



The Relevance of Civic Education in the Realization of National Objectives in Nigeria

Alozie, Cyprian C., Ph.D.

Department of Political Science, Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria

***Corresponding Author:** Alozie, Cyprian C., Department of Political Science, Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria

Abstract: This paper examined civic education as an effective tool for the realization of national objectives in Nigeria. National objectives represent the totality of a nation's development agenda or vision at a particular period. In Nigeria for instance, this has been formulated and expressed in various ways by the various regimes in the country. Similarly, civic education has to do with the inculcation of good or expected moral values, skills and attitudes on the citizens with the aim of arousing their consciousness to obey constituted authority and apply their abilities towards addressing developmental challenges confronting the nation. Effective civic education would therefore enable the citizens to embrace patriotic values and refrain from terrorist insurgency, religious violence, armed robbery, kidnapping, pipeline vandalization/oil bunkering, and other forms of sabotage. This paper therefore argued that proper civic education affords an effective tool for the realization of national objectives. The paper employed qualitative method of analysis through the use of secondary (library) and primary (interview) sources of data collection. The data were descriptively analysed through detailed information gathered from documentary sources and interviews. The theory of post colonial state in Africa was found suitable in the analysis. The paper finds that the poor realization of national objectives in Nigeria has seriously undermined Nigeria's national development. The paper recommends the intensification of the teaching of civic education at the various levels of Nigeria's education system as well as using the tool as a re-orientation for public office holders as well as Nigerians at the grassroot level.

Keywords: Civic Education, National Objectives, Nigeria, Terrorism, Corruption.

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern nation states especially the developing countries where Nigeria belongs have been faced with a galaxy of challenges in their effort to fulfill the responsibilities of statehood. Thus, according to Potter (2004:2) "democratic states hardly relent in drawing up strategies and by extension national objectives under which they are expected to deliver a whole lot of political and other goods for the welfare of their citizens." These include; security, health and education, economic opportunity, good governance, law and order as well as fundamental infrastructural requirements (transport and communications).

The realization of national objectives requires that the state should provide goods and services to guarantee the welfare, protection and well being of their citizens (Francis, 1993). With respect to national objectives, the basic priority of most states is the provision of security. That is, creating a safe and secure environment and developing legitimate and effective security of the citizens and their property against internal and external threats; to prevent crime and enable the citizens resolve their disputes with the state and their fellow citizens without recourse to violence.

National objectives are aimed at developing or creating an enabling environment for every strata of persons in society to realize their individual or collective goals (development of human capital). Besides this, is the creation of legitimate effective political and administrative institutions and participatory processes to ensure the active and open participation of civil society in the formulation of government's policies? Nigeria's first development plan of 1962-68 was for instance, meant to address national objectives in Nigeria as the country just emerged as a post colonial state. Several other strategies and Agenda have continued to be put in place to lift Nigeria from her state of despair to a prosperous nation.

In modern democracies, one major way of eliciting the people's support and participation in state affairs is civic education. Civic education is aimed at instilling in the people some democratic principles, ethics, values as well as an understanding of how democratic institutions function; their rights and responsibilities; as they participate in the political process. Civic education attempts to equip individuals to become informed and active citizens. In this process, citizens are inculcated with such values as tolerance, equality and justice as important instruments in nurturing a healthy and vibrant civil society. With an increased knowledge, awareness and capacity, majority of the citizens get informed and become active participants on political issues. Their level of patriotism is also enhanced in this process (Chidozie & Virtua, 2018).

Civic education creates in the citizens the consciousness to safeguard government property, obey the laws of the land and refrain from acts that are inimical to the survival of the state such as armed robbery, corruption, kidnapping, militancy, terrorism and other acts of sabotage against the state. It is through civic education that the citizens are mobilized for them to support the government in its effort to realize national objectives. The importance attached to a well mobilized citizenry has made governments especially in democratic states to establish agencies responsible for this. In Nigeria for instance, the National Orientation Agency (NOA) has been put in place, to coordinate the process. The media, Ministry of Information, National Information Centre, among other agencies have been effective in this regard. This paper therefore examined the relevance of civic education in the realization of national objectives in Nigeria.

2. CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

2.1. Civic Education

The word, "civic" is used to describe the people who live in a town or city" (Hornby, 2006: 255). A closely related concept to civic is "citizen" which in the Nigeria context has to do with every person born in Nigeria on or before the date of independence either of whose parents or any of his grandparents belonged to a community indigeneous to Nigeria or by naturalization (1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria).

Scholars such as Ukegbu, Adebayo, Uche & Anyaoha (2011), use civic and citizenship education interchangeably. The foremost duty of a citizen is to understand the operations of his social environment or nation and to endeavour to sustain a conducive or harmonious relationship with people in his environment. This is usually made possible through the instrument of education which could be either formal or informal. Kelvin (1982:1) defined education as "the provision of learning experience or the transmission of knowledge that take place in schools, universities, technical colleges and colleges of advanced education among others."

For Njoku (2005) education has to do with the systematic method of training, building, developing, sustaining knowledge, skill and character among students. Civic education therefore represents "a careful and sequential process of liberating members of a community from ignorance and equipping them with the necessary skill, good political, economic, social and administrative conscience that would facilitate and maintain national conscience" (James, 1979: 15). Through civic education, the people are meant to acquire good values, and attitude of good citizenship and thereby paving way for patriotism or love for one's motherland. Civic education enables every strata of society to get educated on their rights and duties as well as the obligations of the government to the people.

Democracy has a strong correlation with civic education in the sense that democracy encourages mass participation in governance. For there to be active citizens participation, they must be educated on the mode of participation, system of government, voting patterns and other issues as it affects citizens - leaders relationship.

As Ukegbu *et. al.* (2011) submit, civic education constitutes the totality of education programmes in terms of knowledge and skill imparted on persons with the aim of making the citizens morally good and ready to render honest service to their motherland. Through civic or citizens education, individuals acquire values and skills that will make them become effective and responsible citizens. It also inculcates the spirit of tolerance in the people and makes them have respect for other people's views, opinions and religion especially in a multi-ethnic society like Nigeria.

Recognizing the important role of civic education in nation building, the federal government of Nigeria has integrated it into the nation's education curricula from the lower to the early years in the

higher institutions of learning. Ukegbu *et. al.* (2011:2) articulated some of the importance of civic education as it affects the realization of national objectives to include the following:

It promotes the understanding of the inter-relationship between the people, government and the society in general; It highlights the structure of government, its functions and the responsibilities of government to the people and that of the people to the government; it serves as an avenue through which citizens are liberated from ignorance and equip them with the needed administrative skills which are necessary to facilitate and maintain national consciousness; it develops in the citizens good values and patriotism and provokes in them the resolve to become good citizens; it helps in creating the needed awareness over the importance of political equality, equity and justice among the citizens; it creates awareness and understanding of the duties and obligations the citizens owe to the government and the nation.

Moreover, Civic education is aimed at creating a patriotic consciousness among the citizens and the need to support government programmes and policies. In addition, it enhances the grooming of effective and proactive leaders and has become an effective instrument for the training of good and patriotic future leaders in various aspects of human endeavour. Inadequate civic education has been noted to have had a destabilizing effect on the society due to the absence of shared values such as political tolerance, respect for the rule of law and trust in democratic institutions. The Technical Publications Series (2002:7) provides that civic education is designed to achieve the following goals:

To introduce citizens to the basic rules and institutional features of democratic political systems and to provide them with knowledge about democratic right and practices; to convey a specific set of values/thoughts that are essential in democracy such as political tolerance, trust in the democratic process, respect for the rule of law and compromise; to encourage responsible and informed political participation, defined as a cluster of activities including voting, working in campaigns, contacting officials, lodging complaints, attending meetings and contributing money.

3. METHODOLOGY AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Methodologically, the paper adopted documentary source of data collection which has to do with information gathered from textbooks, journals, articles, newspapers and official documents. Report and data collected was analysed utilizing content analysis. The Marxian theory of post colonial state in Africa was applied as theoretical framework. The marxian theory's proposition runs contrary to that of western liberal democracy which sees the state as an independent impartial judge or force that equitably regulates socio-economic transactions and protects the interest of every member of society (Ayaka, 2017). In line with the contention of the Marxists, the state is the end product of persistent class conflict and antagonism (Okafor & Udalla, 2018). What results from the class conflict between the haves and have nots is on the one hand, the emergence of a powerful, politically and economically privileged dominant group that device various ways of consolidating their interest and holding down the less privileged members of society. On the other hand is a group consisting of the masses who are alienated and influenced by the minority but influential group (Aja, 1997).

Generally, the post colonial states also known as comprador states include the states that emerged from the European colonialism in the later part of the century. The post colonial states in Africa are noted to be weak in many aspects of state orientation and survival. Given their primordial loyalty and weak integration capacity, their patriotic participation in state affairs is usually very poor. In almost all cases, the privileged elite hijack state structures and utilize such to realize their selfish objective with little or no serious checks on ground. The limited autonomy of the post colonial state due to the overriding influence of the elite negatively affects it in realizing critical state objectives for the interest of the generality of the people. Thus, intensified civic education is therefore adopted by most post colonial states to enable the people eschew parochial sentiments or orientation and embrace the spirit of patriotism in offering themselves as viable agents for the realization of national objectives.

3.1. Agencies/Agents of Civic Education

As civic education has become an effective instrument of getting the citizens equipped for effective participation in national or societal development, the role of the following agents or agencies have remained relevant.

3.1.1. The Family

The family represents the primary agent of socialization and by extension civic education. Parents and adult members of the family contribute a lot in moulding the character, behaviour and overall world view of their family members through communication, and information sharing on a wide range of issues. Each family attempts to inculcate good moral and enduring values on its members. Such values include: respect to elders, constituted authority, societal traditions and refraining from habits that may attract bad name or image to the family. Family members at leisure times normally discuss and share information on a wide range of issues of common interest as well as current affairs.

3.1.2. The School

The school is an agency that sees to the formal education of individuals. It has consciously been set up to systematically inculcate knowledge, values, skills and enduring attitude into its adherents. Civic or citizenship education has long been incorporated as a general studies to be taught in both the lower levels of education as well as in colleges and higher institutions of learning in Nigeria in order to help the youth imbibe lasting values that would enable them contribute their quota to national development.

3.1.3. Religious Organizations

In Nigeria, the dominant religious groups are Christianity, Islam and traditional religions. Every religion has a particular mission to fulfill among its adherents. Among these include; teaching their members the way of God (Allah), ethics and moral issues, love, and refraining from evil to do good. During religious meetings or gathering, emphasis is usually made on spirituality, obedience to constituted authority, etcetera. The teachings of the bible or Koran do serve as guide to worshippers. Time is also taken to educate members on their civic responsibilities and government activities. Sometimes, government officials and politicians have been known to take their political campaigns to churches or religious gatherings to sensitize worshippers on current affairs and solicit for their votes or support.

3.1.4. Government Agencies

Mass mobilization has remained a major component of every democratic government. To actualize this, different ministries or units are created by the government at various levels. Apart from the Ministry of Information, the regime of the former military president of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Babangida (Rtd) launched the Mass Mobilization for Economic Recovery, Self Reliance and Social Justice (MAMSER) on July 25, 1987 (Oti, 2005). The objective of MAMSER which has been replaced by the National Orientation Agency (NOA) with the same objective include; building a politically conscious and enlightened Nigerians and mobilizing them to support the realization of government programmes and policies.

3.1.5. Government Officials/Functionaries

Some categories of government functionaries and legislators are sometimes asked to reach out to their constituents as a way of promoting grassroot democracy, creating awareness and educating them on government activities. There is usually a question and answer session during which certain illusions or doubts people have about the government are cleared.

3.1.6. The Mass Media

The mass media refers to those organs through which mass communication takes place. It is made up of the print and electronic media. The print media include newspapers, magazines, and books, whereas the electronic media include the radio, television, cinema among others. The various media normally run educative programmes, write ups and current affairs to inform, educate and entertain their readers or audience.

3.2. National Objectives

Nigeria's national objectives since political independence in October 1960 have been tailored towards "development strategies anchored on developmental rolling plans" (Areo, 2013:1). These development plans stipulated what the nation intended to achieve within a particular period of time. National objectives are therefore the well articulated strategic options and visions of the state at a time

aimed at enhancing national development. Both the military and civilian administrations in Nigeria have at one time or the other used development plans to further the realization of national objectives in Nigeria. Thus, for instance, the 1970-74 plans defined national objectives to be the building of:

- A united, strong and self-reliant nation.
- A great and dynamic economy.
- A just and egalitarian society.
- A land of bright and full opportunities for all citizens, and;
- A free and democratic society

In addition, following the devastation Nigeria suffered on account of the Nigeria/Biafran war, General Gowon's regime initiated the policies of reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation to rebuild the Nigerian nation from the vestiges of the civil war. The Murtala/Obasanjo regime of 1975/76 introduced the land tenure system and operation feed the nation. The aim was to ensure national development through agricultural revolution.

Between October, 1979-83, the administration of Nigeria's first executive president, Alhaji Shehu Shagari introduced the Green Revolution. The programme was aimed at transforming the agricultural sector and using the gains from it to revolutionize other key sectors of the economy. Following the over throw of the Shagari's administration on December 31, 1983, the perceived "moral and social decay of Nigeria led the regime of the Buhari/Idiagbon in 1984 to concentrate efforts on fighting corruption and instilling discipline in the polity" (Asia, 2000:64). It was noted that corruption was one major cankerworm that had robbed Nigeria from realizing her national objectives and goals over the years. The regime therefore declared war against indiscipline as a way of entrenching moral rectitude and sanity in the Nigerian society.

The emergence of General Ibrahim Babangida in August 1985 led to the refocusing of national priorities. The regime introduced an economic packaging known as the Structural Adjustment Programme SAP (Asia, 2000; Aja, 1998). The programme was targeted at economic recovery through the opening up of the domestic economy to international market forces and institutions in a bid to use the benefits to transform the whole economy (Gyong, 2012). The implementation of the programme however led to some job losses and inflicted economic hardship on some Nigerians.

Late General Sani Abacha's regime (1993 – 1998) as part of his national objectives in the economic sector pursued a policy package that radically de-emphasized the influence of international institutions and relied essentially on the exploration of domestic efforts in economic transformation. The emergence of President Obasanjo as the third executive president of Nigeria in 1999 led to greater expectations of the populace given the long years of military dictatorship in the country.

The Obasanjo civilian administration after his swearing-in on May 1999 earlier focused on democratic consolidation and later embarked on a wide range of reforms in the various sectors of the economy. As part of the nation's economic recovery and realization of national objectives and goals, the country cued into two global initiatives; the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the Millennium Development Goals, (Onuoha, 2008). The National Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) with emphasis on the protection of human rights, security, welfare of the people, promotion of peace, national unity and harmony, respect for the rule of law and equitable distribution of resources to the good of all was also put in place (Tunji,2008).

In order to move Nigeria forward locally and internationally, the late president Yar' Adua's administration marshalled out a 7 – point Agenda as the nation's national objectives in the following areas:

- Energy and power sector.
- Food, land reform and agricultural development.
- Provision of adequate security for life and property.
- Reforming the electoral process and system in Nigeria in order to address and solve the age – long story associated with the electoral history of the country.
- Promotion of high standard of education.

- Health sector reforms and development.
- Resolving crises in the Niger Delta regions (Otoghagua, 2007: 386).

In furtherance to the realization of national objectives in Nigeria, Nigeria's former President, Dr. Goodluck Jonathan (2011-2015) launched a Transformation Agenda that was planned for between, 2011 and 2015. This was necessitated by the need to correct the flaws in the country's drive for development. The administration noted obvious previous lapses in the areas of lack of continuity, consistency and commitment (3cs) to agreed policies. These led to growth without development and improvement in the overall welfare of the Nigerian citizens. Transformation itself implies a development strategy aimed at a complete or radical change in the life of an individual or nation, organization or community.

On the swearing-in and inauguration of President Buhari's administration on May 2015, the former Nigeria's Military Head of State (1984-85) announced a fresh Agenda known as "change" (from the old patterns of governance and administration in Nigeria) to a completely new way of life, both in the leadership and the citizenry. The administration observed that corruption had actually negated developmental efforts in Nigeria and set for itself the task of confronting it headlong.

3.3. Impediments to the realization of national objectives in Nigeria

A myriad of factors have continued to cripple the efforts of the Nigerian state in her bid to realize and sustain national objectives or goals. Although some efforts have been made in certain sectors at one time or the other, yet, majority of the Nigerian people still wallow in fear, insecurity, poverty, frustration, hunger, unemployment, illiteracy, rising cases of internal displacement of persons and decayed infrastructure. Some of the impediments are noted as follows:

3.3.1. Leadership Ineptitude

The problem of leadership has remained the bane of Nigeria's developmental crises. This manifested immediately after Nigeria's independence in 1960. Thus, "some Nigeria's founding fathers and nationalist leaders failed to reconcile their individual and party differences, ethno – religious acrimonies, personal interest, selfishness and greed became the order of the day, paving way for the first military incursion into Nigeria's politics." (Ndoh & Emezi, 1997:116)

Aja (2006:1) described leadership as "a burdensome duty involving the capacity to inspire, motivate and coordinate a people or constituency against the odds in the ways of achieving a vision without losing enthusiasm, cohesion or stability". A foremost Nigerian poet, scholar and philosopher, Chinua Achebe in his little book "The trouble with Nigeria" captured the crux of Nigeria's development challenges when he observed that:

The trouble with Nigeria, is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air, or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership (Achebe, 1984:1).

In spite of the bogus campaign promises of Nigeria politicians and their pledge to uphold the sanctity of the nation or constitution, most Nigerian leaders (across board) have in various instances compromised their positions and allowed personal sentiments to prevail instead of the nation's interest. Putting of square pegs on round holes (to reflect ethnic or party interest) has remained the order of the day. Integrity, honesty, competence, service and sacrifice which are the essential ingredients of good leadership have almost been thrown to the wind in Nigeria, accountability is often made to the party hierarchy, (Kingmakers) or god fathers and not to the people.

3.3.2. Corruption

Corruption has been identified as the single most damaging factor affecting the realization of national objectives in Nigeria. Corruption has permeated every segment or sector of the Nigerian society. The different dimensions corruption takes has led to divergent views among scholars on what exactly constitutes corruption or its meaning. However, the Independent Corrupt Practices (and other related offences) Commission (ICPC) Act 2000 and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Act 2004 have however given a broadened definition of corruption to mean:

Money laundering, embezzlement, bribery, looting and any form of corrupt practices, illegal arms deal, smuggling, human trafficking and child labour, illegal oil bunkering, illegal mining, tax evasion, foreign exchange malpractices including counterfeiting of currency, theft of intellectual property and piracy, open market abuse, dumping of toxic wastes, and prohibited goods (Section 46, EFCC Establishment Act, 2004).

Corruption also denotes the manifestation of anti-social behaviour exhibited by an individual, or group of persons whereby unjust gain is made in the process (Ifamose, 2007). The act usually goes contrary to a society's established norms on moral standard in the sense that it reduces the capacity of the state to effectively and equitably cater for the material and spiritual wellbeing of the people. Similarly, the International Monetary Fund (1998) defined corruption as an abuse of office or trust for selfish or private gain. Corruption in Nigeria has continued to take many dimensions.

Lawal (2012) and Ukachukwu (2015) identified the forms of corruption in Nigeria to include: smuggling, giving and receiving of bribes; various forms of fraud, and sabotage, illegal payment, money laundering, drug trafficking, falsification of records and documents; false declaration, tax evasion, forgery, deceit, examination malpractices, aiding and abetting of crimes, etcetera. The incidence of corruption in Nigeria has not only remained a cog on the wheel of Nigeria's progress but an international embarrassment. For instance, in 1996, the Transparency International ranking placed Nigeria as the 54th most corrupt nation in the world among the 54 countries studied (Moore, 1997). Although the nation improved in the later years in her corruption rating, yet, Nigeria still ranks among the first ten most corrupt countries by global rating as at 2012 (Ogbeidi, 2012). In the 2018 Global corruption ranking, Nigeria moved from 148th position to 144th which represents just a little progress on Nigeria's watch to eliminating corruption.

In a bid to checkmate corruption in Nigeria, the various administrations in the country have not been paying lip service to addressing the menace. For instance, in 2002, the administration of Nigeria's former president, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo had to set up two corruption fighting agencies known as the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission (ICPC) and Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). Although the agencies over the years have made some recorded progress in tracking down some corrupt public office holders and arraigning them for prosecution, however, the EFCC in particular has been severally accused of partisanship, undue executive influence and partiality in the way it carries out its activities especially against members of the opposition.

4. MILITANCY AND TERRORISM

D'Archy (2011) notes that militancy refers to any action or activity that is grievance motivated, adversarial, confrontational and collectively carried out to actualize a mission. Militancy seeks to create tension, crisis or violent situation to the extent that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue (King, 1963). Due to the abject neglect of the oil producing areas of the Niger Delta by the federal government and multinational oil companies that operate in the region, militant groups such as the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP), Niger Delta People's Volunteer Force (NDPVF), Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) among others arose in the area. These groups ran out of patience with the state and resorted to the use of violent activities such as kidnapping, hostage taking, oil bunkering and bombings against oil workers and installations leading to loss of lives and revenue (Oudeman, 2006; Ejibunu, 2007). Respite only came to the Niger Delta following the Amnesty programme initiated by the late Yar'Adua's administration.

In 2009, a Moslem fundamentalist sect known as Boko Haram emerged in Maiduguri, Borno State, under the leadership of Yusuf Mohammed. The sect had heightened terrorist attacks in Nigeria. According to Alao & Atere (2012:3) the term "terrorism" was coined from terror, derived from a Latin verb "terrere" which means to "frighten". Terrorism has been defined as actions focusing on harming some people in order to create fear in others by targeting civilians and facilities or system on which civilians rely (Laquer, 2003). However, the scope and operation of Boko Haram in Nigeria has been extended to police stations, military barracks, motor parks, worship centres and markets.

Boko Haram attacks had left behind an inestimable damage to every facet of life in Nigeria. It has also slowed down national economic growth and development especially in the North Eastern Nigeria. As at the end of September 2015, it was estimated that Boko Haram killed about 3,500 persons in nine months. Nigeria has also been rated as ranking the 3rd among the countries with the highest rate of

internally displaced persons after Iraq and Syria (Jimmoh, 2011; Igbokwe, 2012). In 2018, Nigeria was also classified as the third most terrorized nation globally.

Uptill December 2018, the coordinated attacks carried out by Boko Haram against innocent citizens, the people and residents of the North-East Nigeria and its environs as well as security agencies remained unabated, with severe consequences. Among others, the United Nations in December 2018, had to withdraw her social aid workers in Borno State, Nigeria, following the incessant killing of some of the health workers by Boko Haram. The attacks the sect carried out at Metelle town of Maiduguri, Borno State against Nigerian soldiers and the Nigeria Police on November 2018 left scores of Nigerian soldiers and some Nigeria policemen involved in the fight against the insurgents dead. Within the period, some members of the Nigeria police drafted to fight the insurgency war in Borno State were forced to flee for their safety which led to their dismissal by the police command.

5. DECAYED INFRASTRUCTURE, SLOW PACE OF INDUSTRIALIZATION AND NON-DIVERSIFICATION OF THE ECONOMY

National objectives can hardly be realized under a weak technological and deteriorating economic base. The industrial sector in Nigeria over the years has virtually collapsed due to poor leadership and unfavourable business environment, coupled with power or energy crisis. This scenario has worsened the unemployment situation as the figure rose to 7.5% as at September, 2015. As at the last quarter of 2018, the unemployment level rose to over 11% according to figures released by the Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, NBS (2018). Consequently, poverty, fear, alienation, hunger, disillusionment, frustration and starvation have remained the lot of many Nigerians.

Just like some other less developed countries (LDCS) whose economy are heavily monoculturally oriented, Nigeria's fate over the years has been gloomy. There has been "over dependence on oil without concrete effort to diversify the economy" (Aja, 2002:43). This has grossly affected the Nigeria economy coupled with the fallen price of oil in the world market and depreciation of the value of the Naira vis-à-vis the U.S. dollar. Due to reduced financial receipts and other resources, both the federal and state governments were forced to review their 2015 federal and state budgets. The consequence has been the failure of the government to meet up with the provision of some essential services and prompt payment of salaries to public servants. This necessitated the 'bail out funds' from the federal to state governments. Some states in the country such as Abia, Imo, and Edo were also able to secure approval from their state Assemblies to obtain loans from the capital market for the provision of critical infrastructure.

6. CIVIC EDUCATION AND THE REALIZATION OF NATIONAL OBJECTIVES: THE NEXUS

A strong link exists between civic education and the realization of national objectives or goals. Civic education attempts to create awareness in the expectations of the government from her citizens. It also tries to establish the fact that every right has a duty and every duty a right. Therefore, every good citizen is expected to render the following duties to enable the state realize her national objectives:

To abide by the constitution, respect its ideals and its institutions, the National Flag, the National Anthem, the National Pledge, and legitimate authorities; to help to enhance the power, prestige and good name of Nigeria, defend Nigeria and render such national service as may be required; respect the dignity of other citizens and the rights and legitimate interest of others and live in unity and harmony and in the spirit of common brotherhood; make positive and useful contributions to the advancement, progress and well-being of the community where he resides; render assistance to appropriate and lawful agencies in the maintenance of law and order; and declare his income honestly to appropriate and lawful agencies and pay his tax promptly, (Chapter 11, Section 24, amended Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999:35)

Similarly, the government is expected to implement those aspects of the constitution that provides for the rights of the citizens. These rights are provided in Chapter IV (33) of the 1999 Constitution which include: right to life; right to the dignity of the human person; right to personal liberty; right to fair hearing; right to private life; right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; right to freedom of expression and the press; right to peaceful assembly and association; right to freedom of movement; right to freedom from discrimination.

A properly sensitized and mobilized citizenry shall be properly equipped to discharge their civic obligations. With greater awareness among the people and sincerity on the part of the leaders with

respect to discharging their obligations to the people, greater support to the government will likely be built. In addition, a servant – leader mentality would also be created. Citizens will likely refrain from acts capable of running down the state as they will know that by destroying the state, they would invariably be destroying themselves.

7. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Civic education has become a very effective way of enabling the citizens acquire the right values, attitudes and orientation for the survival of democracy and realization of national objectives or goals. Education is aimed at informing and reforming an individual and inculcating in him basic skills and values that will enable him perform expected roles for individual and society survival. Mass participation in governance contributes to the survival of democracy, the extent to which the people are equipped will also determine the level they will go in political participation.

National objectives are usually development driven. The ultimate goal is to ensure that the dividends of democracy get to the majority of the citizens. A lot of efforts and strategies have been undertaken by the Nigerian state in this regard since her political independence in 1960. However, about 58 years down the line, the nation is still far from meaningfully fulfilling or sustaining her national objectives to the majority of the people especially in the areas of security, energy (power), economic development, education, health, and other social services.

The study recommends that concerted efforts be made towards the reinforcement of the teaching of civic or citizenship education at all levels of education in Nigeria and on the wider society. Effort should also be made in the re-awakening of the activities of the National Orientation Agency (NOA), at least for the agency to make its presence or activities felt at the grassroots.

The fight against insurgency in Nigeria should be pursued with greater vigour in view of the unrelenting attacks by the sect (Boko Haram). Checkmating the activities of the sect will improve socio-economic activities especially in Northern Nigeria as well as attracting more investors into the country.

As corruption has been noted as a major set back to the realization of national objectives in Nigeria, no effort should be spared in sincerely fighting against this cankerworm. Politicians and all corrupt officers in both the public and private sectors with proven cases of indulging in corrupt practices must be meant to face the music, there should not be sacred cows. The fight should not be based on ethnic, racial, religious or party considerations. The state must ensure that all stolen or embezzled public funds be recovered and proper accounts made. In addition, for the fight against corruption to succeed, the welfare of workers in all sectors of the economy must be given priority by the government.

Besides, the much talked about economic diversification should not continue to be left on paper. In view of the fallen value of the naira vis-à-vis other major currencies such as the U.S. dollar; the crisis in the global oil market and the reluctance of some Nigeria traditional buyers like the United States to continue patronizing the Nigerian oil, time has now come for Nigeria to consciously look into the non oil sectors of the economy (Ayo, 2015).

Finally, given the multi-ethnic, religious and diverse political sentiments characteristic of Nigeria as a federation, there is a dire need for an attitudinal change in the “winner takes all” mindset of Nigerian politicians which was not actually the case during Nigerian’s earlier republic (Dibia, 2012). There is the need to oppose constructively and for the party in power to be tolerant of opposing views. Since after the inauguration of President Muhammadu Buhari’s administration in May 2015, a lot of criticisms have continued to trail his alleged lopsided nature in some major appointments in favour of the North. To reverse this situation, the president is expected to be more broad based in the politics and administration of the country in order to carry every part of the country along as the realization of national objectives in Nigeria should be seen as the collective responsibility of all Nigerians irrespective of political party, religious or ethnic affiliation.

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Citation: Alozie, Cyprian C. "The Relevance of Civic Education in the Realization of National Objectives in Nigeria". *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, vol. 6, no.5, 2019, pp. 17-27. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.20431/2349-0381.0605002>.

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