PLACE OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION IN CURBING SECURITY CHALLENGES AND PROMOTING SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Security is a prerequisite requirement of socio-economic development. There will never be sustainable development without peace and security. One of the disturbing challenges facing Nigerian society is the security challenges. Nigeria is facing the challenges of Boko Haram insurgents, pipeline vandals, armed robbers, kidnappers and host of other security challenges facing the country. This paper is an attempt to highlight some of the ways through which Islamic education can help in addressing some of the security challenges in Nigeria for socio-economic development. In the paper, security challenges facing Nigeria and its causes are discussed. Islamic education and the aims and objectives of Islamic education are also discussed in the paper. Also discussed in the paper is the solution provided by Islamic education for curtailting security challenges in the country.

Keywords: Islamic education, security challenges, security and self-reliance.

INTRODUCTION

According to Ogunleye, Adewale, Alese and Ogunde, (2011) security means a condition in which people find themselves due to the measures put in place to safeguard and protect their lives and properties of people against any form of crime. It is a situation whereby people are free and secured to move freely from one place to another doing their normal daily life activities without threat to their lives and or property. In a secured environment, all measures are in place to provide protection to live and properties of the citizens of that particular society, so that people can live peacefully and happily, this will pave way for economic development. There will never be progress in a society that does not enjoy security.
According to Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro (2013) currently Nigeria is in serious security challenges. Nigerians are not safe in their houses, farmlands, on roads during their journeys for economic, social, medical and religious activities. Hence, national security is the major challenge facing the country which is doing serious damage to all aspect of life of Nigerians. Thousands of lives were lost to insecurity in Nigeria. Properties worth billions were also lost due to the same reason. Almost every day, the major headlines in the Nigerian conventional and non-conventional media are that of killing by armed-insurgents, bandits, armed-robbers, militia and other armed-carrying gang of criminals. This is happening in nearly all parts of the country.

According to Heidarizad, Kabiri, and Azarpanah (2013) Security in the life of human being is so important and necessary. Better life, technological advancement, socio-economic development, industrial revolution can only be achieved when there is security of lives and properties of the people. If a country is able to provide high level security, the people of this particular country will live a better, prosperous, peaceful and productive life. Gusau (2018) explaining the Islamic perspectives on security, mentioned that in Islam consider the life of human being both Muslims and non-Muslims as very important. That is why when somebody kills another person without any legal reason, the killer shall also be killed.

**Causes of security challenges in Nigeria**

Understanding the causes of insecurity is a starting point of ameliorating the menace of insecurity. Chukwuemeka and Onudugo (2009) pointed out that it is a well-known fact that Nigeria is surrounded with countless number of social ills. Different types of crimes are being committed every blessing day. It is widely believed that almost all these crimes are committed by youth that are jobless. Large numbers of Nigerian youth are living without a legal means of sustaining their lives and most of them uneducated. Some of these young, unemployed individuals commit one form of crime or another, just to sustain their lives. According to Ude (2010) the possibility of committing crime and other forms of ill-behavior is very high on youth that are jobless. In his opinion, Kingsley (2004) maintained that unemployed youth sometimes take illicit drugs to escape the psychological trauma associated with joblessness. Based on this discussion therefore, joblessness and the problems of unemployment being faced by the young men and women is what unfortunately forced them to committing one type of crime or the other.

Poverty is another causative agent to insecurity in this country, as Batchelder (1976) observed, “Poverty exists when the quantity of resources available to a person is less than some particular quantity of resources needed by that person”. There is poverty when people lack the means to satisfy their basic needs. These basic needs may be defined as narrowly as possible to include only those necessary for survival in the community. In Nigeria, it appears that poverty is largely responsible for the stagnation or simply a barrier to national development. Nwagbosa (2012) stressed that the inability of previous governments in Nigeria to solve the problem of abject poverty and youth unemployment is one of the major contributing factor to security challenges facing Nigeria.

Igbuzor (2011) observed, the insecurity bedeviling the country is directly connected to inability of government to discharge her duty of providing basic necessities of life to the citizenry. This gave birth to citizen who are seriously frustrated that can easily be incited to commit crime. Another cause of insecurity in Nigeria is the perception of inequality and marginalization by a group of people. This as opined by Onuoha (2011) a section of the Nigerian ethnic nationalities claimed that they are segregated and marginalized in political and economic affairs of the country. Hence, they employ the use of violence to register their perceived marginalization.

Salawu (2010) viewed ethnic and religious conflict as a main cause of insecurity in Nigeria. Nigeria as populous country is equally having different types of religions. The country is equally having hundreds of different ethnic groups. Most of these ethnic and religious groups hate one another. This hatred among the various ethnic and religious groups sometimes results to violent and deadly crises.
Another contributing factor to insecurity in Nigeria in the opinion of Hazen and Horner (2007) is the springy Nigerian borders. Movement to and from Nigeria is with very little control and vigilance. Because of this porous border, couple with fragile security system, arms and ammunitions enter easily into Nigeria from neighboring states. According to Edeko (2011) estimation revealed that of about eight million illegal weapons in West Africa, Nigeria housed over seventy percent. Migration of youths who are uneducated and jobless from rural areas to urban centres is also one of the causes of insecurity in Nigeria according to Onuoha (2011).

The Concept of Islamic education

Dauda (2002) stated that Islamic Education dates back to the time Prophet Adam (AS) was created. Islamic Education as seen by Abdullahi (1992) is not limited to the study and memorization of religious texts rather it includes all forms of useful knowledge like medicine, mathematics, geography, chemistry and the like. In his submission, Fafunwa (1974) stated that it was Islam that revived the human pursuit of science and it was through the Arabs (i.e. Muslim scholars) and not the Romans that the world achieved light and power through science.

Dauda (1994) explained that the Messenger of Allah (SAW) made a statement which categorically point to the period during which one should engage himself in the task of seeking knowledge. He said:

The search for knowledge begins from the cradle to the grave.
Transmitted by ibn Majah.

Islamic Education like most other forms of Education is centered on enabling individuals who acquire it become the kind of people an Islamic society desired. (Enoh, 2003). Islamic Education as aptly explained by Dauda (1994) teaches the Muslims that both this world and the hereafter are for them. Therefore, the aim of Islamic Education is for the person who acquire it to live happy in this world and enjoy eternal bliss in the hereafter. Allah (SWT) says:

Among the (mankind) are those who say: O, our Lord! Give us the best in this world and the best in the hereafter (paradise) and protect us from hell-fire” (Qur’an 2:201)

Furthermore, Allah (SWT) says:

And seek the home of the hereafter (paradise) with that, which Allah has given you, and do not forget your own share (of happiness) in this world, and do good to others as Allah has been good to you…… (Qur’an 28:77)

The rationale for Education of man revolves around the purpose of creation which means the assignment divinely decided for man. The assignment is to serve Allah. (Bidmos, 2003)

Solution to security challenges: the role of Islamic education

Part of the teachings of Islamic education is that Islam is a peaceful religion. According to Zaraboza (2007) there is relationship between the Arabic word Islam and another Arabic word salaam which means peace. Islamic education teaches that during the lifetime of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), he identified security of life and property as one of the major duties of the leaders. After the completion of the construction of Ka’bah (the house of Allah in Makkah) Prophet Ibrahim who built it together with his son Prophet Isma’il (AS), the first thing he did was to pray to almighty Allah to secure the town. Allah (SWT) says:

And when Abraham prayed: “O my Lord! Make this a place of security and provide those of its people that believe in Allah and the Last Day with fruits for sustenance,” Allah answered, “And I shall still provide him who disbelieves with the wherewithal for this short life, and then I
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shall drive him to the chastisement of the Fire; that is an evil end.”
(Qur’an 2:125)

Adagba, et al (2012) identified and stressed that unemployment and poverty among Nigerians, especially
the youths, negatively enticed the young men to commit crimes. Dogarawa (2006) pointed out that
Islamic education is very explicit about the position of self-reliance in Islam, it described as a reliable and
defendable tool of socio-economic development. The religion of Islam encourages Muslims to be self-
reliant, shun laziness and be very productive and contributive members of the society. The Prophet
Muhammad (SAW) says:

If one of you takes a rope (goes to a bush) and comes back with a bunch
of fire-wood on his back, sells it and have his problem thus solved by
Allah is better for him rather than begging people for alms whether or
nor they give him. (Bukhari and Muslim)

Allah (SWT) made all His Prophets self-reliant and to live on income they earned through hard work.
None of the Prophets was lazy, they engaged themselves into various kinds of businesses, trade and
labour. Allah (SWT) mentioned this fact in the glorious Qur’an where He says:

And the apostles whom We sent before thee were all (men) who ate food
and walked through the markets: We have made some of you as a trial
for others: will ye have patience? For Allah is One Who sees (all things).
(Qur’an 25:20)

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) himself did earn his living and sustained his family through hard labour
and trade. The Prophet (SAW) said:
Allah never sent a Prophet but he tended sheep. I used to tend sheep for
the people of Mecca in return for payment. (Bukhari)

Murder: Islamic education teaches that human blood is sacred; therefore it cannot be spilled without
justification. Killing of one soul without any legal reason is like killing the entire human being. Allah
(SWT) says:

…..If anyone slew a person - unless it be for murder or for spreading
mischief in the land - it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if
any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole
people…… (Qur’an 5:32)

In his farewell sermon, the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said:
Your lives and properties are forbidden to one another till you meet your
Lord on the day of resurrection……. One who kills a person under
covenant (The non-Muslims residing in an Islamic state) will not smell
the fragrance of paradise.

Islam teaches that whoever kills another person should be killed. Allah (SWT) says:

O ye who believe! the law of equality is prescribed to you in cases of
murder: the free for the free, the slave for the slave, the woman for the
woman. But if any remission is made by the brother of the slain, then
grant any reasonable demand, and compensate him with handsome
gratitude, this is a concession and a Mercy from your Lord. After this
whoever exceeds the limits shall be in grave penalty. (Qur’an 2:187)

Islam has prohibited murder because human life is sacred and cannot be taken except through a death
sentence handed down by a competent court. And the punishment for a murderer is that he should be
killed. Therefore, those Boko haram insurgents killing innocent people both Muslims and Christians are doing it not in the interest of Islam. Abdullahi Ibn Mas’ud reported that the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said:

The blood of a Muslim who testifies that there is no god but Allah and that I am Allah’s messenger may not be lawfully shed but for one of the three reasons: a married man who commits fornication; a life for a life; and one who turns away from his religion, and abandons the community (Bukhari 6878 and Mushin 1676)

This will no doubt serves as deterrent to others. Whoever think of killing someone and knows that he will be killed will undoubtedly think twice before committing such a heinous crime.

**Good governance:** Islamic education teaches that leaders who are unjust will not enjoy the bliss of paradise. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) is reported to have said:

There is none among the bondsmen who was entrusted with the affairs of his subjects and he died in such a state that he was dishonest in his dealings with over whom he ruled that the paradise is not forbidden for him. (Sahih Muslim, 261)

**Stealing:** to prevent people from stealing and secure peoples’ property, Islamic education teach that stealing is a crime which attracts stiffer penalty. Allah (SW) says:

As to the thief, male or female, cut off his or her hands” (Qur’an 5:38)

**Armed-robbery:** Islamic education teaches that the crime of hirabah includes armed robbery, using force to enter into people’s houses, or business premises with weapons harassing and stealing from them. In Islamic criminal law, armed robbery is the same with waging war against Allah. The punishment ranges from amputation to execution, depending on the charges and evidence before the court. The holy Qur’an states that:

The punishment of those who wage war against Allah and His Messenger, and strive with might for mischief through the land is execution or crucifixion, or cutting of hands and feet from opposite sides, or exile from the land… (Qur’an 5:33-34)

**Conclusion**

It is impossible to achieve National security and socio-economic development when youth are unemployed and living in poverty. Islam encourages self-reliance, good governance, and crime-free society. The paper made it very lucid that Islamic education is one of the weapons of fighting insecurity.

**Recommendations**

In view of the negative consequences of insecurity in Nigeria, this paper, recommends that:

1. The government needs to commit more resources to educational sector, so that more and more people will be educated in both western and religious education.
2. Islamic scholars should continue to enlighten the Muslim ummah on the dangers of committing crimes such as stealing, armed-robbery etc in this world and the hereafter.
3. Muslim organizations should provide financial and technical support to schools so that the schools can function well in providing education for the people.
4. The generality of the Muslims especially well-to-do should establish schools where children of the poor can be enrolled and educated for free.
5. Lazy Nigerian youth should understand that Islam despised laziness and Islam encourages self-reliance hence, they should take note of this and comply.
References