The Military and Human Capacity Building for National Development in Historical Perspective

By

Dominic A. Akpan
Department of History and International Studies
University of Uyo
E-mail: dominicapanistory@gmail.com
GSM 08035806603
&
Kia Bariledum, PhD
Department of History and International Diplomacy
Rivers State University
Npkolu Oroworukwo
E-mail: basiledum.kia@ust.ed.ng
GSM 09136875564

Abstract

The military institution, alongside its activities in the nation's development, was purely seen as an institution that strove around violence-containment, maintained order and warded-off external aggression. Today that shared idea is no longer tenable and changes have come to erase that secular mindset. The military has gone beyond that primary roles: military as an institution has improved and set the nation for national development. Human capacity involves training for leadership and special roles in the society. The military institution has taken up this with the understanding that nations could still be built without one being a soldier, or even after retiring as a military personnel could still be called upon for national duty outside containing with violence and war. To this end, the military as an institution has built schools from primary, secondary and tertiary to raise manpower for the nation's development. The paper concludes that Nigeria's military institutions have contributed much to human capacity building of the nation over the years. For instance, there exist the Nigeria's

Defense Academy for training of military personnel: Army, Navy and Air Force Secondary Schools for young people, among others. Personnel trained in these institutions are very numerous exercising their functions today such as the Former Minister of Interior, the Chief of Army Staff, etc. The paper uses historical analysis as its methodology.

Introduction

There are many institutions of significance in Nigeria performing one function or another for the enhancement of national development. One of such institutions is the military. To many Nigerians, the military institution is a "closed" institution whose activities are shrouded in secrecy because of the nature of its functions, hence many therefore perceive the military institution differently. On the other hand, to an ordinary Nigerian, the main function of the military apart from the function of maintaining Nigeria's integrity and territorial warding off external aggression and maintaining internal peace, it only concerns itself with curbing violence. It is true that the institution strives around valence, containment, maintaining of order among other things. Today, the military institution has gone beyond the borders of fighting wars and maintain internal order within the sovereignty. It is also true that the maintenance of peace is leading to development in all perspectives of human endeavour. For now, military interest in the development of Nigeria has gone beyond the level of peace maintenance and building, to human capacity from the grassroot or elementary education to the apex of educational attainment. How? That is developing the military personnel to the university level.

The answer to the how again is that, the Nigeria's military institution has taken up as a duty with the understanding that nations could still be built without one being a soldier, or even after retiring as a military personnel be engaged or called upon for national duty outside containing with violence and war. In this connection, the military as an institution embarked upon building of schools – primary, secondary, tertiary, some with specialized areas to complement the different tiers of government in raising manpower for the nation's development. It is against this background that the paper tends to look at those schools and their contributions to human capacity building for the nation.

Concept of Human Capacity Building

It is nation ability to produce and maintain manpower through acquisition of appropriate skills for value utilization in an informal (non-institutionalized) and formal (institutionised) in an economy. It means the production of capable intellectuals to man the various sectors of the economy through training, in various trades for nation's development. The various training for the production of manpower is acquired in institution such as technical schools, skill acquisition centres, Colleges, Polytechnics, Universities, research institutes, other means are through informal means such as trade, etc. The human capacity building should possess the valency and impact on keys sectors of the economy in areas such as infrastructure, scientific research, innovation and technology, as well as medicine and pharmaceuticals. It should also focus on agriculture, manufacturing, space exploration, tourism, and finance related values.

According to United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP), as quoted by Thingan (2005), it is a process of enlarging people's choices that are created by expanding human capabilities. Those expanding human capabilities involve higher income, access to safe drinking water, better medical facilities, better schooling for children, affordable transport, adequate shelter, and secure livelihood. These would lead to economic growth and by extension economic development. Torado and Smith (2009) see human capacity building as productive investments embodied in human persons. These include skills, abilities, ideals, and health resulting from expenditures on education, on the job training programme, and medical care.

Understanding National Development

National development means the growth of the nation in form of unity, education, economic well-being, and mass participation in food production. Inyanda and Adama (2003) also believe that national development is the ability of the nation to provide a conducive atmosphere for the realization of individuals, the existence of buoyant economy and availability of social infrastructural facilities for the populace. The authors succumb to the views that national development is an improvement in all ramifications of a nation's life. Development in the society needs everyone's contribution to fuel its growth.

Development in the past was seen as the growth in the volume or quality of goods and services or simply an increase in the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country. But this increase did not work for or did not improve the conditions of people especially in developing countries despite the change in GDP. Today development is defined qualitatively to mean a general sustainable improvement in the welfare of the entire society. It means that social indicators such as levels of employment, housing, education, poverty, nutrition, infant and maternal mortality, life expectancy (Akpakpan, 1987; Tordoff, 1997). Development is one's ability to have good and affordable food to eat, access to safe drinking water, good shelter, access to good and affordable medical facilities, being able to communicate, have access to good education and decent and sustained infrastructural facilitates (Akpan, 2011). In the words of Robert Reich, a former Labour secretary in the Clinton's administration, and now Chancellor's Professor or Public Policy at the University of California, Berkerley, in his book, *The Work of Nation* "a nation competitiveness does not depend on its Gross Domestic Product or the profitability of companies within it. Rather it depends on the education and skills of its citizens, the opportunities available to them, and the infrastructure connecting them with one another. The essence of diversity in a competitive global market", (Punch, August 2, 2017).

Why Nigerian Human Capacity was Low

Nigeria is ranked as a developing economy. Even before independence, there was an acute shortage of manpower in nearly all sectors of the Nigerian economy. In the military, there was equally shortage of manpower and at the exit of the British, it became necessary to fill those vacancies created by the British military officers. To ameliorate this, the new state embarked on the training of Nigerians to fill the vacuum created by the exodus of white administrators. Scholarships were awarded to deserving Nigerians to study locally and abroad in needy areas such as the sciences, economics, law etc. The same was found in the military. However, this did not mean that Nigerian youths under the British rule were not trained in different fields. Nigerians were trained in different fields of human endeavour even in the military. For instance, the likes of Retired General Yakubu Gowon, Late Major General Yar'dua and a lot of other Nigerian military officers received their military training when the British were holding fort in Nigeria. This group of young Nigerians formed the base of military officers that the British left behind, it

was against this background that at independence, the Nigerian State embarked on the training of men of various categories for the national development.

Level of Human Capacity Building by the Military

Human capacity building for Nigeria is not all about the building of infrastructural facilities such as schools of sizes and levels but training of able youths in different spheres. Thus, the levels of human capacity range from the primary, secondary and tertiary levels. The primary levels are equally structured to meet the changing levels in the Nigerian society, so also is the secondary and the tertiary levels. As earlier said, there were schools for the training of Nigerian in the military that were established even before independence. But the most important thing to note is the level and expected goals to be achieved.

Primary Level of Human Capacity Building

During the colonial period, the colonial masters had established military barracks/cantonments in the three regions of Nigeria and the then Nigerian Federal Capital – Lagos. In other words, Lagos was the Seat of Government and the Colonial Capital, Kaduna was Northern regional capital, Ibadan for the West and Enugu for the East. Since the concentration of both the British administrators and the army was in Lagos, it became expedient for them to establish an Army Children School to cater for the children of the officers.

In line with this motive, the first Army Children's School, Ann's Barracks was established in Yaba, Lagos in 1947 (Sam, 2018). In January 1964, Nigerian Defence Academy was established before then it was known as a reformist of the British Royal Military Forces Training College, it was renamed on Independence as Nigerian Military Training College (Edet, 2018).

However, the following institutions and their functions are established by the military in line with Nigerian government .

a. Command Children's School for the Army, Navy and Airforce in some states of the Federation; Army Children Primary Schools are established in all the states of the federation.
b. In the secondary school category – nearly all states have Army Secondary Schools. It may be for the army, navy or airforce.

Tertiary Institution for the Army, Navy and Airforce and Artisans

i. Nigeria Defence Academy, Kaduna: To train able bodied men into quality officer; in the Nigeria Defence Academy, the programs for the undergraduate cadets cuts across Arts and Humanities, Sciences and Technology, Engineering, Medicine Etc. Nigeria Defence Academy also has a wing that runs Postgraduate programmes for non-military in Arts and Humanities. Social Sciences, Sciences and Engineering.
ii. National Defence College, Abuja: Here is to train Senior officers for strategic command.
iii. Nigeria Army War College, Abuja, newly established to train middle class officers on combat role and command responsibility.
iv. Armed Forces Command and Staff College, Jaji, this institution prepared young officers for staff and administrative duties.
v. Nigerian Army College of Logistics, Lagos: The schools is training officers on combat, logistics management and supply.
vi. Nigerian Army School of Finance and Administration, Lagos: It trains administrative and finance officers of middle cadre.
vii. Nigeria Army Resoruce Centre, Abuja: It trains senior officers who would be useful to themselves disengagement from service (Sam, 2018).
viii. Army Resettlement Centre, Oshodi: for non-commissioned officers who are preparing to retire. The study runs between six months and one year (Edet, 2018).
ix. In Illorin, the Army has a school that trains officers for administrative programmes in Accountancy, para-medical service, relating to office management, filling, etc.
x. At Ikeja cantonment, there is provision for junior officers to learn trade-in areas such as tailoring, carpentry, etc.

The Military and Human Capacity Building before Independence

As observed by Osuagwu (2000), the Nigerian military was (is) the creation of the British. To complement the British efforts in securing and maintaining peace in Nigeria then, the British embarked on recruitment of some able Nigerians and trained them in their military institutions. However, it is not certain whether the British lack funds or so, but in 1954, Nigerian Military School, Zaria was established to train the military middle manpower for the nation. Other Nigerians

were still being trained at the higher level overseas – these include the likes of General Aguiyi Ironsi, General Yakubu Gowon Late Hassan Katisina, Rtd. General Mohammadu Buhari who had their military education in Sandhust. Apart from the training of high human capacity cadre, the British were able to build in Lagos, primary school and later secondary school to cater for the children of soldiers who were stationed in Lagos. This perhaps marked the beginning of human capacity building for the nation from the military perspective.

The Military and Human Capacity After Independence

Soon after independence, the British Soldiers were gradually being disengaged, the Nigeria military leadership saw the need for education within and outside the military. This was as a result of the gap created at the exit of the British military armed forces. To close the gap, the military hierarchy began to build military schools, one of such was the expansion of the Nigeria Military School in 1964. The Nigeria Military School became the 'rallying' point and the seed where the military began to grow.

The Military and Internal Security Management, the Resource Perspective

Since the 1970s, the Nigerian State has been largely sustained by fossil resources of the Niger Delta. The fossil resource is the heartbeat of Nigeria, the economy revolves around it, thus, human development is anchored on it. Even before 1979, till date, this resource exploitation has often been threatened by the activities of militants. The militants have been a thorn on the flesh in the exploitation of the resources. They may be right in their demands for various reasons beginning from environmental degradation, loss of their livelihood and perhaps non-participation in the exploitation of the oil resources. The point here is that, the military has been playing and is still playing a role to make sure that the oil exploitation goes on unimpeded by the activities of these groups.

The militants often engage themselves in the blowing of oil pipelines, kidnapping of oil workers, blockage of different kinds among others. The military alongside other security operatives formed themselves into Joint Task Force (JTF) to curtail the activities of these 'boys' at various times. Some of the soldiers have laid down their lives in the process so that the economy can grow for the good of every Nigerian. Often times, these militants armed themselves in more sophisticated

weapons that even the military hence, they sometimes overpower the military in the process. The activities of these militants form part of the base of terrorism in Nigeria, a situation that is inimical to national development (Tell, Magazine, 2007).

The Military and Internal Security

Over the years especially in this 21st century, the Nigerian state has witnessed dramatic insurgencies and violent atrocities more than ever before. Nigerian youths either being sponsored or otherwise have constituted themselves into "vipers" aimed at destroying their fatherland. The excuses often painted range from poverty, hunger to unemployment. Whatever is the reason, the Nigerian state has not known any peace or see peace especially since 1979 till date. It is either the Niger Delta militants wrestling power with the Federal Government over exploitation of oil in the Niger Delta, or Boko Haram in the North-east Nigeria over religious issues or creation of Islamic state in that region, or the Independent People of Biafra – seeking a break away from Nigeria, the herdsmen problem in North-Central Nigeria, among others (Akpan, 2018).

The Niger Delta militants and the Independent Peoples of Biafra are not deadly as the Boko Haram and the herdsmen. Boko Haram has killed over one million people since 2009, and herdsmen have killed over one million people in the past four years. Boko Haram and Fulani herdsmen are globally regarded as terrorists, hence, they constitute nuisance to the corporate existence of Nigeria. North-east Nigeria and Central Nigeria especially Benue, Taraba, Nasarawa, Kogi, Plateau have not known peace. The point to make is that without the military perhaps Boko Haram in particular would have overrun Nigeria by now. They conquered over twelve local government areas of Bornu and Yobe before they were warded-off by the military. In other words, the Nigeria military is alert in maintaining peace and cohesiveness of one Nigeria (Punch, March 22, 2016).

The Military and National Development

If national development is taken to mean the growth of the nation in form of unity, education, economic well-being, and mass participation in food production, then the military has contributed its quota to Nigeria. Firstly, the growth and development of any nation cannot flourish without security. This means that the insecurity in any nation is counter-productive in the growth of economies. For

instance, in 1966, there was a coup in Nigeria which led to the breakdown of law and order which regulated in the Nigerian Civil War. Although some of the military men who engaged in the coup and later the Civil War some were product of the Nigeria Defence Academy and Nigeria Military School, what this meant is that the military too was responsible to lack of peace in Nigeria. Without the Nigerian military perhaps today Nigeria would have disintegrated. However, even before now, there were coups and counter-coups in Nigeria, yet the military has been able to protect Nigeria unity till date. In other words it is the security that the military kept that is still sustaining Nigeria as a sovereign state.

Again, today there are "drums of war" being beaten daily either by the Niger Delta militants, Independent People's of Biafra (IPOB), the Boko Haram insurgents, armed robbers, ethnic feuds are gaining momentum, but for the courageous military personnel, perhaps Nigeria would have disintegrated or collapsed completely. These military personnel, bulk of them come from Nigeria's military institutions such as military school, Zaria, Nigeria Defense Academy, NDA, etc. So, the military has a positive linking effect on the security of the environment for other developmental processes to take place.

The military again through their training has become the leaders on their own that assisted in leading Nigerians. Leadership is the nucleus and a crucial factor in development at any level, be it for small unit of a village, business enterprise, military or inter-governmental circles. In the military, this was manifested in the 'black days' of Nigeria history between 1966 and 1970, when General Yakubu Gowon created a twelve state structure and appointed military Governors to these states. These military Governors were able to hold their states together – maintaining peace and order – thus enhancing the growth and development of these states. Leadership is not about the insignia of the office to display, but all about the performance – that of producing good results and fulfilling a mission in the interest of the led. So, the military personnel also leaders not only in the military sphere, but even after retirement. For instance, there are military personnel today who had retired but are still performing in other areas of human endeavour for the growth of Nigeria. For instance, former Minister of the Interior General, Damboba and the Comptroller of Customs, Col. Hameed Ali are all products of the military but doing well in other areas of human development.

The Military and Higher education for National Development

In Nigeria, there is the challenge to the development of higher education. The primary goal of higher education in any society is to enhance and empower development drive within an economy. This has been eluding Nigeria in the past years. However, in terms of economic benefits, as African Union (2006) placed it, higher education facilitates employment, increases salaries and savings, improves working conditions and mobility for the individual, and brings about greater productivity, national development, increased consumption and transformation of low skills and industry to knowledge based economies for the public. It is a critical element of competitiveness and prosperity in an increasing knowledge based global economy. According to World Bank (2002), tertiary education exercise a direct influence on national productivity, which largely determines levels of living and a country's ability to compete in a global economy.

On the area of social and political benefits, higher education leads to improved quality of life for self and family, better decision making, increased personal status and opportunity for the individual; and developed leadership, social mobility, and greater cohesion and reduced crime rates. Higher education to a large extent enhances the political context by contributing to building civil society, enlightened citizenship, self-reliance, equal opportunity and skills and values of defensive dialogue and reasoning, tolerance and respect. It facilitates national development by promoting democratic ideals as well as intellectual and industrial competitiveness, by promoting greater social cohesion, peace, trust in social institutions, democratic participation, and above all appreciation of diversity in gender, ethnicity, religion and social class (World Bank, 2002). The military as an institution developed this culture of improving human capacity established higher tertiary institutions for the military and non-military personnel. This has gone a long way to improve and complement the federal and state governments roles in higher institution building.

Higher education is critical to building human capital, for example, accountants, doctors, engineers, lawyers, teachers, leaders, administrators, entrepreneurs,

critical thinkers, etc, that in turn builds the institution that are regarded as an indispensable factor for development (Devesh and Megan, 2008).

The Military and the Future of their Retirees and National Development

The military hierarchy in their wisdom understands the tortuous moments most retirees pass through after their disengagement not only in the military but from the civil services especially those in the lower cadre of employment. For the top echelon of the military, perhaps that would not constitute much headache but for the junior ranking group it does. The junior ranking are usually referred to as non-commissioned officers. To this end, the military established a resettlement centre at Oshodi in Lagos. This is a vocational centre meant for those preparing to retire to pick up a vocation (trade). It means these personnel would be sent there to learn a trade usually lasting between six months and one year- for skills training either in tailoring, welding, etc. and any vocational job of one's choice. This is done so that they would not become nuisance to the society on their disengagement owing to financial problems or idleness. Again the take-home at the point of disengagement would not be sufficient to keep them and their families for a long time. This has gone a long way to assist this cadre of retirees to prepare themselves for the future outside military and barracks life (Edet, 2018).

To complement the function of Oshodi, at the Ikeja Cantonment the military has also recruited people to learn various trades as a survival strategy after disengagement in tailoring, carpentry among others trades (Edet, 2018).

In Ilorin, the military has created a special training ground to give opportunity to personnel to train as administrators in areas such as Accountancy, para-medical service relating to office management, fillings etc. The duration is usually one year. All these prepare them for a life after barracks (Edet, 2018).

Road Building and Maintenance

The Nigerian military has well trained engineers who are engaged in the building of roads and maintenance of the existing ones. However, the first time, the military showed the prowess not only in fighting wars but on road expansion and maintenance was in 1975 when Uyo – Aba road was being expanded by the military under Gowon's regime. The military has engaged in the building of other

roads, bridges in other parts of Nigeria. What these mean is that the road and bridges have been able to facilitate the movement of people, goods and services from one part of the country or another. Examples of such goods and services are tangible goods such as machineries, spare parts, food and other services. Movement of goods and services is the epicenter of human development. In this connection the military has complemented so much on that direction.

Summary

The Nigeria military as an institution occupies a central theme in any discussion because of its role in maintaining security for the development of the country. It is often seen by some people as an institution of violence. This is not so after all, military as an institution though it appears to be violent has principally complemented its role to that of partnering with civil society in a form to develop individuals and the society. It has come to establish schools from primary to higher institutions. Thus, social and economic progress of any nation is achieved principally through the advancement and application of knowledge and education at all levels where necessary. But education at a higher level is very important because of the skills, innovation, application and production of necessary elements for development. In this connection, the military has embarked on human capacity building that has been a plus to national development. It has turned out thousands of graduates of different levels into the global market as soldiers and as civilians, all complementing each other. Most importantly, no nation can do well in an insecure environment – the military has maintained security and containing insurgency, violence especially those experiment in Central Nigeria, North-east and the Niger Delta using the same people they train to maintain this order.

Conclusion

The thesis is that the military as an institution has performed creditably well over the years. It has diversified its functions from maintain internal security and warding off external aggression. That it has done well, for instance the Bakassi Peninsula issue, the Nigerian military was able to march the Cameroonians armed forces. On the other hand, apart from its oversight functions, the military is embarking on the development of human capacity building to build the Nigerian nation. This has manifested in the establishment of primary schools, secondary

schools and tertiary institutions with various names, but performing the function in which they are meant for. These schools have turned out credible individual who are assisting in performing one function or another. The military and non-military graduants are gingering Nigeria socially, politically and economically. Socially, individuals such as Professor Okon Eminue of the Veritas University, Abuja, is a military trained, now turned teacher, assisting to produce future leaders of this country through education. Olusegun Obasanjo led Nigeria as a civilian head of state from 1979 to 1987. Politically, the immediate past president, General Mohammadu Buhari is of military background, holding fort and leading Nigeria to enhance its growth both physically and socio-culturally. In other words, the military is also on the forefront of development. The human capacity building for national development has enhanced the Human Development Index. HDI refers to the quality of life enjoyed by citizens of any country in focus, one of its measures is per capita income. Although Nigeria is low in that ratio, without peace brought by the military, perhaps it would have been worst off by now. The military functions and its diversification has promoted human development than it was before now.

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