

THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN MANAGING SOCIAL VICES AND YOUTH RESTIVENESS

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Abstract

The article examined the role of education in managing social vices and youth restiveness in a globally depressed economy. Incidence of social vices such as examination malpractice, indecent dressing and prostitution, political thugery, drug addiction, cultism, bombings, kidnappings, rape and armed robbery are discussed in the paper. It also discussed conditions that are linked to social vices and youth restiveness including poor governance, violence, repression, corruption, inequality and exclusion which may affect quality, relevance, equity and management of quality education. Academic research papers revealed that if secondary male enrolment is low, youth restiveness, especially in low income countries with a youth budge increases. The interface between incidence of social vices, youth restiveness and quality education in a globally depressed economy is highlighted in the paper. The paper concludes that if government and relevant stakeholders make efforts to provide quality education to its citizens, social vices and youth restiveness might be reduced. The article recommended that even in a globally depressed economy, educational provision should always be placed on first line charge. It also recommended that government, Non-governmental Organizations and other relevant stakeholders should make education accessible to all irrespective of social status. All levels of educational systems should be given good attention as no level should be seen to be inferior to the other as both complement one another in terms of quality and cohesion of the educational system.

Key words: Education, Management, Vices, Youth, Restiveness.

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Introduction

Education is a tool used to develop the individual so that he becomes useful to himself, his family and the society generally. Okwori and Ede (2012) define education as the transmission of relevant knowledge into the learner to enable him to effectively adjust to his environment and live a useful life. Education enables the possessor to live a useful life by contributing to the development of the society.

Educational management is a concept that deals with putting educational system under formal control by formulating policies and implementing same to achieve the desired goals and objectives. Babalola and Isuku (2008) state that educational management is a concept that goes along with the quest to put the formal education system under control, regulation or supervision.

Social vices are deviant behaviours such as illicit sex, drug addiction, evil or immoral behavior such as murder, examination malpractice, thuggery and such other criminal tendencies. Restiveness on the other hand is a condition where one is unable to stay still, or unwilling to be controlled most especially because one feels bored or unsatisfied with the state of affairs. Youth restiveness is therefore a condition in which youths are seemingly uncontrollable because the state of affairs in a nation or society are unsatisfactory. A globally depressed economy on the other hand is one in which inflationary trends are on the ascendancy, money is chasing few goods in the market.

Since the return of Nigeria to democratic rule in 1999, the country has been facing national security challenges across the six geo-political zones. Incidences of bomb blasts, oil pipeline vandalism, kidnappings, armed robbery and political assassinations are added dimensions to the security challenges which are stretching the nation to its limits, sometimes constituting a great threat to the very fabric of its existence (Abimbola & Adesote, 2012).

Incidence of social vices and youth restiveness are linked to inadequate education service delivery. In Sierra Leone, the cause of insurgency and youth restiveness is linked to denial of education to a section of the country (Education International, 2010). The poor and the uneducated revolted against the repressive regime in North American continent of the British monarchies, leading to the declaration of independence and the revolutionary war (Young & Gray, 2011). Genyi and Euginia (2013) state that peace and security of Nigeria has been seriously compromised because of the inability of government and other relevant stakeholders to provide quality education to some sections of the country. Human restiveness occasioned by Boko Haram, Fulani herdsmen clashes with sedentary farmers, kidnappings, targeted assassinations, arson and such other social vices are stretching the nation beyond its elastic limit. Without good education for all and sundry, the nation may be dragged to the precipice beyond which there could be chaos in the country. Education is therefore the only instrument that can be used to bring about national cohesion and integration that will lead to national development.

Conceptual Framework or Clarifications

Incidence of Social Vices

Social vices are fast becoming national and global trends. Social vices cut across ethnic nationalities, races and even religious cleavages. Some of the social vices include but not limited to examination malpractice, indecent dressing and prostitution, political thuggery, cultism, drug addiction, targeted assassinations, armed robbery, pipe-line vandalism, vandalism of electricity installations and cyber crimes. These vices are at

variance to social norms and values which include beliefs, attitudes, honesty, hard work, customs and traditions, ideals, skills and taboos which a society cherishes and passes on from one generation to another via formal and non formal education. For want of time and space only a few of the social vices will be explained presently.

(i) Examination Malpractice

Tests and examinations are very important in the school system. It is examinations that are used as criteria for placement of citizens in society. Its natural tendency is to establish a meritocracy in which power, earnings and status depend (Umaru and Babuje, 2012). The quest to pass public examinations conducted by examining bodies like the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), National Examinations Council (NECO) and Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) by hook or crook emphasizes the importance of examinations to students. Oyetunde (2004) stressed that examinations exert a very powerful influence on the educational system, on what is taught or how it is taught, and they determine how far students can go in their academic pursuits and job aspirations. Entire family lives can be influenced by a child's performance in an examination because that performance can constrain or expand future employment possibilities for the child (Copper, 1996). Examinations therefore are very important to students as their future seems to hang on them. All manner of examination malpractices are therefore trending. Maduabum (2001) states that examination malpractice is an improper practice carried out before, during or after any examination by an examinee or others with a view to obtaining good results. Examination malpractice could include leakages, impersonation, collusion, swapping of scripts, smuggling in already answered scripts and most recently downloading examination questions and answers from the internet of examining bodies' website. The recent trend of downloading examination questions and answers and indeed all forms of malpractice is worrisome as it makes mockery of the examination process and its intended purpose. Stakeholders in educational planning including Ministry of Education, examining bodies, teachers and parents have the responsibility to ensure that examinations measure correctly the competences and capacity of students that sit for them.

ii. Indecent dressing/prostitution

Social norms and values are part of the culture of a people. The Nigerian society believes in a Supreme Being or God who controls the affairs of man. The people value decent dressing but abhor near nude dressing associated with prostitution. Nigerian youths have a penchant for any kind of dress even foreign dresses. They dress in British dresses, gowns and suits, Chinese wears, American trousers and suits and German wears (Ogbonnaya, 2009). Social media and the internet have influenced the dressing of our youths negatively. It is common to see on the streets and campuses half clad boys and girls or wears that show the contours of all vital statistics of their bodies. For quality education in a globally depressed economy, Nigeria and other nations must plan education to cater for the decadent society. Education should be planned to correct the ills in the society.

Education should be planned to cater for the need of both the rich and the poor, in this way prostitution may also be reduced. It is in this respect that the classical economists do not often regard education strictly as an economic but a social good, a luxury consumption good. They insist that education does not strictly obey the law of demand and supply. This school of thought argued that since the principle of externalities

of education stipulates that in the long run the education of the individual benefits the society as a whole more than the individual who invests in it, or acquires it, it stands to reason that society should be made to pay for the proportion of benefits that it derives from the education of the individual (Nna, 2012). The cost of education should therefore be borne by the public, the government. The socialists therefore see the provision of education at public expense as a means of creating a class-less society and a society free from the exploitation of the downtrodden by the bourgeoisie (Nna, 2012).

iii. **Cultism**

A cult is a belief system in a local god. The Oxford Concise Dictionary of Sociology as cited by Nwoke (2006) defines cult anthropologically as a set of practices and beliefs of a group in relation to a local god. These activities relating to the local god are highly secretive as members always swear oath of secrecy. Secret cults or societies are those organizations which completely conceal their rules, the names of their members, their signs, passwords from outsiders and the members take oath of secrecy and are often under the threat of severe punishment in the case of its violation (Ogbonnaya, 2012). Youth restiveness is typified by political assassinations, ethnic militia, armed robbery, sexual assault or rape, kidnappings among other vices. Cultism is an extension of violence in the Nigerian society. Gimba (2002) states that university students and graduates earn much money by taking part in crime-related services and contracts. Thomas (2012) observed that campus cult groups enjoy subtle supports and patronage from both government and school authorities. To eliminate or reduce cult activities on campuses and Nigerian streets, educational planners and policy makers should consider in its planning Nigeria's philosophy of education which is based on:

(a) The development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen; (b) The full integration of the individual into the community and (c) The provision of equal access to educational opportunities for all citizens of the country at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system (Federal government of Nigeria, 2004 p.2)

The Interface between Youth Restiveness and Quality Education in a Globally Depressed Economy

The bombings, kidnappings, pipeline vandalism, armed robbery, targeted assassinations, rape and other forms of criminality in the six geo-political regions of Nigeria are emerging acts of youths restiveness. Some commentators view this disturbing trend to political dissatisfaction, ethno religious differences, perceived societal neglect and abject poverty in the land. Niger Delta and South East youths are responsible for kidnappings and destruction of oil installations just as the activities of Boko Haram in the North East are a serious national concern. There is an emerging trend of ethnic militia or private armies that are a source of terror in the nation.

Through the oil boom of the 1970s to date, human trafficking, prostitution, kidnapping, and criminality in general have flourished in alongside continued high unemployment (International Crisis Group, 2010). Because the oil wealth seems to flow to the powerful and elite, social services, public safety programmes, and education are of very low quality or non-existent and Nigeria ranks among the World's poorest populations with 75% of the population living on \$1.25 per day (Thomson, 2012). The poverty rate in the Muslim North is 72%, in the Christian South - 27%, and in the Niger Delta - 35% (Johnson, 2011). For the majority outside of the establishment, there is no

continuous access to safe drinking water, shelter or employment (O'mede, 2011) and life expectancy stands at 46.5 years of age (Bureau of African Affairs, 2012).

Another predicament is that two thirds of Nigeria's population is under the age of 30 (Thomson, 2012). A country with a high population, combined with high unemployment is surely at risk of youth restiveness and high incidence of social vices. Nigerian youths are living under disease conditions. Nigeria has the second highest HIV/AIDS burden in Africa and the highest tuberculosis burden in the world (Ploch, 2011).

Within a given context, education can be an instrument for construction or destruction depending on the kind provided. Education can help produce the benefits of inclusive and constructive integration of individuals and communities, socially, politically and economically which can contribute to prevent social vices and youth restiveness (Dupuy, 2008). Social vices and youth restiveness are associated with a combination of economic, governance, security and social conditions that can have unpleasant influence on quality education and its provision. At a very minimum, these factors impinge on basic service delivery. Of the 72 million children of primary school age estimated to be out of school globally, over 25 million are found in countries with high incidence of youth restiveness (UNESCO, 2010), Millions of youths and adults find themselves with few meaningful opportunities to access education in a globally depressed economy. Even when education services are made available, the dynamics of the 'who', 'what', 'how' and 'why' associated with their delivery can further complicate and negatively impact the quality of what children and youths experience in the classroom (Dupuy, 2008). There are conditions that are linked to social vices and youth restiveness - including poor governance, violence, repression, corruption, inequality and exclusion - may affect quality, relevance, equity and management in ways which not only reduce education as a tool for social cohesion but reverse development gains and further entrench or exacerbate economic, social or political stability through youth restiveness.

The impact of education on social vices and youth restiveness can be seen at macro-level in some case studies. Macro-level evidence shows a link between education and the causes of social vices and youth restiveness particularly at the nexus of poverty, crime wave and youth restiveness. Greed and grievance literature links social vices and youth restiveness to poverty: Academic research on the causes of youth restiveness demonstrates compellingly that countries with low income per capital are at increased risk of civil conflict (Rice, Gaff & Lewis, 2006). Two dominant explanations exist about the link between low income per capital and youth restiveness - the first emphasizes opportunities for rebellion, while the other focuses on state capacity for which education plays a role in each of the explanations. Collier & Hoeffler (2004) offer argument concerning the role of education in the relationship between poverty and youth restiveness. They find that a 10% increase in enrolment rates in secondary schools can reduce the average risk of youth restiveness by three percentage points, and that male secondary school rates are negatively related to the duration of youth restiveness (Collier & Hoeffler, 2004). According to the authors, as educational attainment rises, the potential income that rebel recruits would have to forgo in order to join a rebellion rises, making it less likely that rebellion will occur.

Regarding state capacity, it can be seen that a state's failure to provide access to quality education created youth restiveness. Thyne (2006) states that people should expect a poorly funded system of education to generate poverty and inequality each of which has been found to increase the likelihood of social vices and youth restiveness.

Thyne argues that primary enrolment rates are a strong proxy for equitable educational investment. His study revealed that an increase in primary enrolment from 1 standard deviation (SD) below the mean to 1 SD above results in a 73% decrease in the predicted probability of civil war onset. This means that if increased and sustained investment in education with increased enrolments become a priority for conflict prevention, there is the likelihood of significant reduction in youth restiveness. A strong quality education for both males and females is an antidote for social vices and youth restiveness.

In the context of who is enrolled and at what level of education is also significant. Research suggests that in many contexts, those who join rebellions are overwhelmingly young males who have not received education; the hypothesis is that this group is easily manipulated by propaganda and finds the power of possessing and using arms alluring (Collier, Lani, Havard, Hoffler, Rey-Querol & Sabanis, 2003). Dixon (2009) finds that the highest correlation between youth restiveness and education indicators is a decrease in risk of youth restiveness. Barakat and Henrik (2009) confirm that low secondary male enrolment increases youth restiveness, especially in low or lower middle income countries with a youth bulge. Thyne (2006) also finds that secondary male enrolment has the strongest marginal effect when values are very low which supports Collier and Hoeffler's (2004) rebel recruitment argument, suggesting that secondary male enrolment is more relevant than primary enrolment and secondary male and female enrolment rates.

Post secondary school enrolment is not as important as secondary school enrolment in reducing youth restiveness. Post secondary school enrolment is not strongly correlated with a decreased probability of youth restiveness as secondary school enrolment, and increasing adult literacy and expenditures on education only has a marginal effect on youth restiveness (Tebbe, Breazeale, Commins, Kalista, Pigozzi, Winthrop & Graff, 2014). The authors maintain that educational expenditures are often distributed unequally to the university level, which disproportionately helps the wealthy, especially in poor countries as the poor can hardly afford the cost of university education for their wards. This implies that at the tertiary level of education, increase in education expenditures could rather foment youth restiveness because they perpetuate existing social and economic inequality.

Quality of education services plays a role in social vices and youth restiveness with access to various types and levels of education as a critical component in this interface. Access as a quantitative measure that encompasses enrolling in, regularly attending and remaining in the education system until a certain phase of schooling has been completed, has-proven itself as a contributing structural factor both exacerbating and mitigating youth restiveness (Dupuy, 2008). As Dupuy describes, there is now an extant body of evidence demonstrating that the lack of access to education contributed to the outbreak of conflict in places including Rwanda, Kosovo and Sierra Leone by serving as a grievance among fighting parties (2008, p.33). The case of Liberia serves as an example where patterns of mass exclusion from the formal education system of indigenous children, comprising the bulk of the population, were widespread in the century prior to the outbreak of conflict in 1989 (Tebbe et al, 2014). Exclusion in education across gender, income and geographic lines, - reflected broader patterns of social, economic and political exclusion in Liberian society which entrenched grievances contributing to civil war.

Education is considered as a public good to be provided by the state. As such, education systems have the symbolic value of (re) establishing state legitimacy in the eyes of the population given their role as a site for daily interaction by the population

with the state and as a barometer of the state's commitment to its people (Dupuy, 2008; Barakat, Karpinska & Paulson, 2008).

Education can impact behaviour and attitudes in youths in diverse ways. Schools and classrooms can provide the space in which people of different origins can be brought together and taught how to live and work together peacefully (Thyne, 2006). For example, participatory processes both in classrooms and within school management practices have potential to build practices of cooperation and reciprocity both within and beyond schools (Wedge, 2008). Additionally, the content and methods of imparting education have a role in mitigating youth restiveness-peace education can have positive effects on students' attitudes and teachers have the ability to impart values of tolerance of cultural differences and acceptance of diversity as well as fostering critical thinking and interactive skills among learners (Wedge, 2008; Barakat, Karpinska & Paulson, 2008). Education systems, and schools themselves, serve as locations where combined interests and objectives from a wide range of groups are addressed in attempts to establish agreements on the details of schooling and also common understanding of citizenship that the school system promotes (Thyne, 2006).

Conclusion

Education even in a globally depressed economy can be used as an instrument to link to livelihoods, economic opportunities, mobility and enhanced standard of living. Quality education delivery can be used to avoid entrenching disparities and development of grievances which are factors for social vices and youth restiveness. If the result of education cannot meet these expectations it calls to question the quality, relevance of education provided and the segments of the society receiving such education.

Suggestions

1. Even in a globally depressed economy, educational provision should always be placed on first line charge. This position is imperative because education is an instrument for national and international development.
2. Government, Non-governmental organizations and other relevant stakeholders should make education accessible to all irrespective of social status.
3. All levels of educational system, primary, secondary and tertiary schools should be given good attention as no level should be seen to be inferior to the other as both complement one another in terms of quality and cohesion of the educational system.
4. Universal Basic Education system is funded by the Federal government of Nigeria, states, World Bank and other donor agencies. The tertiary level of education is supported with a special intervention fund, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND). The secondary level of education is left only in the hands of various state governments in Nigeria. This lopsided intervention funding excluding secondary schools should be addressed.
5. The Universal Basic Education Commission is in charge of basic education in Nigeria while National Universities Commission regulates activities of universities in the country. No such body has been created for secondary schools. This imbalance should be looked into. This may enhance quality education delivery at this level of education.

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