
NATIONAL INTEGRATION: IT'S IMPLICATION'S FOR NIGERIAN EDUCATION

Mbagwu, Justine Ukaeju (Ph.D)

Department of Educational Foundations, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, PortHarcourt, Nigeria

Ogadima, Amadi Jeremiah (Ph.D)

Department of Educational Foundations, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education Port'Harcourt, Nigeria

ABSTRACT

National integration in many circumstances has been considered as the panacea for national development for any given society. The above means that for a meaningful and peaceful co-existence that is expected to enhance the rapid development of any society, every component part of the society must come together and live in harmony. To achieve a democratic setting in a society, all regions, sections, or groups must be carried along in the scheme of affairs. The paper discusses what National integration is all about and its significance in a society. It goes further to reveal the role of education in making national integration a reality. In doing this the analytical method of investigation was employed to arrive at the desired result.

Key Words: National, Integration, Implication, Education.

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a nation of many ethnic groups. According to scholars and writers, the number of ethnic groups ranged between 350 and 400, With the Hausa, Yoruba and Ibo group dominating. To some, the number runs parallel with their various languages and dialects. It should be of note that language and ethnicity may not be viewed as the only challenges of the country (Nigeria), as Okonjo-Iweala (2018) did observe. That the country is bedeviled by other complexities arising from religion, history, and other aspects of national life. The country alongside is dominated by three main religions alongside other minor religions; these are Christianity, Islam and the various traditional religious beliefs. While some practice Christianity (mostly in the south), the Islamic religion dominates in the Northern part of the country, and the Traditional African religious practices still rife in many other parts of both regions.

The above situation tends to make one justify the country as a complex one. Complexity on the ground that it requires adequate measures to harmonize these people of different ethnic groups, languages, religions and so on to live as one nation, and enhance peaceful co-existence. The obvious truth is that when each group or section is allowed to go its way against the national goal, there is bound to be reaction, and maybe, "things", in the language of Chinua Achebe would, will definitely "Fall Apart". It was on this wisdom that the Nigeria's founding fathers

anchored the former national anthem on national unity and integration, believing that; “though tongue and tribe may differ but in brotherhood we stand...” (Abernethy, 1969:255).

Indeed it should be clearly stated that national integration will be achieved speedily when the spirit of nation-hood overrides that of ethnicity or region. On the contrary, when we allow our personal sentiments, tribes, regions take the lead above national interest; when we sacrifice the pride meant for our nation on the altar of our individual ethnic groups and tribes, then the nation is bound to collapse and national integration will be a mirage.

Consequent to the above analyses, education stands as a very viable instrument to enhance national integration. As we rightly pointed, nationhood starts from ones loyalty to his/her nation, and holding to a high esteem that which will enhance its growth more and above his/her personal or tribal interest. To achieve state has much to do with the individual’ mind-set or character development, and that is where education comes into play. Sharma (2007: 374) observed that, education has been in the business of “character building process, because without this the future of the nation will always remain dark”. This strongly agrees the fact that education takes up the role of character-molding, in which case the individual’s perspectives are tailored towards the good and growth of his nation above his personal needs. This further goes on to advise that our educational system hinging on this vital role should be modified to suit the demands of the nation. The courses and disciplines in the curriculum must be carefully selected to run parallel with our national cum educational objectives, to impart optimum knowledge that will result to character development among the citizens.

It is in the light of the fore-going that, Swami Dayan in Sharma (2007) commenting on the Indian education, insisted upon reforming the education system to suit the educational pattern that existed in ancient times, to infuse the spirit of nationalism in the people. Based on the above, the Annie Besant’s educational plan that was put in place which was said, recorded positive results as it touched the problems of contemporary India, and instilled the spirit of nationalism among the Indians. This follows that if the Nigerian education well-tailored is bound to yield much influence in making National integration a reality.

Conceptual Analysis

This section, will be analyzing the following concepts for a better understanding of the issues.

- National Integration
- Implication
- Education

National Integration

To comprehend fully the concept of national integration as it appears in this section, we must first of all dissect the concept “national’

National or Nationality is taken from the term 'nation'. Sharma defined nation as "that defined group which lives in an area with clearly defined geographical boundaries, united by common traditions, common interests and common sentiments, possessing a desire for unity and common political ambitions." (2007:372). This view of what nation stands for is not different from the position of Anderson who in Haralambos & Holborn (2008), added that the term nation are characterized by the following; imagined, limited, and sovereign.

Anderson argued that for an entity to be viewed as a Nation, such entity should be made up of the above ingredients.

- **Imagine:** It is imagined as most of its members never meet one another or know one another yet they feel that they all belong to one national community.
- **Limited:** A nation according to Anderson is limited as it includes some people who are said to be members and excludes others who are not. The point to be made is that no nation can claim to be made up of all humanity; it is limited.
- **Sovereign:** Every entity recognized as a nation is independent on its own in the word of it. This talks about the independence and self-government of the people which is the focus of every nation.

The above analyses devised by Anderson in this regard, to an extent concretizes what a nation stands for even though certain issues are still left to be revealed. When we view the concept of a nation in the eyes of Sharma as stated earlier we may tend to be journeying in a smooth path that may lead us to confusion at the end. The reason is that some nations are multi-lingual, and many show great cultural and ethnic diversity. While many more exhibits different ideologies. This means that the above criteria devised still have issues. On that note, it becomes difficult to have a watertight definition of a nation. However, Ozumba, Eteng, and Okon (2012) stressed that any interpretation that must find a good landing in guarantee what a nation stand for should include among others; a common territory, common myths and historical memories, common economy and political affiliation. Obviously, the above position may to an extent, attract an acceptable view of the people's view of the concept of a nation, however, the fact remains that, living in the same territory and under the same government or even sharing economic and legal systems, may somehow fail to blend different communities into one nation. The situation of Canada, Belgium, and Czechoslovakia should be cited as case study in this regard (Ozumba, et al 2012). To devise an acceptable definition of a nation, Rupert Emerson in Ozumba et al (2012:110) submitted that; "the nation is a community of people who feel that they belong together in the double sense that they share deeply significant elements of a common heritage and that they have a common destiny for the future". Having to an extent perceived what nation stands for, we shall go further to discuss what the term "national" means.

National: The term national in the present usage should be seen as that which has to do with the entire nation. These are issues concerning every member of a nation and are viewed as issues of national interest. It is in this regard that we talk of National policy on education, meaning policies in the education sector that cut-across the entire nation. In the same vein we talk of National economic program, when it has to do with issues concerning the economy of the nation. While Issues that deals with sports of the entire nation are tagged as national sports programs.

The emphasis here is that the term, “national” has dealings with issues of the entire nation (national issues or matters). Succinctly put; national matters are issues that affect every member of the nation, the benefits as well as the challenges are owned by all.

It is on this backdrop that issues pertaining to the entire nation should be paramount to every individual to keep the nation on the fore-front. This was the spirit behind the nationalist movements and among the nationalist leaders. It is in line of the above that it becomes pertinent for an individual to express loyalty to his/her nation to enhance national interest. In which case, Prof. Oroka identified certain national problems in the case of Nigeria, as in the area of; election irregularity, laxity among the leaders, and corruption topping the list. The above mentioned challenges among others have to a great extent marred the development of the country. For instance, when a free and fair election is allowed, the right candidates will be chosen and made to occupy the leadership positions. This will mean, giving the opportunity to the right candidates to lead, and of course; when a square peg is fixed in a round hole, it becomes easy to deliver as is in the case of the right people to deliver and take the country to a better height. That an attempt to disrupt the process will result to having the wrong elements into the political system. Buttressing this point, Umukoro in Oroka (2010:3) stated that, “the freer and fairer the elections, the higher the level of development; while the less free and (less) fair the elections, the lower the level of development”.

Corruption is another bane that has retarded national development in any giving society. This is the case in Nigeria. Our national leaders have been accused of being corrupt that has resulted to the slow rate of economic development experienced in the country. Wole Soyinka, the Nobel Laureate is cited to have argued that; “Nigerian Leaders do not create or produce wealth. They only destroy and consume. This makes them to be ‘guilty of destructive one-sidedness” (Oroka, 2010:3).

The argument of Soyinka in this regard is not different from that of Chinua Achebe who categorically stated that the problem of Nigeria is our leaders, and their corrupt practices. (Achebe, 2012). A nation widely characterized by corrupt practices will be bereft of the various social amenities they ought to have enjoyed. Such social amenities as: electricity, good roads, clean water, better educational facilities, and many others. Indeed, it takes corruption free leaders to look inward to the needs of the society and do the needful as required of them. For the fact that leadership involve sacrifice and selflessness, our national leaders should do what it takes to add value to society, and as Ekwueme and Nsirim (2010) suggested that such gesture will translate to building a system that is capable of sustaining the present and future generations.

Integration: The concept of integration seems to run side by side with that of unity. The point is that neither integration, nor unity exists automatically. Unity or integration does not occur by virtue of the people living in the same geographical area, speaking the same language, or having common historical background as we have identified nation to be, but that integration or unity is enhanced when there is that consciousness of oneness in the mind of the individuals in the nation. Sharma (2007) made this point clearer when he insists that the true reality of integration or unity is established when emotional integration is established. He posits that to access an

effective national integration and unity is a function of emotional integration which must be deduced from the members' Psychology. One can speak of any of the two concepts (integration and unity), when the "individuals feel related to and concerned with each other (Sharma, 2007:380).

Abernethy (1969) advanced a similar argument to what integration stands for when he stated that the concept can come into play when individuals in a particular community imbibe the feeling of oneness and understand that their values and institutions are worth preserving. Indeed, he is of the opinion that such strong belief will not give room for conflict that is tantamount to causing friction or war. The above argument translates that integration can exist in the midst of divergent language, religion, tribe and many more.

National integration by the fore-going stands to mean the various groups in a nation coming together as one entity dropping their differences in language, tribe, religion, culture, etc. It is in harmony with this view that Agi in Ozumba et al (ed) (2012) listed the following as the process by which national integration can freely be enhanced;

- Presence of common values, beliefs and attitudes among the people,
- An effective leaders capable of eradicating any evil occurrence,
- Accepting decisions, tolerance, accommodating one another and views, compromise, respecting leader, and those in authority and various institutions in the society,
- Instituting economic well-being that enables individuals and groups to enhance the standard of living.

National integration in Nigeria's context is of little significance despite the various steps put in place by the National government. In fact scholars of various times have tried to asses if the nation's integrative tendencies are more proactive when compared to the various actions undertaken by the leaders that seem to disintegrate the people.

In her bid to institute national integration in Nigeria, the federal government of Nigeria has carried out several programs in the country. Some of these are;

- The National Youth Service Corp (NYSC) created by Decree No. 24 of May, 1973.
- The Nigerian University Games Association (NUGA) – 1966
- The West African University Games (WAUG) – 1965.
- The Federal Character Principle, enshrined in the 1979 Constitution.
- The Revenue Sharing Formula: aimed at addressing the violence in the oil-rich Niger delta of Nigeria.

Onifade & Imhonopi (2013) added that the unification of the National policy on Tertiary Education carried out by the federal government of Nigeria is another step towards re-instating national integration and unity in the country.

Against these programmes aimed at integrating the various regions and people of Nigerian as one, several incidents happening in the country both in the past and contemporary times thwart our dream of achieving a “one Nigeria”. A clear indication of the existence of tribalism and nepotism mostly among the leaders has corrupted the said integrative process devised by leaders of leaders of different regimes and administrations. This prompted the position of Abernethy who concludes that “In Nigeria, however, there is no room for doubt, the evidence for disintegration, even in the short run, is all too compelling”. (1969:254). Pegging his point on the military coup of January 1966, and the massacre of the Ibos living in the north that began in May 1966 and continued intermittently throughout the year, he identified this negative incident as hallmarks of disintegration in the country.

One may be tempted to justify the various incidents mentioned above as things that happened in the dark, when the people are clouded by ignorance. Some even say that, all that took place in the early period of the birth of the nation-Nigeria. Yet in contemporary times series of more heinous events have frequently experienced which also construed that integration in Nigeria can only exist in theory, ‘pen and paper’, rather than in practice. For instance, the allocation of social amenities in the country has been argued by many as lopsided; one part of the country being highly favored over others. In the political realm, appointment of officers and men into high ranking and vital positions are not evenly distributed to reflect our goal of re-instating national integration we yearn for in the country. Any leader at the top tends to favor people from his/her tribe, region or language in the appointment of position of authorities to work with his/her administration. A situation of this sort can only alienate loyalty, patriotism and confraternity which are all ingredients of national integration.

It is no gain-saying to categorically state here that national integration can only thrive in a smooth play-ground where no section or part of the country is aggrieved, especially in that which ought to be for the common good of the people. It is on this note that Agi in Ozumba et al advised that for national integration to thrive in Nigeria “the conduct of its affairs shall be carried out in such a manner as to reflect the federal character of Nigeria and the need to promote national unity, and also to command national loyalty thereby ensuring that there shall be no predominance of persons from few states (regions) or ethnic group...” (2012:119-120).

The complexity of Nigeria, a term which for the purpose of this paper stands as fit to describe Nigeria deserves to be treated with the highest degree of caution to achieve national integration. A population of about 190 million people, 350 ethnic groups, and different languages and dialects, though having the English Language as the major means of communication, should be integrated to enhance optimum productivity nationally (Okonjo Iweala, 2018). What this means is that, to pacify the various sections of the people good governance should play an essential role, as this stands as the panacea for national integration. A point made clearer by Shaaba (2010:16) citing Bitrus Ghandi that;

Good governance is all inclusive of anything that promotes public good and growth which are achieved by the ability of the government to adhere to the principle of accountability to the people, access to

information by the people, transparency in decision making and rules of procedural fairness.

Even though the various vital ingredients suggested here by Bitrus may not all be noticed in the case of Nigeria, yet we cannot debunk the fact that most of these basic issues are far-fetched among our leaders, which has made the crusade for national integration a mirage. Having made a remarkable input in conceptualizing National integration, what then is education, and what part should education play in achieving national integration in the Nigerian society?

Education: To deduce a working definition of education, it will be pertinent to tackle it from its etymological or root meaning. The Latin word 'Educatum' means to train. According to Sharma (2007: 2), 'E' means from inside and 'Duco' means to draw out, to lead out or to bring up". By the foregoing, education stands to draw the best from within you.

Further, education should be seen as a process which is tailored to bring out the latent qualities inside of you with the aim to make you useful in the society. John Dewey asserts that the etymological meaning of education as a process of leading, of bringing up, is tailored to; "shaping, forming, molding activity. That is, a shaping into, the standard form of social activities". To this effect, Dewey considered education as a fostering, a nurturing, and a cultivating process. In his words; "all of these words mean that it implies attention to the conditions of growth" (1916:10).

The reality of the above assertion can be established on the ground that each individual is born with peculiar innate tendencies inside him. Undertaking the process of education brings out those vital values in him. It is this understanding that the ancient Greek philosopher-Socrates was seen as acting the role of a midwife to his audience. He effectively undertook this role through his inductive method, otherwise known as the Socratic Method.

Like many other disciplines, education has been viewed using different parameters and through various angles, but which-ever way we should explain education to mean the Centre point is that it involves the acquisition of knowledge and the learning of skills. Although the process of imparting these knowledge and skills may either be carried out in an intentional or unintentional, formal or informal setting. But which-ever way it goes; when the knowledge and skills are imparted the process can be seen as education. Base on the above, Nduka (1964) posits that education should be regarded as the process of transmitting the people's culture (at least part), from one generation to the next. By this, it should be stated that the adult, the learners, and the content to be learnt, are said to be involved in the education process. The content in the education as posit by Nduka are those values acceptable to that society. They are the essentials of the society that are transmitted to the younger generation.

Akinpelu (1981) in turn argued that though it seemed to be right that the education process guarantee primarily the development of knowledge and skills in the individual for his economic and social well-being, yet these tools when used, contribute to the welfare of not only his immediate family, but also to the community, and the larger society. This makes the value

received to have both personal and social significance. The above analogy translates that education is vital to both individuals and the larger society. In fact, it is for this reason that scholars in many instances have subscribed to the view that education is the bedrock for societal development.

Plato, the ancient Greek educational philosopher, due to the place of education in the society, not only suggested that the process should not only be accessible to the male and the female folks, but that education should be made free in the society. In his opinion, when education is made free for all, it will give everyone access to attain it in the society. And as expected, it will bring out in every one their individual potentials to contribute meaningfully to the development of the society. Plato believed that no one is created indolent or to be idle; everyone through the level of education his head can take him to, has something to offer.

Many nations, (both developed and the developing ones) have keyed into this doctrine, making education a vital instrument for national development. In Britain, for instance, free compulsory education was made to take off in 1870, powered by the Foster's Education Act of 1870. Though it was targeted for children at the elementary level, but with the Fisher Education Act of 1918, the state extended being responsible for the secondary education and the universities. Other tertiary institutions also received a boost to accommodate these graduates of the secondary schools and those prepared to further their studies (Haralambos & Holdborn, 2008). These efforts taken by the British nation in this direction was propelled by their knowledge of the roles of education in a society.

To guide against wrong usage and misconception of the term, R. S. Peters argued that to speak of education process means that something worthwhile is being or has being intentionally transmitted into the individual in a morally acceptable manner. He strongly contended that it would be a logical contradiction to speak of an individual as being educated but has not changed for the better (Peters, 1966). The position of Peters about education is that its process or activities must yield positive outcomes especially as it has to do with change in behavior and conformity with the societal norms and values.

Akinpelu cited in Mbagwu & Igbegiri (2019:309) summed up the educational process as must involve the following;

1. A conscious effort to bring about a desirable change;
2. A change that is intentional, deliberate and purposeful
3. Knowledge and understanding; and
4. A method of transmission that is morally acceptable.

The analyses of R. S. Peters on what education stands for also illustrates the fact that it is expected to reform the individual's character to adapt to the acceptable societal norms and values. This construes the function of education on the socialization of the individual. Based on this Peters warned that education should not be understood as just knowing a particular subject or discipline, "for 'education' cannot be tied down in this way to a specialized competence" (Peters 1966:32), but should be understood as that which has to do with the entire being; his character and attitude. No doubt, the above view is in line with that of Immanuel Kant when he

postulated that man can only become man by education. That man is merely what education makes of him (Churton, 1988). According to Churton, Kant suggested that education brings our nature a step nearer perfection, that the uncultivated man is crude and unruly. He insists that “through education human nature will be continually improved, and brought to such a condition as is worthy of the nature of man” (1988:8).

The above analyses to a large extent unveil the true position of education in the life of the individual and the society. And as it is, education to any individual or the society cannot be overemphasized. To any given society an effective education undertakes the following roles;

- National Development;
- Moral Development;
- Political/National Consciousness;
- Man-power Development; as well as
- National Integration; which is the focus of this paper.

Education and National Integration

So far, the paper have to an extent expatiated the concept of national integration and also what Education stands for. As regards the focus of this discussion, we shall proceed to examine the impact of education on National integration. In doing this, much effort will be done to relate the study to the Nigerian situation. No doubt, the commitment of education to establish national development is universal. However, the disparity is in their educational strength, and the effort advanced by various nations to enhance national integration.

As was clearly stated, among the vital roles undertaken by education is that of national integration. In the Nigerian situation, Abernethy (1969) made a case that the expansion of education by the colonial masters in Nigeria made a positive impact on both the vertical and horizontal plane in national integration. The action was occasioned by the British administrative pattern of dividing the country into regions. Consequent upon this division, there were several dichotomies in the areas of religion, culture, politics, ethnicity, language, and other issues that posed as barriers to the entire national life of the country-Nigeria. The option of expanding Western education went a long way in yielding a positive outcome on the traditional society. According to Abernethy, the venture was able to raise western-oriented indigenous elites whose outlook was quite different from that of the masses. In line with the above, people began to see reason why they should relate with one another, despite their individual tribes, religions, and other inclinations. When this gesture seemed to be yielding fruit, schools were spread to other parts of the regions, and down to the nooks and crannies of the country. The above project was undertaken in view of the essentials of education.

Away from the above, scholars have argued extensively that nation builders solidly rely on the efficacy of education to bring about effective national integration. They, the nation-builders draw their reasons from the power and influence which the education they have acquired has on them. Many of them through their education have a national outlook. Hence, they argued that if education is made available to all, it will guarantee similar results. Despite how convincing this point may look, the educational content of a particular nation must be considered. It should be

known that the curriculum content of the education expected to be used as a tool for integration should be tailored to the needs of the people. Again, the vehicle to be used in delivering the content should also be examined. As Immanuel Kant rightly said, “It is through good education that all the good in the world arises” (Churton, 1988:15). If the assertion of Kant should be granted, the question that should be asked is this; how viable is the education system of Nigeria, and how fortified is it? Is it able to enhance national development?

Osokoya did not mince words when he stated that, “Nigeria’s education has failed to usher in the desired expansion of available facilities and resources both quantitatively and qualitatively so as to produce a better and greater nation” (2008:95). He made this assertion that despite the massive educational expansion going on in the world, Nigeria is still lagging in its current educational process. Considering the view of Osokoya, one will be tempted to conclude that our chase for national integration will remain far-fetched. The reason is that many are of the opinion that the present educational institutions in Nigeria are bedeviled with series of obstacles that will adversely affect its performance. Some of these challenges as made known by writers and scholars are; shortage of teaching and non-teaching personnel in the schools, poor funding, lack of technical equipment, lack of infrastructure, lack of commitment by the teachers, the students, and the parents. Alongside these are; poor administration and planning, and high level of corruption, and many other challenges.

The reason for the existence of these challenges that have roped the effective performance of the Nigeria’s education system is because, both the leaders and the followers are yet to ‘see’ the importance of education in a complex nation like ours. Educational issues have been treated with levity, and the effect of it all is what we have in Nigeria today as an education system. The enticing and charming goals of education in Nigeria did not make any difference in bringing us to the right footing, because it is not being pursued vigorously. All that is drawn which the education system is expected to achieve, including national integration has virtually become a myth. It will be pertinent at this point to take a critical look at the goals of education in Nigeria, as it may be applicable to other societies.

The National Policy on Education outlined the following goals to be achieved by the education system in Nigeria. These are;

- a. Development of the: Individual into a morally sound, patriotic and effective citizen;
- b. Total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world;
- c. Provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens at all levels of education, within and outside the formal school system;
- d. Inculcation of national consciousness, values and national unity; and
- e. Development of appropriate skills, mental, physical and social abilities and competencies to empower the individual to live in and contribute positively to the society (FRN, 2004:20).

No doubt, an analytical view of the above speaks well as the education system is mandated to carry out the above vital roles relevant to achieving our national objectives; especially in the area

of national integration. In fact item 'b', 'c' and 'd' specifically direct its focus on integrating the individuals into one nation. The indelible question that will continue to surface is that, how can these dreams come true when the system is hampered by numerous huddles that have hold down its effective performance?

For the total integration of the individual into the immediate community, the Nigerian society and the world, as stipulated in the item 'b', one begins to doubt its effectiveness in a spongy education system like ours. Though Abernethy (1969) did argued that the school can provide more than academic knowledge, but through its recruitment policies, can bring together members of different groups, making it, the school becomes a miniature nation by instilling cooperative habits among a diverse student body. This point may actually hold water, but it should be added that for the school to deliver, the school environment should be devoid of certain evils that tend to scare away people from other tribes and culture. What this translates is that our school environment/community of all levels should be structured to accommodate all people despite their tribe, culture, religion and linguistic differences. Everyone should be made to live in harmony with one another and possibly be treated well.

On the issue of provision of equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all citizens, great educators and scholars have consented that this will go a long way in projecting national integration. However, the question that puzzles every concerned Nigerian is this; has the situation in Nigeria allowed for equal access to qualitative educational opportunities for all her citizens at every level? Indeed, it is only an answer in the affirmative direction that can make this point clear. What this argument means is that until qualitative educational opportunities become accessible to all citizens of the country despite their regions, religion, tribes, languages and political differences, national integration in Nigeria will continue to be a difficult task. The issue is this, granted that an effective education has been accepted as a major tool for national integration, it means that access to every one member of the country to gain qualitative education will make him part of the country. Again, such qualitative education received will also transform the individual, and create in him a perception in relating with not only members of his tribe but others outside his region.

The above may be the opinion of Immanuel Kant when he opined that man's greatest problem is the problem of education. To him, "Insight depends on education, and education in its turn depends on insight." (Churton, 1988:11).

Another goal aimed by the Nigerian education to achieve which is in line with national integration is that of "the inculcation of national consciousness, values and national unity". As we did discuss extensively above, in this section we should make the assertion that the ability of the education system in Nigeria to guarantee national consciousness values and national unity will automatically assure national integration. The reason is that national consciousness national unity, and national integration are all synonymous, it's just a matter of nomenclature. Granted that an effective education system can guarantee the above, the process should be that the educational and curriculum experts should draft the kind of curriculum that will take cognizance of this need. It is obvious that subjects like, civic education, social studies, political education

and other related disciplines will go a long way in inculcating peace, unity and good neighborliness among the learners in the school system. Alongside with making these vital subjects in our primary and secondary schools, there should be a proactive national orientation on the need for national unity and integration. By so doing, our education can truly function as a vital tool for national unity and integration.

Conclusion

The paper centered on the impact of Nigerian education on national integration, in which case, the relevant concepts were analyzed. The position of the paper is in the affirmative, that no doubt, an effective education system will surely establish national integration. However, in the case of Nigeria, much is needed to be put in place to enable the education system to perform optimally.

The paper also revealed that national integration is a must for the Nigerian society considering its nature of diverse regions, ethnic groups, languages, religions and cultural disparity, mostly engineered by the early colonial masters. Consequent upon the above, it is deduced that a viable educational system stands as a basic tool to integrate the entire people as one entity. Hence, there is need for the necessary authority to uplift the standard of the present education system in Nigeria. This course will also bring the educational goals enshrined in the National policy on education into reality.

Against the position of this paper, some scholars have proposed devised the argument that education in most cases can bring about disintegration in a nation. The reason according to these fellows is that when educational institutions or facilities are not equitably distributed, it can cause disaffection. In which case, a particular group or region not favored is likely to fight or work against the other. According to this school of thought, it may even make them withdraw their loyalty to the national body.

The point to be made here is that to enhance national integration in Nigeria or in any nation of the world, not only the educational institutions and facilities should be evenly distributed, but everyone or region should have a taste of the national cake. No doubt, achieving this will mean achieving national integration.

Suggestions

Most of the suggestions made in this section have been articulated in the paper. However, for the purpose of itemizing them the paper put forth the following;

- Education in Nigeria should be uplifted to meet with the global trend of technology that is invoked.
- Quality education should be entrenched in Nigeria and should be made virtually free for everyone, mostly at the primary and secondary levels.
- Educational institutions and facilities should alongside with other social amenities in Nigeria be evenly distributed; no section or region should be marginalized.
- Subjects and programs relevant to our national unity and integration should be re-instated and be captured in the curriculum content.
- Priority should be given to the education section in our national budgets recognizing its importance in national integration.
- There should be a set educational plan that should be evaluated periodically based on the present needs of the people.
- The teachers/instructors in the education business should be attended to, in terms of periodic training and re-training, remuneration, and other incentives that will boost their morale in putting in their best. The aim of this point is anchored on the fact that no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers. Meaning that; high level teaching man-power, will mean, high level of educational standard and vice-versa.

References

- Abernethy, D. B. (1969). *The political dilemma of popular education- An African case: California*, Stanford University press.
- Achebe, C. (2012). *There was a country: A personal history of Biafra*: London, Penguin Group publishers.
- Akinpelu, J. A. (1981). *An introduction to philosophy of education*. Ile-Ife, Macmillan publishers.
- Churton, A. (1988) (Translator). *Education: by Immanuel Kant: USA*. University of Michigan Press.
- Dewey, J. (1916). *Democracy and education*: New York, the free press Macmillan publishing co. Inc.
- Ekwueme, E. G. & Nsirim, K. E. (2010). Quality leadership for the transformation of the Nigerian society: *The role of philosophy of education Nigerian Journal of Educational Philosophy*. Vol. 1, No. 1: The relevance of philosophy of education.
- Federal Government of Nigeria (FGN) (2014). *National policy on education (6th edition) Abuja, Nigerian educational research & development council*.
- Haralambos, M. & Holborn, M. (2008). *Sociology: Themes and perspectives*. London, Harper Collins Publishers.
- Mbagwu, J. U., & Igbegiri, D. C. (2019). Philosophy of education and national development: The nexus. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*. 12(3), 306-316. Retrieved: from <http://www.ij sre.com>.
- Nduka, O. (1964). *Western Education and the Nigerian cultural background*: Ibadan, University Press. Ltd.
- Okonjo-Iweala, N. (2018). *Fighting corruption is dangerous: The story behind the headlines*: London, The MIT press.
- Onfiade, C. A. & Imhonopi, D. (2013). Towards national integration in Nigeria. Jumping the Hurdles. Retrieved: Researchgate.net/publication/307920172-Towards-National-Integration-in-Nigeria-Jumping-the-Huddles.
- Oroka, O. (2010). The relevance of philosophy of education: *Nigerian Journal of Educational Philosophy* Vol. 1 No. 1, 2010.

- Osokoya, I. O. (2008). *Contemporary issues in educational history and policy in Nigeria Ibadan*, Laurel Educational Publishers.
- Ozumba, G. O., Eteng, F. O. & Okon, M. (2012). *Nigeria: Citizenship education: Ariaria-Aba*, AAU VITALIS Book Company.
- Peters, R. S. (1966). *Ethics and education*: London, George Allen & Unwin.
- Shaaba, M. M. (2010). The relevance of philosophy of education to good governance: *Nigerian Journal of Educational Philosophy*. Vol. 2, No. 1, ISSN 0794-0114.
- Sharma, Y. K. (2007). *Sociological philosophy of education*: New Delhi, Kanishka publishers, Distributors.