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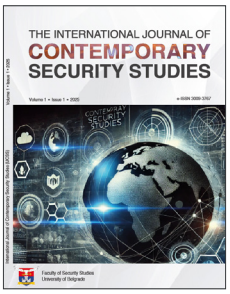

Improved Security and Education: Pathways To National Development

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the effective positioning of the relationship between security and education in Nigeria's national development. Education has become a critical issue in Nigerian society, with concerns often revolving around fluctuations in quality, deteriorating facilities, insufficient funding, inconsistent policies, gender inequality, teacher efficiency and quality, frequent strikes, and other issues. As education is the key to resolving societal security challenges, this research assesses national development issues in Nigeria. It examines how education can mitigate the effects of insecurity on development. Based on secondary data sources, it is suggested that a strong security framework, alongside a robust educational system, is essential for Nigeria to achieve its national development goals with the cooperation of all stakeholders. To foster a united Nigeria, the following policy recommendations are made: the federal government should strive to govern sound educational policies, justice, and fairness.

KEYWORDS

Education; security; national development; policy.

1. Introduction

The development of the information, abilities, attitudes, and values that allow people to contribute to and profit from an inclusive and sustainable future depends heavily on education. In the upcoming years, it will be crucial to develop the ability to set specific, well-defined goals, collaborate with people who have diverse viewpoints, identify unexplored opportunities, and devise multiple solutions to significant issues. Education must strive for more than just preparing students for the workforce (Olusanya, 2021).

Creating educated citizens and developing scientific and technical human resources is the goal of most nations. On the one hand, technology education facilitates the acquisition of fundamental scientific information, as well as practical and applied skills, for national development (Abbas, Babangida, and Muhammad, 2019). Education can help people, including students, acquire the scientific skills, knowledge, mindsets, and work habits necessary for independence. The ability of a country to protect its national security, support economic growth, produce higher-quality goods, enhance healthcare, create cleaner and more effective domestic energy sources, and protect the environment for effective learning depends on advancements in science education and the security of the people. Developing countries, including Nigeria, must revamp their educational systems if they hope to rank among the world's 20th largest economies by 2030. Evidence, however, suggests that the current educational paths are not producing a workforce of science and technology educators that is both

sufficiently large and well-trained to meet this objective (Tsafe & Yusha'u, 2016) due to some factors, including serious ones.

This paper examines how education can positively contribute to national development within a secure environment. The development of the information, abilities, attitudes, and values that allow people to contribute to and profit from an inclusive and sustainable future depends heavily on education. In the coming years, it will be crucial to develop the ability to set specific, well-defined goals, collaborate with people who hold diverse viewpoints, identify previously unexplored opportunities, and devise multiple solutions to significant issues. Education must strive to do more than prepare students for the workforce; it must also equip them with the tools they need to become involved, active, and responsible citizens (Olusanya, 2021). Every nation's development and empowerment are based on education, which is essential for comprehending and engaging in the day-to-day activities of the modern world, for developing one's character, for passing on one's culture, beliefs, and values to others in society, for fostering innovation, and for satisfying the expanding needs of every country (Olusanya, 2021).

2. Conceptual clarification

Within the context of this paper, security can be viewed as the very high level and ability of the government to defend and ensure the safety of the nation, property and its citizens against assaults from extremists, kidnappers, and herders in Nigeria. Security occurs when the government can ensure its citizen's safety from all forms of danger. Furthermore, a nation is uncertain not just when its ways and limits are abused but also when the individual and aggregate privileges of its citizens to life are continually threatened as a result of the activities of extremists and agents of destabilisation. A country enjoys security when the fundamental human rights, financial status, and the sanctity of its citizens' lives are continually regarded and respected by the government of the day (Ezeani & Chilaka, 2013). Thus, we can appropriately say that Nigeria of today is shaky as there is plausible proof to show that fierce fanatics are currently having a field day in wanton and unjustifiable annihilation of lives and property.

Education is the pillar of all development. This is because human capital development, technology and science, information and communication technology (ICT), social, political, economic, cultural, and democratic development are all dependent variables, depending on the independent variable of education. Education can be defined as a process of teaching, training and learning, especially to improve knowledge and develop skills. According to Rafindadi (2014: 4-5), "education can be considered as a form of learning in which knowledge, skills, and habits of a group of people are transferred from one generation to the next through teaching, training or research". Education often occurs under the guidance of others. Any experience that has a formative effect on the way one thinks feels, or acts may be considered educational. Education is typically divided into stages, including preschool, primary school, secondary school, and then college, university, or apprenticeship.

According to Nigerian foremost educationist Professor Fafunwa (1974), education means what each generation gives to its younger ones, which enables them to develop attitudes, abilities, skills, and other behavioural attributes germane to the growth of the society in which they live. Generally, education is the instrument used for the development of a human being in the cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and productive domains. This is achieved through the process of teaching and learning. The universal importance and role that education can play in the national development of all nations is emphasised in the right to education enshrined in most constitutions of the world, including Nigeria's. The first normative instrument on the right to education is the 1960 UNESCO Convention against Discrimination, which addresses equality of opportunity, access to free education, and the rights of minority groups. Fortunately, Nigeria, like most other countries in the world, is a signatory to this convention. Article 4 of the CEDA formulates the following legally binding clause and actions, which signatories are expected to implement, primarily centred on making education free and compulsory. The achievement of these noble goals of education for national development requires significant investments in both funding and other associated factors, such as policies, their implementation, infrastructure, and human capacity development. Ultimately, education can be regarded as the foundation of knowledge that enables individuals to adapt to an ever-changing environment continually. Man has certainly progressed a long way in terms of education in this world. Indeed, education is much more than an economic investment; rather, it is an essential input upon which the development of life and the survival of the individual in society depend.

National development refers to a country's ability to improve the standard of living of its people, which can be achieved by providing individuals with the necessary tools to develop themselves and their nation. The term' national development' is very comprehensive. It encompasses all aspects of an individual's life and the nation's life. It is holistic in approach. It is a process of reconstruction and development in various dimensions of a nation, as well as the development of individuals. It included the full growth and expansion of our industries, education, and agriculture, as well as social, religious, and cultural institutions. It can be best defined as the all-round and balanced development of various aspects and facets of the nation, encompassing political, economic, social, cultural, scientific, and material aspects. For John Vaizea, a noted economist, national development is viewed as the sum of all citizens' forces, in addition to the nation's stock of physical human resources, knowledge, and skills. The United Nations Decade Report has defined National development as growth plus change. Change, in turn, is social and cultural as well as economic and quantitative. Broadly, National development encompassed parameters such as development through a planned national economy, an increase in agricultural production through the application of modern technical knowledge, and the provision of mass education. National development can be broadly defined as deliberate efforts by the government to ensure that the nation develops in terms of per capita income and facilities like education, healthcare delivery, and a secure environment. National development is achieved by ensuring that all harmful elements, such as corruption, unemployment, poverty, and other social evils, are eliminated by the government and its citizens.

3. A Brief Overview of Nigeria's National Development Plan (NDP)

A nation's development is tied to deliberate, scientific, and intelligent developmental plans; hence, it is necessary to have an overview of the various National Development Plans that led to the recent 2021-2025 National Development Plan. The plan builds on the foundation developed in Vision 20:2020 and the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP). Lessons learned from previous plans have guided the development plan for this period, 2021-2025. Vision 20:2020, introduced in 2009, was Nigeria's long-term economic transformation blueprint. It aims to improve the living standards of its citizens and position the country among the world's 20 largest economies. Other objectives included achieving fiscal prudence, low inflation, and increased availability of infrastructural facilities to spur economic growth. While some progress was made in achieving the Vision 2020 goals, the country's ranking in terms of GDP size only improved marginally from 30th to 27th position during the period under review, as the vision's target was to become one of the world's top 20 economies. A review of the economy's performance in meeting its growth objectives revealed mixed results, and input analysis showed why the goal of becoming one of the top economies in the world was not met. The Nigerian economy grew by 7.9% in 2010 but slowed from 2015 onwards due to the negative impact of exogenous shocks, especially from the global oil market.

In 2016, historical terms of trade shock, exacerbated by reduced oil production and prices, as well as structural constraints, took a significant toll on the Nigerian economy ahead of the design and implementation of the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP). The ERGP, a medium-term plan for 2017-2020, was developed to restore economic growth and achieve a more diversified and inclusive economy. Following the economic recession, macroeconomic and structural policies, as well as relatively higher oil prices, supported Nigeria's exit from the 20th recession. Growth performance, although below the ERGP's targets, was broadly in the right direction from 2017 to 2019, spurred by the implementation of the ERGP, increased oil prices, and a recovery in agriculture and services. In 2020, the economy was hit by three major shocks: the pandemic, a decline in global crude oil prices, and social conflicts. In response, the government undertook proactive measures to limit the impacts of these shocks on the Nigerian economy. Anchored in the government's Economic Sustainability Plan (ESP) during the period were policies comprising palliative measures, increases in petroleum product prices and electricity tariffs, as well as fiscal and monetary policy support to various sectors. The fiscal and monetary stimulus packages contributed to the country's exit from the recession that occurred in the second and third quarters of the year.

The vision, mission, and objectives of the National Development Plan of 2021-2025 were based on making Nigeria a country that has unlocked its potential in all sectors of the economy for sustainable, holistic, and inclusive national development. The mission is to effectively guide the implementation of programs and policies that promote rapid multisectoral growth and development of Nigeria's economy. The National Development Plan, 2020-2025, like the previous one, also has very ambitious goals. The plan aims at accelerated, sustained,

inclusive, and private sector-led growth, addressing critical macro-structural issues in the areas of concentric economic diversification, fiscal space to support higher economic and social expenditures, and a stable macroeconomic environment. The robust macroeconomic framework developed from the plan enables projections in the areas of real sector, fiscal, monetary, and external sectors. The macroeconomic framework recognised that sectors have differing potentials for growth and thus identified and leveraged those sectors with the higher potentials for stimulating the growth of the Nigerian economy

4. Problems of National Development in Nigeria

Since before gaining its independence, Nigeria has experimented with several development strategies; while some of these have partially succeeded, most have fallen short of their anticipated outcomes. Since most plans were intended to address poverty, which still affects many Nigerians, inconsistencies and discontinuities in plans have persisted, tarnishing the country's planning and implementation (Igbozuruike et al., 2021). More significantly, it appears that successive governments have not given education the necessary consideration in national planning. Lack of a Clear Vision: From colonial development planning procedures to national development planning, these processes reveal that successive governments have lacked insight, vision, and a clear mission. According to Uche (2019), the majority of Nigeria's development plans are riddled with misaligned priorities, overlapping and contradictory goals, inconsistent policies, and fragmented programs. Mohammed (2020) noted that the majority of budgets and development plans lacked areas of urgency where quick fixes are required to drive economic growth. For example, energy is one of the most fundamental infrastructures for economic development; however, previous Nigerian plans did not prioritise it. Research indicates that the plans' prioritised areas did not receive primary attention. Iron and steel projects included in the first and second national plans were abandoned despite the iron and steel industry being deemed a priority sector in the first development plan (Mohammed, 2020).

Lack of Discipline in Plan Implementation: Officials from previous Nigerian governments often avoided or disregarded established policies and processes designed for plan implementation. One significant issue that jeopardised some of the earlier plans was the lack of political commitment to implement plan elements (Igbozuruike et al., 2021). There were instances where projects not included in the original plan were presented for implementation without being subjected to established planning procedures to determine their cost-benefit ratios and feasibility levels. The Universal Primary Education (UPE) program, for example, was developed and implemented rapidly at that time despite not being included in the Second Development Plan (Igbozuruike et al., 2021). The result was high student enrollment in schools lacking the necessary infrastructure to support teaching and learning, combined with a teacher shortage and financial issues that ultimately led to the school's failure. One issue is the persistent reliance on the Western model of development planning, which is inappropriate for the Nigerian economy (Uche, 2019). Nigerian development plans are typically in line with the exploitative and capitalistic dominance of Western countries. A change must be made, and programs must be customised to utilise national levers to boost the economy. Therefore, it is advisable to utilise indigenous technology and education independent of Western-oriented economics and policies (Igbozuruike et al., 2021).

A plan's magnitude and, to a greater extent, the availability of funding determine its success in implementation. It is challenging to determine the breadth of a plan and the calibre and number of projects to be included in it without prior knowledge of where to find funding (Igbozuruike et al., 2021). This is because without funds, execution will be impossible, and estimating costs will be difficult. This occurred during the implementation of the Fourth Development Plan when the oil price collapse threw the plan's execution into chaos. Ineffective and oversized public sector organisations, inadequate technological infrastructure, a weak public-private sector alliance, ineffective interagency cooperation, and subpar project monitoring and evaluation are among the additional challenges facing national development planning (Igbozuruike et al., 2021).

5. Education and Other Predisposing Factors Responsible for the Failure of Nigeria's National Development

The failures of various Nigerian governments to develop the nation to date can be attributed to several factors, including colonialism, the absence of positive leadership orientation, inadequate security, and poor

education. This is because, as of May 29th, 2023, the majority of Nigerians seemed to agree that, during the Buhari administration, the country was deeply divided along ethnic, religious, social, and economic lines, with significant disparities in poverty. The gap between the poor and the rich is like the distance between the earth and heaven. The population of those who are poor have doubled or even tripled during the immediate past administration of Buhari. Except for people like Lai Mohammed, Femi Adesina, Shuabu Garuba, and Buhari's ministers, who continue to claim and insist that Nigeria is better than ever before, even when the reality of the situation shows that Nigerians are far worse off is glaring and obvious.

Our colonial past is a key factor contributing to Nigeria's national development failure. The history of how Nigeria was colonised is already well-documented and does not need to detain us here. However, it suffices to say that the amalgamation of different independent nations that existed before 1914 has created problems for national development to date. This is because, before a nation can be built, its diverse people must come together under a sovereign state with a unified constitution and legal dispensation. This process never took place before the British forced Nigeria into being in 1914. Those who took over from British rule were Nigerian Nationalists, a name they adopted in order to wretch or take power from the colonists. However, immediately after independence in 1960, they revealed their true colours by acting as regional leaders and projecting the image of their regions rather than the gospel of Nigeria. The First Republic, which began on October 1, 1960, came to an abrupt end on January 15, 1966, through a military coup. The military administration in Nigeria ended on May 29, 1999, when General Abdulsalami Abubakar handed over to General Olusegun Obasanjo as the democratically elected President of Nigeria. For the records, this was the second coming of Obasanjo, as he was Nigeria's Military Head of State from 1976 to 1979. Since the recommencement of democratic rule, the preoccupation of the ruling class has been to make life unbearable for the masses through state policies on education, agriculture, the economy, and wages and salaries that are tilted against the people but in favour of the ruling class. This situation cannot foster national development, as it is contrary to the doctrine of national development, which is founded on principles of justice and fairness.

Education, one of the fundamental factors for national development, is in disarray in Nigeria because the educational system is not functioning correctly. For example, the basic foundation of education, which is primary school, is now out of reach for the poor because most primary schools in Nigeria are privately owned and charge school fees that impoverished parents cannot afford. Therefore, the Nigerian government has abandoned one of its primary responsibilities: providing education to the people. There are many higher educational institutions in the country, but their output in terms of human resource development is very low and poor. This is because the government policy on public education is very flexible. The various institutions require adequate funding from the government, as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) suggests that for any country to maintain an acceptable standard of education, at least 20 to 26 per cent of the annual budget should be allocated to the education sector. However, since 1999, budgetary allocation to education has remained criminally low in Nigeria.

The topic of education is a pressing concern in Nigerian society today, and the first thoughts that come to mind are often fluctuations in quality, deteriorating facilities, a lack of funding, inconsistent educational policies, gender inequality, teacher productivity and quality, frequent strike actions, and so forth. According to Adofu et al. (2019), Nigeria, the largest black nation in Africa with a population of over 200 million, is also one of the largest black countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Since the 1980s, the country has had a national education policy focused on producing literate individuals who would support economic growth, produce higher-quality products, and lower unemployment rates, as well as lessen security threats (Isa, 2022). Education is a way to cultivate the qualities necessary for a rich and satisfying life as well as a tool for social and economic development. The standard of education received determines both a person's value standing and the advancement of any community. As a result, the primary metric for assessing the total level of national development is now educational development (Muhammad, Yusha'u & Lawal, 2018). Development is a change or improvement in growth. The process of social, political, and economic change is implied and described. Individual growth within a society is the foundation for any nation's development. The reason for this is that a country's degree of prosperity and development is primarily determined by the knowledge, skills, and competencies of its people and resources. Muhammad et al. (2018) claim that by developing human resources—which includes transferring knowledge, abilities, and competencies to people—education promotes economic growth. The only way to develop human capital and create responsible citizens in the nation is through education. Thus, since the beginning, education has been the top priority for Nigeria's succeeding governments. High-quality education is essential to a nation's or country's development (Olusanya, 2021).

Leadership Orientation: The higher the risk, the greater the returns orientation of our political leaders. This type of orientation has been corroborated by a former president of the Nigerian Senate when he affirmed in an interview that because "votes are not free, politicians considered electoral contest for seats in the National Assembly as an investment and that many of them invest their fortunes, incurred debts and even sold their houses to contest and get cleared" (see Sunday Punch, June 5, 2000). The unequivocal message being sent by the former president of the senate is that if huge sums of money have been invested in contesting an election, then it is inevitable for the investor to strive to recover their money or part of it through various means.

Good Governance: The negative leadership orientation of the political class also leads to the absence of good governance in Nigeria. Good governance is a situation in which the strict and proper application of democratic tenets and principles is deployed to govern society. Essentially, continuity in government, such as adopting a people-oriented policy framework by the succeeding administration, even if it is from a different political party, is an essential aspect of good governance. However, in Nigeria today, one of the significant problems arising from poor governance is the wanton abandonment of applicable policies and projects initiated by their predecessors. This is because, instead of implementing good policies initiated by the opposition party, political officeholders often jettison the implementation and completion of such policies and projects. This ugly and repugnant attitude towards governance in Nigeria is evident in the high rate of abandoned projects throughout the country.

Security: Another factor that can promote national development is security. Security is a state of being free from fear of any kind. Security is the foundation upon which a country records meaningful development and nation-building. Every Nigerian today knows the meaning of insecurity because of the existence of Boko Haram, terrorists, kidnappers, rape, bombing, and other nefarious activities of these outlaws. In a country where insecurity is more prevalent than security, it is challenging to think about national development due to the absence of peace. According to Adofu (2019), insecurity may result from a hostile environment dominated by an individual's insensitivity to man. Most people in charge today in Nigeria make use of their positions to enforce policies that tarnish and harm the populace. Human security was defined by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 1994) as persistent risks, including persecution, illness, and starvation. Security entails defence against unnoticed and harmful disturbances in our homes, workplaces, everyday lives, or communities. Another definition of security is a defence against potential future events or actions taken to safeguard a nation, a structure, or individuals against danger, threats, and other dangers (Wehmeier & Ashby, 2002). In general, calmness, contentment, safety, safeguarding physical and human resources, the absence of crisis, and protection from dangers to human health are all linked to security.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

The educational deficit in the country has a significant effect on national developmental challenges. In a modern nation-state, governance is primarily about meeting the basic needs and desires of the populace through governmental institutions and procedures that are led, motivated, and guided by a well-structured and functional education system. Education promotes human security and propel national development. The overwhelming view is that what appears as indicators of a failed or weakened state in Nigeria are a pointer to the absence of effective educational system on a scale likely to undermine the country's development. With a robust security architecture and a functional educational system in the country, the collective efforts of all stakeholders can help Nigeria achieve its quest for national development. To build a United Nigeria, the following policy options are recommended: The federal government should, as much as possible, run the government in line with sound educational policies, justice, and fairness. This is because a situation where there are two different measures of punishment for a similar or even the same offence cannot engender national development and security. The education sector should be well-funded so that our tertiary institutions can produce the required manpower for development. More importantly, our ruling elites should imbibe the characteristics of Nation-Builders, such as accepting responsibility for the nation's well-being, believing in the nation's potential, committing their energy and time to building, and doggedly determining to do all the necessary things that lead to national development in Nigeria. Finally, the government must secure the country so that, in a peaceful atmosphere, all citizens can join in building the Nigerian nation through education.

Disclosure statement

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