

**LIBRARY AS A TOOL FOR PROMOTING
LITERACY TO TACKLE INSECURITY IN
NIGERIA**

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the role of Library as tools for promoting literacy to tackle insecurity in Nigeria, the writers highlights what literacy means and levels of insecurity in our country. Why, we need to promote literacy to tackle insecurity and briefly discuss the role of library on promoting literacy, finally, it was recommended and concluded that government have to appreciate the important of libraries as an agent of 'information winch disseminate information that are inevitable tools for promoting literacy as it sustain the nation.

LIBRARY AS A TOOLS FOR PROMOTING LITERACY TO TACKLE INSECURITY IN NIGERIA

The library is the nerve centre of any tertiary educational institution, especially colleges, polytechnics and the universities. It is also a crucial unit in the educational development of man, at any level of human development.

Libraries are information centres which promotes academic activities taking place in any education setting, indeed a library is a Living and active part of the whole effort towards promoting peace and security in Nigeria. To support this motion, the National Policy on Education (2004), on the aim of a library states:

- a. encourage the development of skills in reading
- b. prompt the readers to some literacy appreciation
- c. be source of subject information
- d. be a clinic for intellectual development

Education is the art of teaching and training of the young ones. Education is the aggregate of all the processes which a young adult develop the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behavior of positive value to the society in which he/she lives. Therefore, the purpose of acquiring education is to gain and share experience from direct or induced contacts for any meaningful development and individual socioeconomic empowerment to take place in a society, needed education must be acquired. (Aladenusi, 2010).

In view of the fact that all education programme and libraries are partners in progress. It is pertinent to ensure that the library is established and maintained and complement the education process, no matter the level, so as to achieve the desired objectives as stated in the National Policies on Education. (Olorunyomi, 1985) observed that, library can promote the development of reading habit and contribute to academic achievement in all subjects. Hence, in promoting literacy and reading habit, there exist a peaceful co-existence where there will be no commotion, violence, destruction and destabilization. While peace will be quite, calm or being free from disturbance. It refers to anti-strife,

Unity, harmony and friendly relationship or to experience a crises-free atmosphere . According to moshood (2002), literacy is the ability to understand and use symbols that are culturally specific, such as alphabets, numbers and visual icon for learning and development.

Literacy, broadly and properly conceptualized, goes beyond reading and writing and emphasis the acquisition of values of decency, togetherness, respect for others, irrespective of class ethnic origin, creed and other differences. A literate person avoids all antediluvian, predisposition and demonstrates that he/she is a man or woman of culture, repute and discipline. In Olajide (2007b) word: to be literate, then, accords one the opportunity to get involved in thought sharing through the written page, i.e the literate person is endowed with a bi-dimensional instrument of either sharing his own expressed thoughts or those of others as put down on papers, on screen or any other vehicles for conveying the written word. Literacy is an essential ingredient for building and developing reading, writing, speaking and listening skills. To establish the connection between literacy and reading habit to tackle insecurity one must look at the culture of the community in relation to members of that community are writing, sending, speaking, watching and listening to so as to encourage reading habit. A society that they are illiterate, they cannot read, they will be prone to violence and that society will never know peace because peace and war will depend on what people are reading, watching and saying. All these brings about insecurity in our society, literacy is the most singular factor in the upliftment of an Individual. Therefore, there is a great concern for the prevention of illiteracy in our various community; so that our youths will be useful members of the society.

The format of this paper hereon, is to describe the current perception of insecurity, then highlight the tools for promoting literacy. Also, look on why promoting literacy to tackle insecurity. Literacy is a complex term if as been described in many ways by different scholars mid authors. Orisawayi (2008) described literacy from two levels micro and macro literacy. He believe that Micro literacy embodied initial or basic literacy and functional literacy derivable from basic education. This he said is concerned with the use of skills of listening, understanding, speaking, writing translation in whatever language of the nation. Macro-literacy is equated to

good balanced education of the individual, that is, what enables him or her to attain self-fulfilment and self-actualization, and therein- gaining full integration into the society.

Literacy is the foundation and pillar for development, it is the engine for sustainable and continuous development of the individual and society. Literacy is a basic need in our society that's is why every 8th September is set aside as the international literacy day which will proclaimed by the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). While the six goal, of the Dakar framework for Action (2000) which aims at education for all by 2015 emphasizes literacy. Thus, Nigeria as a signatory to the Dakar framework for Action launched the Universal Basic Education Program in 1999 to move the literacy level up. The literacy level rose up in 2004 (Adeosun and Maduekwe 2008). Based on these six goals and lunching of the Universal Basic Education Program and the establishment of library in all schools, the literacy level will rise above the 46% in subsequent years

INSECURITY

An instance of insecurity in Nigeria is the ethro-religion unrest. "Ethnic and the foregoing problems and criminal activities of individually and collectively create insecurity and breach or the peace that are likely to or indeed affect legitimate social and economic activities in the country" (Abubakar 2007).

Political instability is also one of the symptom of insecurity because the political activities in the past have resulted in violence, destruction and death, by the dreaded terrorist group "Boko harram:

Today, spales of bombing at Nigeria is as sad commentary, In recent time their exploit include the bombing of the Nigerian Police Headquarters at Abuja, 16th June 2011 , Madalla Christmas day bombing, 26th August 2011, the United Nations building, Abuja and various attacks across the nation.

Hence the unity and peaceful co-operation of various ethnic and religious groups is important to avert the frequent crisis and violence as well as development deterrents, all of which arc perceived as insecurity indicators.

WHY PROMOTING LITERACY TO TACKLE INSECURITY

Since there is a link between literacy and violence, what is happening in northern Nigeria, where a larger percentage of the people cannot read or write, it makes it very easy for them to be indoctrinated accepting to be agents of death through suicide bombing. Hence their literacy level speaks why the youth in that region took to violence to protest their displeasure. Likewise in the South-South where kidnapping of oil workers, Foreigners and bombing of oil installations. If all our youth are literate and cultivate the habit of reading they will be exposed to be men and women of repute, disciplined and highly cultured.

There is a contrary situation in the South West where majority are illiterate, perhaps, of the free education policy by Chief Obafemi Awolowo in the 50's. Successive authority also replicate the policy by keeping the literacy level on the high side. One may reasonably submit that, that was why people in south west do not take to violence to protest any form of displeasure.

The increase in work population brings about promoting literacy for the population to know more about human development and their environment. Therefore, there is a need for library services for the growing literate for them to be more knowledgeable because we are in the period of information explosion. It is evident that knowledge is not static, it is more sophisticated, it is expanding with the discovery of new fields of knowledge.

Igwe, (2005) stated that one way of transforming the society (teaching and learning) is to properly harness and integrate the efficiency of promoting literacy through information and communication technology into the society, since information is dispensable to the society.

LIBRARY AS TOOLS FOR PROMOTING LITERACY

The basic philosophy of the library is that it encourage learning and a place where learning materials are stored for use, (Popoola 1990). Therefore, a good library must have abundant and varied collection of books, periodicals, tape recorder graphics like charts, maps, posters, graphs, globes, filmstrips to be shown to the population. Library also a

tools for promoting serves through communication network centres which transfer knowledge from a host to the user. That why Dr. Goodluck jonathan, President, Federal Republic of Nigeria, on December 2010 launched a programme tagged “Bring back to book Initiative”

“The effort was geared toward bring back the culture of reading and increasing the level of literacy in Nigeria”

- ❖ Literacy serves as the first exposure of human to the world of information as it creates appropriate international relationship that links everybody and through library, thus, creates a forum for the exchange of ideas.
- ❖ It encourages continuing education and also mobilize professionals consciousness by making professional aware of current publications.
- ❖ Library promotes literacy by providing learning materials that will facilitate the development of mutual awareness and appreciation among all racial and cultural groups.
- ❖ Library reflect fully the reality of religion and cultural diversity of a community.
- ❖ Library must acquire materials which foster positive feeling and attitudes towards the cultural diversity.
- ❖ Library has great rule to play in promoting literacy, it helps an individual to learn how to live with one another after read in a about other people's culture.
- ❖ Li brary also help the populace to be literate and when the society is literate, ignorance is relatively reduced and people will not be push to war, because it is assumed they know the implication of war. Library enlighten user through publicity, book review, book lairs, observation of book weeks, library weeks and other celebrations on what goes on around them. While Uwasomba (2012) admitted that there is a link between literacy and peace literate person is by every implication a man or woman of culture and civilized conduct.
- ❖ Library play a key role in creating a literature environment as it helps to promote literacy by offering relevant and attractive reading materials for all ages.
- ❖ Libraries embrace the social responsibility to offer services that bridge social, political and economic barriers. It traditionally make

effort to extend services to marginalized people, by providing unlimited access to information through public libraries, which are located in the community.

- ❖ A literate society is likely to develop very fast because citizens can easily have an understanding of government programmes. They can express their opinion, thereby participating in governance to create a peaceful society which is a prerequisite to development.
- ❖ The library also performs its social responsibility to people by providing them information related to existing job vacancies in the society.
- ❖ The libraries help to break information barriers and empower and the nation develop through economic transaction and improved social relations among the people.

Libraries have been used to promote campaigns against violence. To use libraries for this aspect of development, stickers with catching colours like red or yellow will be used. The stickers should have educative messages on WARS, KIDNAPPING, RIOTING and DEMONSTRATION. President Obama (2005) United States of America reiterated that libraries have a critical importance of language, working, reading, communication and books as a means of transmitting and cultivating peaceful co-existence of citizens together as a people. He observed that:

"If we want to give our children and the society the best possible change in life, if we want to open our doors to opportunity, while they are voting and teach them the skills they will need to succeed later on, then one of our greatest responsibilities as citizens, as educators and as parents is to ensure that every American child can read and read well. This is because literacy is the most basic currency of the knowledge economy that we are living in today. Reading is the gateway skill that makes all the learning possible. (Obama 2005)"

- ❖ Libraries play a vital role in the educational development of any society, it has become indispensable in the fight to eradicate illiteracy, in which it provides information through books and other related information materials.

RECOMMENDATION

- Government should redefine security policy and allocation of fund to state and local government.
- Proper orientation should be given to the society by the National Orientation Agency on the negative effect of crime, violence.
- Government have to appreciate the importance of libraries in development and promoting literacy. The qualify of knowledge the citizen have can have a lot of impact on the level oj development of a nation, per example, Julius Adolusi-Adeluyi, a former Minister of Health in Nigeria said "the reading man is the living mart".

Lastl, it is important to educate the management of Education Trust Fund (ETF) on the need to include school library in their programme at that level promoting literacy will be highly achieved because these set of people arc expected to be absorbed into secondary schools.

CONCLUSION

The desire to promote literacy should be prominent in the mind of our leaders. Our leaders are to promote literacy, so that whatever the policy they make, the society can easily understand and put to use appropriately. Therefore, the role of the citizen to have access to quality information within a short period.

Hence, libraries remain an agent for information and dissemination of information which are inevitable tools for promoting literacy as it sustain the nation.

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