An Open Access Journal Available Online

Human Security for Sustainable Development in Nigeria: The Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

Lukman Muhammad Bashar

Shehu Shagari College of Education, Sokoto, Nigeria
lukman.bashar@gmail.com

Abstract: Human security is needed in response to the complexity and the interrelatedness of both old and new security threats ranging from chronic and persistent poverty to ethnic violence, human trafficking, climate change, health pandemics, international terrorism, and sudden economic and financial downturns. The paper: Human Security for Sustainable Development in Nigeria: The Role of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) looks at the role of improved technology in human security and development, analyzes technology utilization in addressing human security and development issues in Nigeria. It recommends among others increasing the accessibility of information technology to reduce the threat to sustainable livelihood.

Keywords: Human Security, Sustainable Development, Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

1. Introduction

The development of any nation is usually measured by the degree and extent of the sociocultural, socio-economic, and economic improvements that are brought to bear through the enterprises of Science, Technology, and Mathematics. One of the many roles of the state is to provide peace, security, and a platform for development for its citizens.

Human security focuses primarily on protecting people while promoting peace and assuring sustainable continuous development. It addresses issues such as organized crime and

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criminal violence, human rights and good governance, genocide and mass crimes, resources and environment. It emphasizes aiding individuals by using a people centered approach for resolving inequalities that affect security.

Information and communication technology (ICT) is a term that has several meanings across different sectors. It is used as an umbrella term to refer to the use of communication devices such as radio and cellular devices, satellite devices and channels, computers and utilities to manage the acquisition, dissemination, processing, storage, and retrieval of information (Ogu, Oyeyinka 2014).

The introduction of ICT into many aspects of everyday life has led to the development of the modern concept of the information society. This development offers great opportunities such as improving both access to education, and the quality of that education. Insecurity in Nigeria is at a level where it is necessary to deploy technological systems and professionals to help fight all crimes and corruption in the country.

Having a clear picture of issues, leads to a better understanding of events. In order to give this paper a better focus, basic concepts would be clarified. The major concepts of this paper are: human security, Information and communication technology (ICT), and sustainable development. It discusses the security challenges in Nigeria and the role (ICT) could play in ensuring human security and sustainable development of the Nigerian society.

2. Human Security
Security entails safety, it is protection against harm. It is the protection of a country, a building, or a person against attack or danger (Isaac, 2007). It has

been defined as a state of well-being characterized by freedom from danger, risk, lack, uncertainties etc. (Nwankwo, 2013).

Human security is a concern for the well-being of human beings. It is the protection of human beings from threats and risks. It entails men and women having security at home, in the offices, and within the community. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report of 1994 defined human security as:

i.   Safety from chronic threats such as hunger, disease and repression.
ii. Protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the pattern of daily life whether in jobs, in homes or communities.

Human development report highlights two major components of human security. These are: freedom from fear, and freedom from want. Human security therefore entails ability of individuals to live in peace and harmony free from such threats as disease, hunger, unemployment, political oppression, environmental degradation etc. justice, fair-play, tolerance, protection of human rights and a level playing ground for all citizens to participate

3. Information and Communication Technology (ICT)
Today's world is knowledge-based and technology-driven. Technology has widened the scope of interaction among people all over the world and it has led to emergence of new and innovative ways of doing things. This has turned the world into a global village resulting to a technological revolution that cannot be ignored. To progress in this world therefore, individuals and groups within societies must acquire, utilize and communicate knowledge. Knowledge is power and a means of empowering all

citizens. A knowledgeable citizenry is a productive one. As a result of this, nations across the globe are placing more and more emphasis on the acquisition of technological capabilities for all citizens.

Information and communication technology has been defined as modern equipment and tools that includes hardware, software, networks and media for collecting, storing, processing, transmitting, and presenting information (World Bank, 2002). Computer hardware and software network and other digital devices such as radios, videos, television etc. convert information in form of text, sound, or motion into digital forms. Mohammed (2007) defined ICT as an umbrella term that encompasses all technologies for the manipulation and communication of information. Wuru (2008) also defined ICT as a wide range of technologies that are enormous and powerful tools for development. It is a wide range of technologies that includes telephones (land and cellular), computer, satellite, telex fax, radios, television, videos etc. (Ikemelu, 2015). Nwabueze and Ozioka (2016) also defined ICT as a broad-based technology that supports the creation, storage, manipulation and communication of information.

Information and communication technology plays an important role in the use of the individual and society. It has brought tremendous awareness and new technologies are tremendously changing our world. They create jobs, transform education, healthcare delivery, and politics.

They help in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and contribute to security (Wuru, 2008).

4. Sustainable Development

Development is associated with progress, advancement, and the ability to provide for the material well-being of all citizens. It is the advancement in the social, economic, political, and spiritual well-being of all citizens. It involves social harmony and economic growth.

Sustainable development is the development that leads to the fulfilment of societal ideals. United Nations General Assembly in 1987 defined sustainable development as the development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs. It is development that is regenerating and self-sustaining. It is a development that is needed to maximize the output of citizens. The satisfaction of physical, mental, spiritual needs and the mastery of environment are the parameters of development when applied to human society (Nbuezor & Ozioka 2015).

Sustainable development is only possible when the capacity of human beings is built through the process of human resource development which education is the regulator. Education is ideally and organically linked with the production process. Education is concerned with imparting knowledge and a means of enabling individuals to tackle personal and societal problems. It provides appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes, abilities, and competence necessary for undertaking specific tasks and functions. Education improves human relationships, ensures economic growth, healthcare, effective citizenships, national consciousness, and national unity for enhanced human security.

A functional education promotes manpower development. It produces competent men and women who can

apply knowledge to solve personal and societal problems. That is, it provides training and skills for production of craftsmen/women, technicians, technologists and other skilled personnel who are enterprising and self-reliant.

However, for any education system to be relevant to the developmental needs of the society. It must develop the creative ability of individuals especially in the cultural and technological realms. It must foster in the individuals those values which make for good citizenship such as honesty, selflessness, tolerance, dedication, hard work and personal integrity. It must train the individual to relate and interact meaningfully with other individuals in the society and appreciate the importance of effective organization for his progress. It must also promote the culture of productivity by enabling every individual to discover the creative genius in him/her and apply it to the improvement of his existing skills.

The most important skills required for success in todays' world is information and communication technology (ICT). ICT equips individuals with critical wealth of skills, technical knowledge and diversity of understanding, values, and attitudes that are needed in order to live happily and contributes meaningfully to the development of the society. ICT provides limitless possibilities, allows opportunities in every field of human endeavor. Therefore, the ability to access and use information is no longer a luxury but a necessity, this underscores the need for basic knowledge of ICT for all citizens.

5. Security Challenges in Nigeria

Justice, equity, fair-play, and respect for the dignity of individuals are needed for responsible living within the society. In this respect, every citizen deserves the right to live in an environment that is free from social antagonism. That is, every citizen needs to be free from traumatic experiences, dysfunctional relationships and unsatisfactory conditions of life. Every citizen also deserves the right to resource information and the freedom of action to be able to fulfill social responsibilities. It is the responsibility of government to ensure that all citizens have equal right, obligations, and opportunities before the law.

In the last few years however, Nigerian citizens have suffered from social distinctions, and inequalities in the distribution of resources, social rights, privileges, and power thereby widening the gap between the haves and have not's. Poverty is now widespread and it is a leading factor to crime. Corruption, high rate of inflation, mismanagement land misappropriation of public funds due to poor governance have led to inability of government to protect and support its citizens physically, socially, and emotionally.

The Nigerian society is now witnessing serious political, religious, and ethnic disturbances, economic distress and high rate of youth unemployment which has made Nigerian youth to indulge in drug use and abuse, gangstarism, armed robbery, political thuggery, and other social vices leading to frequent crisis and violence. Absence of peace leads to insecurity and without security of human beings, sustainable development of the society is not possible.

6. Role of ICT in Sustainable Development

Economic security provides a durable foundation for peace and stability to prevail. Economic security however, depends on steady, regular, and adequate income and gainful

employment (Attah & Kyari, 2014). People must have a source of income to be responsible members of their families and the society at large. In a distressed economy, there is a high cost of basic necessities of life, high rate of inflation such that people cannot meet their basic needs of life. There is thus an unsatisfactory condition of life.

Unemployment and poverty are among the major symptoms of economic insecurity which deprive people from meeting their basic needs of life. Under such circumstances, children and youth are left uncartered for by their parents and the society. Many children and youth are forced out of school no matter their ability because their parents cannot afford the payment of school fees and other educational requirements. Those that are able to continue to graduation level hardly acquire more than the basic skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic. Many of them are now roaming the streets with certificates that cannot fetch them means of livelihood because they have not acquired relevant skills for gainful employment.

Education must prepare people for the future. To do this, people must learn with technology, and about technology. Amongst the yardsticks for measuring success at any education system is the marketability of the graduates of the system. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) provides unparalleled degree of communication collaboration, resources sharing, and unlimited access to information for more powerful and complete knowledge building. In ICT, skills are deployed and integrated with other types of knowledge and skills in a technological environmental context. That is technologically vibrant individuals.

The high rate of unemployment in Nigeria could be attributed to lack of equilibrium between skills needed in the labor market and the training received b youth. ICT trains the youth for economic and social responsibilities with which to convert poverty and promote peace. ICT provides relevant and comprehensive intellectual and vocational skills to meet the requirements of skilled manpower and improve access to jobs as an important requirement of the economy. Industrialization of the economy requires the production of competent engineers and technologists. ICT leads to emergence of new employment categories. Through the use of ICT, the world has become a global village where everyone can be reached.

Technological advances in transportation have made it possible for workers and traders to reach their destination in good time

ICT could be used in the laboratories to carry out experiments, monitor medical laboratory activities to provide efficient medical and veterinary doctors, pharmacists, nurses, radiologists, astronomers, engineers, architects, pilots, research scientists, and science educators.

ICT is used in saving lives, flying aircrafts, running nuclear power plants, processing orders, controlling production, making bookings, transferring vast amounts of money, controlling missile system and in the enhancement of educational practices. People can move about searching for new items in the world market, check for prices, and place order on what they need just in their living room.

7. Conclusion

It is evident from the discussion so far that ICT education for all individuals is not just a luxury, but rather a necessity. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) network is the basic facility through which information needs of industry, commerce and agriculture can be satisfied. Industrial development requires the coordination of a series of operation, including the acquisition of supplies, recruitment of labor, control stocks, processing of materials, and delivery of goods to buyers, as well as billing and record keeping. Information technology is vital to the effective development and control of many of these operations. Commerce is essentially on information processing activity; effective buying, selling and brokerage rely on the continual supply of up-to-date information regarding the availability of prices of goods and services. Farmers on the other hand, must not only grow food but they must sell effectively and buy seeds and fertilizer. They also need information on weather conditions, disease outbreaks and new agricultural techniques.

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