

Enhancing Patriotism Education for Nation Building

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Abstract

The quality of every society is largely predicated on the quality of its love and loyalty to its nation, no society builds itself above the quality of its nation. Patriotism not only helps individuals escape social vices by developing the right skills they need to improve their lively hoods, but also generates productivity gains that fuel economic growth and development. It also helps one to escape all factors that fuel criminalities, bad governance and bad followership etc. Patriotism shall remain a basic tool for socio-economic and political transformation of any nation; which provides a significant source of commitment to the state, even if this is indirectly extends to law. This paper discusses the concept of patriotism, education and nation building. Also in the paper are: the objectives of patriotism, qualities of a good patriot, unpatriotic acts (bribery and corruption, ethnicity, religious intolerance, poor leadership, impunity and indiscipline) that hinder the promotion of patriotism in Nigeria, the contents and goals of patriotism education, patriotism as an effective tool for nation building, and finally recommends among others that government shall ensure quality education through adequate funding and better welfare to citizens as logical avenue to infuse patriotism among the citizenry.

Keywords: Education, Patriotism, National-Development, Nation-Building and Citizens.

Introduction

There are actually a lot of means to demonstrate patriotism in our society today, waving the flag is an obvious way, but anything that celebrates your country or makes it stronger is a great display of patriotism. Still, people are more vocal about their patriotism (support) when their country is at war with one another, i.e. playing patriotic songs, and making speeches full of national pride, or about politicians argue with each other about who really has more patriotism. In the current reality of Nigeria, there is an increase in the activities that undermine the patriotism which affects the nation building. With the present leadership that is not justifiably executed to the satisfaction and conviction of all Nigerians, and the circumstances where dis-order seems to be celebrated as normalcy, and when all possibilities of hope seems impossible, the hope of developmental strategies is dashed. Nigeria is now in a dire need of transformational agenda through patriotism and accelerated commitment in making it a better nation for all.

Window of Definitions

Patriotism: Is defined as love of the country and willing to sacrifice for it, through loyalty, truthfulness, integrity, and general respect. Patriotism involves citizens displaying devotion to their country including devotion to the fundamental values and principles upon which it depends (Kimberly in Kakira in Kadiri et-al (2017). Correspondingly, Nathason (1989) claimed that patriotism consist of four main components which are: a special affection towards one's country; defining self through one's country; being interested in the country's welfare; and sacrificing for the sake of the country's welfare. Throughout the history, some of the most respected defenders of liberty felt that

patriotism implies thoughtfulness over blind acceptance. Kakira in Kadiri, et-al (2017) stated that Socrates, Henry David Thoreau and Martin Luther King all encouraged active efforts to improve one's country by adhering to the highest standards of behaviour, by both the government and citizens themselves.

Education: Farrant in Ekuafteh, et-al (2015) defined it as the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, faculties trained and skills developed. Also, Adeyemo in Ekuafteh, et-al (2015) sees education as anything that is done consciously and unconsciously to influence the thoughts, behaviours and attitudes of others. In this light, Farrant in Ekuafteh, et-al (2015) consider education to be formal, informal and non-formal, and it can have desired effects or influence on the persons acquiring it. Though, Shekarau in Naniya and Kurawa (2004) stated that education is the primary key to development and progress throughout human history, it is a cardinal to the spiritual and material development of any society, and also it is the central nerve of community's existence and invariably, therefore the most significant determinant of its survival.

Nation Building: Mezieobi (1994) defined nation building as a multi-faceted complex process of building the socio-political and economic pre-conditions of a political society that would be instrumental to the policy of continued independent, sustenance, development and growth. Moreover, Zuru in Kadiri et-el (2011) defined it as a process of constructing or structuring a national identity using the power of the state, a process that aims at the unification of the people with the state, so that it remains politically stable and viable in the long run. Yet, according to them, the process involves the use of propaganda or major infrastructural development to foster social harmony and economic growth. Ololobou in Kadiri et-el (2011) noted that nation building attempt is made among others to achieve:

- i. Oneness, unity and indivisibility of the state.
- ii. Sense of belonging and security in the citizenry.
- iii. Productivity on the part of every citizen.
- iv. Growth and development of the state.

Objectives of Patriotism

Kakira in Kadiri et-al (2017) viewed the objectives of patriotism as:

- a) to supports economic and political activity and promotes social cohesion. The supporters of economic patriotism describe it as a kind of self-defense of local economic interest. Because some manifestation of economic patriotism are attempts to block foreign competition or acquisition of domestic companies;
- b) to coordinates and promotes the behavior of consumers or companies (both private and public) that consist of favouring the goods and services proceed in their country or in their group of companies;
- c) to encourages consumers to purchase the goods and services of their own country or through supply protection that is shielding of the domestic market from foreign competition through tariffs;
- d) the political objective on the other hand is an emotional attachment to a nation, which individuals recognize as their homeland or national feeling or national pride. This can be viewed in terms of differing features relating to one's own nation, including ethnic, cultural, political or historical aspects; and
- e) to boosts the nation's spirit; enhance cohesion, and consolidating the county's political culture. These national feelings are called Chauvinism or Jingoism.

Qualities of a Good Patriot

The qualities may include having much interest of nation at heart, having mutual respect to the national symbols, obeying all the rules and regulations of one's country, self-less service, love and loyalty to the nation. Others are reporting all criminal acts to the appropriate authority, and must be hard working towards the development of one's nation. Nevertheless, a good patriot loves his country and defends it from negative influence, ranging from bad leaders, external and internal adversaries etc. This can be manifested in national life through the following ways as stated by Nathason (1989):

- i. Taking care of public property: Bearing in mind that the government with all its property belong to them, therefore he has the key responsibility to take good care of public property whether place in his custody or not whenever he comes in contact with it.
- ii. Depending the interest of his country: He should prepare to depend and serve his nation when it is threatened by any aggression at whatever capacity, whenever the need arises. He shall avoid any harmful act that jeopardizes the peace of his country.
- iii. Loyalty to the nation: He should be law abiding, owes his loyalty to his nation, his community and to himself. He obliges to exhibit high degree of honesty in his commitments to the nation, this is seen as a very essential for the existence of a nation and shall put his country at heart.
- iv. Responsible and respected: He should endeavor to carry out his civic responsibilities assign to him and to recognized his sphere of influence and act within it, performing dutifully with a sense of seriousness and respects the legally established authorities and national symbols etc.
- v. Discipline to self and the nation: This is the ability to conform to the laid down rules, norms and regulations and complete obedience to orders as stipulated in the country's constitution and respect the dignity of others.

Acts that Hinder the Promotion of Patriotism

a) Bribery and Corruption: Kakira in Kadiri et-al (2017) states that bribery and corruption has long been perceived as a major obstacle for socio-economic development, because it distorts national and international economic and political relations. Corruption includes any illegitimate use of office and may include a range of different types of crimes while bribery is limited to the giving or acceptance of payment of other illegitimate advantages. Yes, the scale of the problem of bribery and corruption is at significant level. Therefore, this factor contributes largely to the behaviour of citizens expatriate. The Corruption Perception Index 2020 rank Nigeria as 149th and 2nd most corrupt nation in the world as well as in the West Africa, and it is also rated as the poverty capital of the world due to corruption (Transparency International, 2021). Similarly, NBS (National Bureau of Statistics) cited in Abbas in Ekwueme et-al (2018) reported that 400 billion spent on bribes yearly with judiciary as having the lion share, followed by the police. In the same vein, Bala (2008) stated that corruption has been the root of manifold problems in many societies, for some countries, it has been the source of their downfall.

b) Religious Intolerance: Religion is supposed to serve as the tie that binds people together, but unfortunately, it has created more divisions in Nigeria, Nigerian are rooted in religion they show interest in their own to the detriment of others, this created mistrust among the followers of the two major religions (Islam and Christianity). Nigeria is religiously diverse state with three predominant religions i.e. Christianity, Islam and traditional religion. Religion became value base which people are

bound to be emotionally attached, religious identification overrides the loyalty to the state. Religious organizations may be the only institutions with some degree of popular credibility, trust and moral authority. This resulted into the freedom of religion, conscience and practice enjoyed from the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Constitution, 1999).

However religious intolerance is due to the following exhibitions:

- a) spreading misinformation about a group beliefs or practices;
- b) attempting to force religious beliefs and practices on other against their will;
- c) restricting human rights of members of an indefinable religious group;
- d) devaluing other faith as worthless or evil; and
- e) inhibiting freedom of a person to change their religion.

By the late 1970's the first religious violence between Muslims and Christians Students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria change the climate for worst (Kano, 2007). Ever since, our religious climate started changing for worst, the trend has been sustained and the tempo is increasing and religious intolerance is manifested in the people life, which for years culminated into religious conflicts that took millions of life and destruction of properties worth trillion of Naira. Extremist can also uses religion to perpetuate other crimes such as killing, insecurity and destructions, a phenomenon in which religion can be used in achieving political ends in Nigeria, taking advantages of economic misfortunes, irresponsible leadership, poverty, indiscipline and unemployment in the country.

c) Deprived Leadership: The first post-independence leadership was formed by nationalists through a conservative alliance. These were leaders who were not polluted by the intellectual domination of the Western civilization, and they remained the custodians of the traditional intellectual heritage. They did a lot with their little western education, and their dedication and patriotism earned them much respect and recognition. The subsequent military and political leadership has made to be a favor in Nigeria, through inheritance and is meant for enjoyment, comfort-ability and self-enrichment. Tahir in Kadiri et-al (2017) states that majority of Nigeria leaders at local, state and federal levels are corrupt. Parochial and undemocratic in values and attitudes, some are dictatorial autocratic and vindictive, some of them see themselves as masters and not servants of the people. Some of them see their positions as opportunities to cart away public funds and properties; these types of leaders promote nepotism, favoritism, ethno-centrism, and rejection of outsiders and perpetrates election rigging which make Nigeria -nation to exist as fragile geographical entity. Also Wikipedia (2017) added that poor leadership also contributes to the social problems such as economic, political and religious conflicts and these conflicts led to unresolved problems in the society. Kundila (2016) states that the near total eclipse on visionary leadership in Nigeria over the years has contributed greatly to the thorns and facelessness of the education sector. Consequently, to avoid all these social conflicts, a leader must be a competent with confidence and bold to confront any situation. He may bring peace to his followers. Nigerians must rise to defend the nation and liberate themselves from the merciless groups of oppressors and unpatriotic leaders.

d) Indiscipline: Abbas in Ekwueme et-al (2018) defines indiscipline as a deviation from normal way of behavior, or rejection of norms, traditions and values that guide the conduct of the people in the society. It is a state of disorder because of lack of control in the life of the individual". The trend of indiscipline is common in Nigeria and many counties, it fuel negative acts such as persistence insurgency, pandemic corruption, injustice, human rights violations, hyper stealing in government, and the shameless exhibition of flamboyant life style by the politicians; despite the unbearable sufferings by the majority populace of Nigeria which has dominated the country, as if there is total death of patriotism talk less of education among the citizens. Evidently, top Nigerian politicians and

government functionaries are accused with indictments and criminalities, but as a result of indiscipline they may go unpunished, and continue enjoying their liverish lifestyle, and stand to be respected in their communities. This has infused the young Nigerians into committing different acts of indiscipline and criminalities that is why today indiscipline for material gain, is celebrated as normalcy among some citizenry. In a nation where a large number of its inhabitants congratulate and value wealth without a connected means of the wealth was made, will have plenty of delinquents everywhere.

e) Ethnicity: Tahir in Kadiri et-al (2017) consider an ethnic group as a group which identifies itself and is identified by others as constituting a category distinguished from other categories of the same order. He elaborates further that an ethnic group is characterized with cultural or sub-cultural traits like beliefs, values, pattern of behavior, views of the self and most importantly language e.g. Hausa, Tarok, Igbo, Fulani, Yoruba and Tiv. Nigeria is an ethnically diverse state According to Mezieobi (1994):

Nigeria is an exceedingly heterogeneous society with a bewildering number of independent ethnics nationalities totaling 619, and each one basking- in strong ethnic consciousness to the relegation of national consciousness, while the majority ethnic groups: the Hausa-Fulani, the Yoruba and the Igbo have gained a stronghold in the ethnicity continuum ladder and are hell.. bent to dominate other ethnic minorities and in fact continuum put in national power control, the minority groups, wherever they are not in contemporary times resting on their ethnic oars...

However, every ethnic group in Nigeria has a strong feeling of belongingness and homestead (location) instead of promoting national belonging, with over 619 ethnics nationalities in Nigeria, is likewise the most thickly populated and most multicultural country in Africa, but a greater percentage of Nigerians are tribesmen, who look at everything from the point of their clannish view, they only trust their tribesmen and alienate others in terms of leadership, political appointments, employment and other opportunities to the detriment of merit. That is the beginning of hatred, injustice, nepotism, favoritism that is endangering nation building in Nigeria. And the ugly circumstance is that, many floors hatred flows in their blood and transfer it to their children. This is the evidence in what Nigerians say and do, a character of many decent looking people who appear to be normal, but are not better than urchins.

f) Impunity: According to Ya'u (2016) it is the situation in which people willfully do the wrong things, simply because they feel they cannot be called to account for it, either as a result of their positions, closeness to power or because they are rich. He further cites an example by saying that "impunity and corruption feed off each other by creating a circle of vicious people". Yet, in Nigeria everyone is equal before the law but now the law is applicable only when there is interest to protect by the authorities. Many governments in Nigeria at different levels and times protects the vicious people in their circle through impunity, that is why the governments at times induce favoritism, ethnicity, tribalism and promote God-fatherism to the detriment of any other consideration. The implication of impunity in Nigeria is seen clearly as the country is bedeviling with the issues surrounding its national security such as: insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, militancy, successions etc. the major sponsors of the above criminalities are covered by impunity, whereas government agents are going after the ordinary culprits, a process that deteriorate the situations and render it endless.

Contents and Goals of Patriotism Education

The contents of patriotism education can be found in different subjects such as social studies and civic education in primary and junior secondary schools curriculum while in senior secondary it is in government as a teaching subject. Furthermore, in tertiary institutions students are exposed into patriotism in General Study courses such as citizenship education and nationalism. Therefore, the teaching and learning of patriotism is going simultaneously from primary to tertiary levels of education in Nigeria.

In primary education, the students are exposed into the concepts of Nigeria as a nation with multi-ethnic and pluralistic religious affiliations, they are also been exposed into different cultures, norms, values and the respect of the constituted authorities. The basic form of patriotism as according to Michael (2021) is having a love for one own country, if patriotism were to be taught in schools, the students would be able to slowly develop and sense pride for his/her country. Also, that students of patriotism education will understand why it is important to have respect for the fundamental structures of the country, students could even have lessons about important institutions like the government and the constitution. The goal is to make them feel that the country is worth fighting for. Michael (2021) further said the students get the chance to understand that they have a purpose in society, as it helps them build the students' character development, where a sense of pride may grow in them and to grasp that there is nothing wrong with strongly identifying with nationality. However, all the contents of patriotism education goals aimed or prefer students for patriotic quality which can be found in the curriculum of social studies, civic education, citizenship education, nationalism education etc.

Relationship between Patriotism and Nation Building

Nation building can be a deliberate attempt of re-structuring the socio-economic and political landscape of any nation; it is the process that aims at bringing the citizens together for growth and development. Ololobou in Kadirri et-al (2011) states that the process of nation building requires: the emergence of national consciousness, loyalty, patriotism, values of prudence, honesty, discipline, hard work, accountability, corporate responsibility and selflessness. These are very crucial for the much needed national growth and development; in view of Nwachukwu cited in Kadiri et-al (2017) ...before there can be a successful nation-building. First, there must be an element of identification and secondly there must be an element of social and cultural integration.

There is general agreement that patriotism fuel nation-building; as a pre-requisite for national development. In an attempt to nation-building from the numerous ethnics, cultural and religious diversities as well as socio-economic and artificial tribulations, Nigeria shall hit upon a harmonious and enduring solution via patriotism through quality education as the alternatives worthy for equipping Nigerian students with knowledge, skills, values, fitness for active partaking in societal activities, and as an element to succeed in building trust, mutual understanding, and common brotherhood for national development.

Nation building is not just what elites or government will do alone, it also involves the social, cultural and economic exchanges by ordinary people towards the development, which could be done with mutual responsibility and love for the nation. Patriotism is so much more than just loving a country it has to do with full blooded loyalty towards a nation and helps positively in developing young ones' character to fight for their nation, as we all read the roles of our heroes past in the struggling towards independence of our colonized nations, which was done using education and patriotism as the tools. Yet, patriotism education remained critical to nation building anytime, anywhere and in any circumstances.

Conclusion

Nevertheless, patriotism shall remain a tool of restructuring the multi ethnic society like Nigeria; it also serves as effective sensation that fuel every development. Evidently, the introduction of the major artificial malignant problems of illiteracy, religious bigotry, indiscipline, corruption, ethnicity etc. into the Nigerian politics, leadership and administration, dashed the hope of Nigerian radical mission in transforming the country into a viable African continental force in politics, leadership and economic excellence and may probably not be recovered in the near future.

Recommendations

- i. Government shall ensure quality education through adequate funding and better welfare to citizens as logical avenue to infuse patriotism education in the citizenry.
- ii. Holistic transformation of Nigerian decay in political, economic, social, cultural, and religious artifacts to improve self-sacrifice, focus and patriotism amongst the citizens
- iii. To make teaching the teaching approachable and comprehensible the best brain shall only be allowed to teach the integrated courses/subjects of patriotism from the onset to an end.
- iv. Enacting effective policies that may promote good governance, transparency, discipline and eliminations of all unpatriotic acts that are hazardous to nation building.
- v. Build in all the citizens an awareness of patriotism and self-less service using all the available media platforms and equip them with the vision to serve their fatherland with love and loyalty through role-modalism.

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