

# Managing Education for national SEcurity: a caSE for Utilitarian EduCation

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## **Abstract**

*National security is the requirement to ensure the survival of the State through the use of economic power, diplomacy, power projection and political power. A nation can achieve national security through the instrument of education which is believed by every nation to be an instrument for national development and transformation. This type of education must be utilitarian and must be appropriately managed. The success or failure of any national educational system lies in how well it is managed. This paper therefore dwells on managing education for national security using an education that is utilitarian. It highlights the value of education, the concept of utilitarian education and how education could be managed to achieve national security. Some recommendations were made which include proper planning of educational policies, programmes, projects and transcending normative, strategic and operational levels. Restructuring, diversification and improvement of curriculum to be more relevant to both the needs of learners and society etc.*

**Key words:** Managing, education, national security, utilitarian

National security is the requirement to ensure the survival of the state through the use of economic power, diplomacy, power projection and political power. The concept developed mostly in the United States after World War II initially focusing on military might, it now encompasses a broad range of facets, all of which impinge on non military or economic security of the nation and the values espoused by the national society. Accordingly, in order to achieve national security, a nation needs to possess economic security, energy security, food security, environmental security etc, and this can be achieved through education. Security threats involve not only conventional foes such as other nation/states but also non-state actors such as narcotic cartels, natural disasters and events causing severe environmental damage.

To ensure national security, education should be utilitarian and effectively managed in order to produce enough manpower or individuals who are capable of

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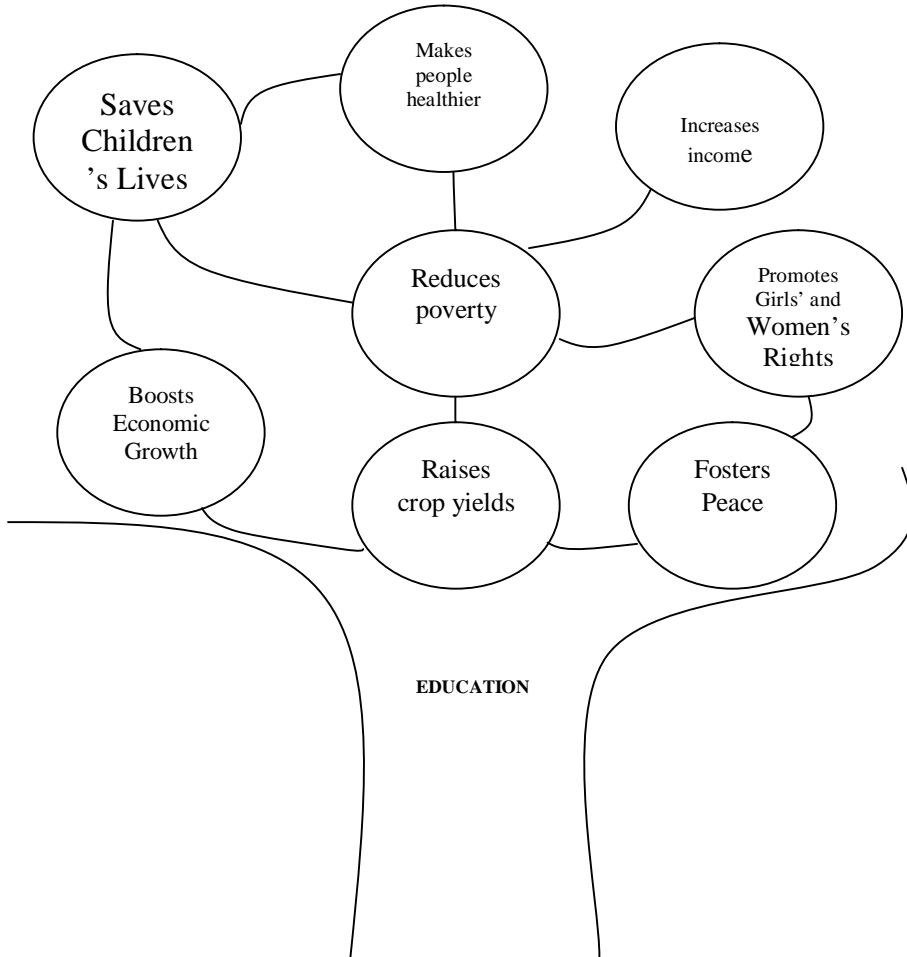
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exploring and exploiting the natural resources effectively for the well being of the nation.

Education is seen as a veritable means of bringing about socio-cultural, political and economic growth and these foster national security. All over the world, education is seen and assumed to be the greatest instrument of change, as any fundamental change in the intellectual and social outlook of any society has to be preceded by an educational revolution (Williams and Anekwe 2010). The fulfillment of this role lies on utilitarian education and education policies. To achieve the much needed utilitarian education, there should be effective management of the education system. Nzerem in Williams and Anekwe (2010) opined that education is a life-long process which enables an individual to develop his potentials in order to give service not only to himself but to the community at large. The success or failure of national educational systems lie in how well they are managed. (Nwadiani, 2012).

### **The Value of Education to National Security**

Education is more than reading, writing and arithmetic. It is one of the most important investments a country can make in its people and its future and is critical to reducing poverty, inequality, hatred and other vices.



**Fig 1: Diagram showing the Value of Education to National Security**

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1. Education gives people critical skills and tools to help them better provide for themselves and their children.
2. Education helps people work better and can create opportunities for sustainable and viable economic growth now and into the future.
3. Education helps fight the spread of HIV/AIDS and other diseases, reduces mother and child mortality and helps improve health.
4. Education encourages transparency, good governance, stability and helps fight against graft and corruption.

The impact of investment in education is profound; education results in raising income, improving health, promoting gender equality, mitigating climate change and reducing poverty. These are in line with Nigeria's philosophy of Education as stated in the National Policy on Education (NPE, 2004) which stated that:

We believe that:

- a. education is an instrument for national development; to this end, the formulation of ideas, their integration for national development, and the interaction of persons and ideas are all aspects of education
- b. education fosters the worth and development of the individual, for each individual's sake and for the general development of the society
- c. every Nigerian child shall have a right to equal educational opportunities irrespective of any real or imagined disabilities each according to his or her ability;
- d. there is need for functional education for the promotion of a progressive, united Nigeria; to this end, school programmes need to be relevant, practical and comprehensive; while interest and ability should determine the individual's direction in education.

For the philosophy to be in harmony with Nigeria's national goals, education has to be geared towards self realization, better human relationship, individual and national effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity as well as towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress.

It is only when education is utilitarian or functional and effectively managed that these goals can be achieved. The achievement of educational goals as derived from the national goals depends on effective management of the educational system. A nation that manages its education effectively and achieves its goals has achieved national security.

### **Concept of Utilitarian Education**

The development of any society depends largely on the creative capacity of the citizens to be capable of effectively exploring and exploiting the country's natural resources and transforming them into finished products and services so as to enhance the standard of living of the country's citizens (Nwangwu 2007). These can be achieved through utilitarian or functional education. According to Collins English Dictionary (2003), utilitarian education is education that is involving or containing a function or functions; practical rather than decorative, utilitarian, capable of functioning or working. So, for Nigerian education to be utilitarian, it must be practical and useful. Ali (2010) posited that functional education will ensure and/or produce food for people, create jobs, provide services, lead to democracy and ensure national security. According to Idowu (1999) functional education is the total process of bringing up an

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individual to develop their potentials (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) to the fullest and consequently to be able to contribute maximally to the development of the society. Fafunwa (1974) also defined functional education as the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitudes and other forms of behaviour which are of positive value to the society in which he or she lives. He went further to state that when evaluating any educational system one must determine the extent to which it is meeting the needs of a particular society at any given time. According to Mkpa (2002) education is said to be utilitarian when its purpose goes beyond the provision of education as an end but as a means, the end of which are targeted at the felt needs of the country. It is that education which is not merely theoretical, but rather is skill oriented, geared towards the cultivation of intellectual skills, vocational/technological skills, social skills and the like. That education according to him once acquired by the individual remains as life long and continually utilitarian.

Nwokolo in Williams and Anekwe (2010:71) summed up utilitarian education in the following words:

*The education of our dream in the year 2010 should be capable of producing Nigerians who can manufacture raw materials, machines and tools needed for our industries, produce enough food for local and international markets, invent new designs, discover drugs capable of curing diseases hitherto incurable and transform the nation from consuming one to a manufacturing one.*

It is this type of education that equips the learner with the potentials and capabilities for self reliance. These achievements from education go a long way to reducing illiteracy and poverty which are the impediments to national development and national security.

From the above concepts of utilitarian education, it is expected that utilitarian education should therefore promote the welfare of citizens, advance technology, promote economic growth, and enhance democracy and above all foster national security.

Therefore a utilitarian education depends on good management, which will involve, proper planning, coordinating, organizing, controlling, budgeting, evaluation etc and provision of an enabling environment particularly input and support in form of human, material and financial resources. These are parts of the functions of educational managers.

### **Managing Education for National Security**

A nation's policy on education is government's way of realizing that part of the national goals which can be achieved using education as a tool. The overall philosophy of Nigeria according to FRN (2004) is to:

- a. live in unity and harmony as one indivisible, indissoluble, democratic and sovereign nation founded on the principles of freedom, equality and justice;
- b. promote inter-African solidarity and world peace through understanding.

For the philosophy to be in harmony with Nigeria's national goals, education has to be geared towards self realization, better human relationship, individual and national effective citizenship, national consciousness, national unity as well as towards social, cultural, economic, political, scientific and technological progress.

In order to realize fully the potentials of the contributions of education to the achievement of these goals and values, all other agencies will operate in agreement with education. To that end, government shall take various measures to implement the policy.

The success of any system of education is hinged on proper planning, efficient administration and adequate financing. Administration is a function of organization and structure, proprietorship and control, inspection and supervision, FRN (2004). School systems and consequently their management and day-to-day administration shall grow out of the life and social ethos of the community which they serve. Therefore, the administrative machinery for the national education system shall be based on the following cardinal principles viz:

- a. shared responsibility for the funding and management of education among the three tiers of government;
- b. close participation and involvement of the communities, at the local level, in the administration and management of their schools
- c. effective line of communication between local community and the state on the one hand and national machinery for policy formulation and implementation on the other;
- d. devotion of functions whereby the direction, planning and co-ordination of the total educational effort within the states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), especially of secondary education will be the responsibility of the state ministries of the Territory's Department of Education; and
- e. the integration of educational development and policy with national objectives and programmes by the Federal Ministry of Education.

In order that these functions may be discharged efficiently, a cadre of qualified staff is required in adequate numbers and quality at the different operational levels by

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the local, state and federal authorities. With a well managed education by involving all relevant stakeholders, the nation will be transformed into

1. a free and democratic society;
2. a just and egalitarian society;
3. a united, strong and self-reliant nation;
4. a great and dynamic economy; and
5. a land full of bright opportunities for all citizens (FRN 2004).

It is therefore a great challenge to educational managers and other relevant stakeholders to see to the great agenda of national security through adequate educational management. This will be in line with Manaham's claim in Nwadiani (2012:7) that:

*Every major problem confronting modern societies, is in the final analysis, an administrative problem whether it is extricating a nation from entangling and unpopular foreign policies, or polluting the environment, dealing with criminal deviance, healing the sick, industrializing the economy, or educating the young. Every social problem ultimately seeks its solution through some manner of administrative function.*

For national security through the instrumentality of managing education, the resources (physical, fiscal and human) provided for education must be well utilized through the co-operation and willingness of stakeholders, co-ordinated by professionally trained educational managers. There should be the following interventions according to Nwadiani (2012:8).

1. Proper planning of educational policies, programmes, projects and transcending normative, strategic and operational levels.
2. Restructuring, diversification and improvement of curriculum to be more relevant to both the needs of learners and society
3. Training and development of quality education personnel (teachers and managers) in the light of modern challenges globally
4. Mobilization and disbursement of adequate funds apolitically
5. Provision of and maintenance of educational infrastructure
6. Monitoring progressive and effective inter-stakeholders relationship to ensure cooperation
7. Ensuring appropriate and adequate reward and motivation to encourage excellence and commitment
8. Systematic and continuous evaluation of performance of the system
9. Education should be accessible and affordable with regenerative programmes to discourage functional illiteracy over time.

## **Conclusion**

Investing in education is the single most effective means of reducing poverty, gender inequality and ensuring national security. Girls and boys who learn to read, write and count will provide a better future for their families and countries. This can be achieved through utilitarian education. With improved education, appropriately managed towards achieving the goals of education, the other aspects of life will be positively affected. In short, education has the power to make the world a better place and ensure world peace.

It is therefore the function of education managers and other stakeholders to ensure that education is geared towards attaining the national goals to enhance national security.

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