

Role of Social Studies in Mobilizing Nigerians for Global Citizenship

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Abstract: *The thrust of this paper is focused on the role of constitution and Social Studies in mobilization of Nigerian for global citizenship. The paper examined the general concept of constitution. It had it that constitution is the fundamental and organic law of a nation or state that establishes the institutions and apparatus of government, defines the scope of government sovereign powers and guarantee individual civil rights and civil liberties. And that Social Studies is an integrated course which enables human beings to participate effectively and rationally in the affairs of their local, national and international communities in a manner that will make the overall global society a better place than they met it. The paper also discussed that citizen is a bonafide or legal member of a country who gives his loyalty to such and expects protection from it. It is a term used to refer to someone or a person, who is a legal member of a particular country he or she owe allegiance to and enjoy the full and political rights as entrenched in the constitution. The paper maintained that the gateway to global citizenship is the development of responsive and responsible citizenship of international recognition, implying that the mobilization of Nigerians towards global citizenship will be easily achieved when the drive for national integration of mind, values, attitude and philosophies of the citizens has been achieved as it is easier to mobilize people of like minds and philosophy as well as peace loving individuals than militant and unstable minded individuals. The uniqueness of constitution and Social Studies education therefore encourage the teaching of peace education, intercultural studies and social interaction skills in order to contribute worthily to the growth of the responsible citizens that can prepare them for global citizenship. It was recommended that the condition under which social justice and respect for the obligations arising from the treaties and other sources of constitution can be maintained in order to promote progress and better standard of life.*

Keywords: *Social Studies and Global Citizenship*

I. Introduction

The present state of the Nigerian nation calls for conscious and concerted efforts towards the cultivation of global citizens. It appears that the increasing level of lawlessness and undemocratic practices have constitute serious setback to the attainment and sustainability of democratic structures in Nigeria. There is neglect of civil duties and national interest by some of the citizens. And some other Nigerian citizens demonstrate intolerance and disrespect to the rule of law as enshrined in the constitution. Explaining further, Akinjide (2006) reported a world bank finding that Nigeria scored less than 5% in a scale that determined the extent to which the citizen abide by the constitution of the land.

Hornby (2000) defined constitution as the fundamental and organic law of a nation or state that establishes the institutions and apparatus of government, defines the scope of government sovereign powers and guarantee individual civil rights and civil liberties. In addition, Obi (2004) presented constitution as an instrument of law. It is a guide through ethical moral standards is upheld. Against this backdrop, this paper considers the constitution as the hallmark upon which the government of every country operates. Constitution here should be seen as the pivot at which the wheel of every country's administration operates and a guiding principles of citizens actions and behavioural pattern. Indeed it is a basic requirement for the development of responsible citizens. No country in the world today operates without a constitution especially in democracies as without the constitution, there would be no laws, rules and regulations to adhere to by both the government and the governed, hence a state of anarchy.

In the face of anarchy, the prevailing circumstances will be lawlessness and then the possibilities of building or developing a responsible citizen becomes slim if not impossible. Under this situation, the desire for global citizenship mobilization may tend to be defeated; hence the significance of the constitution in refining and reforming the citizenry especially when the constitution is used and regarded as what the Bible is to Christians and the Koran to the Muslims.

The Nigeria nation is not an exception in the use of the constitution in governance and as a cardinal instrument for citizen's conduct, no wonder there have been stages of constitutional development in Nigeria right from the colonial period all in an attempt to produce a workable constitution in Nigeria that can define in

earnest the powers, functions and limitations of government without undermining the rights, duties and obligations of the citizens.

The adherence to the constitutional provisions by the citizens by way of performing their duties and obligations in return for the rights enjoyed creates equilibrium and hence paving the way for national integration and eventual national recognition of the citizens by the government based on proving themselves responsible citizens in view of their adherence to the constitution. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that have since been developed right from time precisely 1922 during the colonial era triggered up the desire for global citizenship mobilization with its inherent features. The elective principles as 'contained in the constitution tagged the Sir Hugh Clifford constitution of 1922 paved ways for participation of citizens in political activities in Nigeria with the formation of political parties such as the Nigeria National Democratic Party (NNDP). This circumstance opened the way for international recognition of some Nigerian citizens due to their efforts in the struggles for self-government.

Similarly, the Sir Bourdillion constitution of 1939 came and gone, the Sir 'Arthur Richard constitution of 1946, the Macpherson constitution of 1951, the Sir Oliver Lyttleton constitution of 1954, the independence constitution of 1960, the republican constitution of 1963 down to the 1999 constitution as amended in 2011 are the series of enacted and operated in Nigeria which give a sense of belonging to Nigerians (especially in their struggle for political independence and eventual self-rule. All of these constitutions have roles to play in the development and mobilization of Nigerians towards global citizenship based on the inherent features or provisions.

II. Concept Of Social Studies

Social Studies, according to Adeyemi (2000:253) is "an integrated course which enables human beings to participate effectively and rationally in the affairs of their local, national and international communities in a manner that will make the overall global society a better place than they met it". Social studies is an integrated study of social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence and help young people to develop the ability to make informed and reasonable decisions as citizens of diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world in view of making it global community, (NCSS, 1992). In addition, Mezieobi (2010) is of the view that Social Studies have the capacity of projecting the spirit of national integration which is primarily for national development. Oyibe and Mbang (2013) stated that Social studies is the subject that equips the youths with skills necessary for solving personal and the world related problems. This implies that the goal of Social studies purely revolves around effective citizenship education, education for cultural integration, sustainable living and globalization. Social studies in its eclectic subject nature will enable human beings to acquire knowledge, skills, attitudes, and actions to participate effectively and rationally in determining the structures and composition of their societies and the interaction between themselves and the world in which they live.

III. Global Citizenship

The concept of citizen according to Ikwumelu (2012: 19) refers to a full member of body politic who is entitled to all the rights, privileges and obligations associated with such membership. He presented three basic prepositions or basics to buttress his stands for this definition viz a viz;

- A citizen is one who is a full member of a sovereign state.
- He is entitled to all the fundamental rights that are enjoyed by members of the sovereign nations, and
- Consequent on the rights he enjoys as a bonafide member of sovereign state, he performs specified obligations associated with such membership and the rights he enjoys.

In the same line of thought, Ibezim (2001: 10) maintained that a citizen is a bonafide or legal member of a country who gives his loyalty to such and expects protection from it. It is a term used to refer to someone or a person, who is a legal member of a particular country he or she owe allegiance to and enjoy the full and political rights as entrenched in the constitution.

On the other hand, Johnson (1966:63) defined citizenship as "a legal relationship of an individual to a political or governmental community. Hormby (2000) added that citizenship is being a citizen as well as the right and duties of the citizen. This definition highlights the fact that citizenship is about the relationship that goes on between the citizen and the sovereign state, implying that there must be a value chain between the citizen and the state to satisfy this citizenship status thus, revealing that a citizen is not just a citizen probably because he or she is born there, naturalized there and honoured there, but that there must be something in common that goes on between the citizen and the state that will create recognition between them in order to pave way for a harmonious cooperate existence of the two variables so to say. Since citizenship is the legal right of belonging to a particular country and an act of becoming a legitimate member of a country and accepting, the

responsibility and the benefits attached to it. The concept of global citizenship has entered into the lexicon of diverse movements for peace and justice over the years, but what does it mean to be a global citizen? The term, global citizenship is an idea that is too controversial to conceptualize though some educators have struggled in their areas of endeavour to define what is viewed as global citizenship. This seems to be a confirmation of Karlberg (2008) who stated that global citizenship is not yet an accepted legal construct; the term is becoming a significant discursive construct that can play an important role in the creation of a more peaceful and just global centre.

Global citizenship is an attempt of a particular citizen of a country to extract and practice the idea of world mindedness. Such a person places his or her identity with global community above his own identity as a citizen of a particular nation or place. This definition base its idea of the fact that one identify transcends geography or political borders and that the planetary human community is interdependent and whole believing that mankind is essentially the same. Yes, mankind is essentially one in consideration of human nature, universality of man and his uniqueness. Global citizenship is a democratic ideal that expanded the 'boundaries of self-determination within the sphere, thus revealing that the total number of persons in a country notwithstanding, can be recognized or declared citizens as only those in the value chain, and are participants in government are citizens while others are subjects. Placing one's identity with the global community above his or her natural or local identity will mean disregard for one's culture, a thing so many will not subscribe to as it is somewhat difficult for a patriot to think of putting the identity of the global or another country above his or her own country as this will be tantamount to proclaiming cultural superiority or inferiority respectively and hence, racism.

Against this backdrop, this paper maintains that global or world citizenship is the recognition, respect and honour given to an individual by the global communities in view of their immeasurable contributions towards global advancement. To be a global citizen entails thinking globally, having global attitude, behaviour, and feeling; knowledge and be world mindedness instead of tribalism or nationalism. A typical example in this era is the computer guru Bill Gate who have added value to global lifestyle in the area of science and technology. From this submission, it therefore means that the conceptualization of global citizenship is still undergoing diagnosis or discourse of what it will substantively look like, but this paper will not fail to admit that whichever shape global citizenship will take, the first step to its attainment is what this paper will Christian national citizenship which is the recognition and respect accorded to a citizen by his country that serves as a spring board for global citizenship.

IV. The Role Of Social Studies In Mobilization Of Nigerians For Global Citizenship

Social Studies education has been presented by Kissock (1981:3) as an instrument for societal values transfer. According to him Social Studies is a “programme of study which a society uses to instill in the students the knowledge, skills, attitudes and actions it considers important concerning the relationship human beings have with each other, the world and themselves”. This agreed with the view held by Lawton and Dufour in Ikwumelu (2002). According to them, Social Studies is a course that is concerned with man as a social being and with the way he organizes cultural, economic, political, historical and geographical aspects of society. This implies that Social Studies is capable of transforming Nigerians to be more global like than nationals. And the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, being the standard norm for Nigerian society, its forms the basis upon which the world cultural values and orientation are shaped and controlled. In a view closely to value transformation, Social Studies according to Edozie (2001:39) is;

a dynamic, systematic and integrated discipline for generating knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviours necessary for dealing with contemporary life issues, for understanding man and the factors which influence his relationship with himself in particular and his society generally in a sustainable manner.

As a discipline of study in Nigeria educational system, Social studies is presented by educators as a preparation ground for citizenship education, education for cultural integration and education for living in a conflicting global world. This position has influenced the National Council for Social studies (NCSS) to adopt its official definition of the subject, “the integrated study of social sciences and humanities to promote civic competence and help young people to develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions as a citizens of a culturally, diverse, democratic societies in an interdependent world”, (NCSS, 1992:92). This shows that Social studies does not only inculcate transfer of value but values that is geared towards making the world global village. Again, the constitution in its unique nature is the instrument for integrating the world cultural values. It helps to clarify the issues of cultural diversities of making the world global village. Uche in Osakwe (2010) held that Social Studies provides knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable people to understand their physical and human environment in order to act or behave as responsible citizens. It is not only concerned

with knowledge for its own sake, Social Studies teach ways of life that is acceptable in the global communities. It is a means by which people know what there need to know and do what there are expected to do as members of the global society.

Social Studies education is of educating the citizens on their rights, duties and responsibilities to empower and motivate them; identify what areas of the political and governance process there can effectively participate in; what they can do to influence political outcomes and thereby improving the quality of governance at both local and national levels and by so doing inspire the learner to share their gathered experiences globally and create a mobilizing force for global citizenship development. The constitution also in its unique is the only apparatus that protect the right and liberty of the individuals which is essential in the discourse of mobilizing Nigerian for global citizenship. As already mentioned, several views are held by different authors, Researchers and scholars about what social studies is, the few definitions mentioned here suffice the fact that social studies is a mobilizing agent of Nigerians towards global citizenship. Social Studies is no doubt a critical and effective empowerment tool for the promotion of citizens participation in democratic and development processes as they both centres on the reformation of man through the inculcation of moral values, skills and competences that can help the leathers have a global recognition through their meaningful contribution to local, national and global issues.

All these presuppose the fact that for there to be global citizenship, an action must be effected. This is where social studies come in as a tool for mobilization. The inculcation of moral values through Social Studies education into the citizens forms the basis of adjudging Social Studies mobilization agent. Social Studies as a discipline teaches the skill of communications, human relations and cultivation of the spirit of patriotism which in turn develop in the citizen the following;

- i. Ability to cooperate harmoniously with others on small and large group project.
- ii. Ability to contribute productively to the group task.
- iii. Ability to supply quality leadership when needed if necessary and appropriate

Frankel (1973) submitted that the acquisition of Social Studies skills including those of social relationship by the students is likely to involve them in;

- i. Acting responsibly.
- ii. Responding cautiously to the questions of others.
- iii. Exhibiting concern or feeling for others,
- iv. Interacting with others.

Similarly, other Social Studies skills that constitute the centre piece of human relation that drives home the idea of mobilization within and beyond the boundaries of Nigeria as reflected in the national policy of education (1981) include the development in the citizens;

- i. Self-confidence and initiative.
- ii. Power of imagination and resourcefulness.
- iii. Appreciation for the identity of man and liberty.
- iv. Sense of respect and tolerance for others.
- v. Willingness to accept necessary challenges, attitude and value favourable to social, cultural and economic development such as honesty, cooperation, participation, open mindedness, inter-dependent, trustworthiness, diligence and obedience.
- vi. The spirit of natural consciousness and patriotism.

It is with the inculcation of these moral ethical values by social studies education and it cultivation by the citizens that a firm foundation can be established for the purpose of mobilizing Nigerians towards global citizenship; as these values may have define, redefine and reformed their psyche towards the intended project of global citizenship.

The role of social studies in the mobilization of Nigerians towards global citizenship cannot be doubted, undermined or over emphasized as it objectives are geared towards preparing Nigerians to be becoming holistically responsible and responsive to national and global challenges which will eventually project them as respected nationals that would have no stain in being accorded global citizenship.

V. Educational Implication:

The educational implication of global citizenship is that it helps citizens acquire new lease of life, thinking and ways of doing things. According to the discourse theory, human cultures and human consciousness are shaped in part, by the patterned ways that we collectively think and talk, :our discourses influences our perception, motivation, action and even our construction of social institutions and by so involving our discourses, citizens mental and social realities are structured.

Similarly, global citizenship provides a new way of thinking and talking about our global relationship with others, about our place in the world, about our perceived interest and most fundamentally, about our identities. It helps in the productive scaffolding or matrix of human culture and makes us escape out of obsolete cultural practices. Through conscious commitment and efforts, global citizenship endears us to intervene in discourses that are problematic and come out with sound and sustainable solution. For example, the public discourse of overt sexism and racism that prevails only fifty years ago in the United State had been challenged and partially transformed, new ways of thinking and talking about gender and race are clearing gaining grounds all with the effort of global citizenship. In Nigeria, there is high level of corruption, youth restiveness, kidnapping, religious intolerance, high crime wave, prostitution, incessant destruction of life and properties, sectarian identity construct and the lots. One dimension or a strategy to overcome these upheavals is to cultivate an inclusive sense of global citizens.

VI. Conclusion And Recommendations

The thrust of this paper is focused on the role of constitution and Social Studies in mobilization of Nigerian for global citizenship. The paper maintained that the gateway to global citizenship is the development of responsive and responsible citizenship of international recognition, implying that the mobilization of Nigerians towards global citizenship will be easily achieved when the drive for national integration of mind, values, attitude and philosophies of the citizens has been achieved as it is easier to mobilize people of like minds and philosophy as well as peace loving individuals than militant and unstable minded individuals. The uniqueness of constitution and Social Studies education therefore encourage the teaching of peace education, intercultural studies and social interaction skills in order to contribute worthily to the growth of the responsible citizens that can prepare them for global citizenship.

In order to mobilize Nigerians for global citizenship, the condition under which social justice and respect for the obligations arising from the treaties and other sources of constitution can be maintained in order to promote progress and better standard of life. Social Studies has been institutionalized in the Nigerian school curricular for preparing Nigerian citizens for worthy living in the global society.

VII. Recommendations

Based on the above discourse, the following recommendations were made.

1. The constitution in itself as a body of fundamental principles roles and regulation through which a state is govern should continue to direct the management of the educational system by entrenching the national goals or philosophy in the constitution as a principle upon which the entire educational system should operate, which will then serve as a spring board through which the required skills for global citizenship mobilization can be achieved.
2. Social Studies teachers in classroom should incorporate some aspects of human rights education in the teaching of the subject.
3. The condition under which social justice and respect for the obligations arising from the treaties and other sources of constitution can be maintained in order to promote progress and better standard of life

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