

EDUCATIONAL SECURITY: A PANACEA FOR GOAL ACHIEVEMENT IN NIGERIAN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

BY

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Abstract

Hundreds of Nigerian students have risked their lives in order to pursue their education. While schooling is not without its challenges especially when students are put at risk of losing freedom or their lives while in the classroom. It is disputed if Nigeria has ever been this hazardous, but the fact remains that the country's security system is overwhelmed and in dire need of all the solutions it can get its hands on right now. The study therefore examine security education as a panacea for goal achievement in Nigerian secondary schools. The concepts of security and insecurity were examined taking into cognizance the theoretical framework, effects and strategies for enhancing security situation in the schools. It was recommended among others that the entire school system be securitized and placed on red-alert for the state actors to devote adequate attention and resources towards ameliorating this menace, government should implement policies that will improve security, education expenditure and national income in order to improve school enrollment, seminars, conferences and workshops should be periodically organized for secondary school administrators, teachers and students in order for them to be well groomed on security measures in the school system and synergy should be established between the secondary school administrators, security agencies and the communities where the schools are established.

Keywords: *Insecurity, Goal achievement, Public secondary schools*

Introduction

Insecurity has become rampant in educational institutions right from the basic to the tertiary level and this scenario has severely affected the actualization of education goals. This has raised deep concern among parents, educational agencies, policymakers, administrators and relevant stakeholders in educational industry as peaceful terrain is inevitable for effective teaching and learning. Stakeholders in education are becoming worrisome of the safety of students, staff and facilities in school environment as the crime rate or violence has reached rampant proportions and the issue has taken on national significance as a result of these high-profile occurrences. A large or small school criminal occurrence is almost never not published in the news or is not the subject of a government inquiry or report in Nigeria today (Ayorinde, 2011). Insecurity is a social illness characterized by the presence of a danger to human life as well as organizational operations. In today's world, no facility can be considered secured in school if it does not have the bare minimum in terms of security measures in place to ensure the protection of people and their properties on a daily basis. Undoubtedly, many instructors and students are involved in confrontations that endanger their personal safety as well as the security of the school's physical facilities. When a person does not have control over a situation but must depend on the cooperation of others, which cannot be guaranteed, the outcome might be dissatisfaction or insecurity, which is very frightening. Schools are threatened by insecurity, which jeopardises learning as well as the general sense of calm that exists inside and around them. As a result, effective teaching and learning, as well as the activities of such schools, are jeopardised (Akintunde & Selzing-Musa, 2016).

The goal of secondary education can never be actualized in any country in the face of widespread insecurity of lives and properties. The global challenge of insecurity develops from organized high profile

crimes perpetrated through transactional syndication and racketeering has endlessly perceived as threats to survival of countries. The political history of Nigeria has been characterized by plethora of challenges ranging from violence, civil war, election related mayhem, riots and protests, militancy, insurgency and herdsmen/farmer clash. However, the rise of Boko Haram insurgency has created new dimension to Nigeria insecurity problem. The core belief of the notorious group is that western education is sinful and should be detested. The operations and activities of Boko Haram sect against education came to limelight following the abduction of 276 student of Government Girl College, Chibok. Brought a new dimension and tension on perception to Nigeria insecurity challenge as many secondary school attacks have been recorded in several state of the country afterward. There are cases of kidnapping of teachers and students in Lagos, Niger, Adamawa, Boronu, Kaduna and other states. There were reported cases of rapping of students and teachers, bombs have been brazenly detonated in school assembly leaving dozen dead while school buildings are burnt beyond recognition. Also, five secondary school teachers were abducted in River state leaving the students and people in the area in total fear and tension (Chinedu, & Iheanachor, 2015)

Studies have shown that over 3, 295 teachers have been killed and more than 39,000 others displaced in Boronu, Yobe and Adamawa between 2009 and 2020, while an estimated of 1500 schools have been destroyed since since 2014 with over 1, 280 casualties among teachers and students (Adesolu, 2019). Insecurity in school environment influence the effective teaching and learning of students (Akintunde & Musa, 2019). Situation of insecurity triggers traumatic disorder and toxic stress that affect learning negatively. General school attendance and enrolment are also affected as parents pull their children out of schools while in some extreme cases insecurity has led to closure of schools. For instance, in Boronu State, schools were shutdown in major town as a result of insurgency (Ameh, 2015). Effective teaching and learning are only feasible in a secured and conducive learning environment. Adebisi (2012) emphasises that academic success of students depends largely on emotional stability, while insecure environment impede learning.

Given the importance of education towards human capital and national development there is the need to deploy extraordinary measures to tackle the state of attacks on school facilities in Nigeria. Securitization remains a veritable option as the security architecture of the nation seems to be overwhelmed by the ongoing insecurity challenges. Thus, political leadership failure and other systemic institutional uncertainties/irregularities that exists in Nigeria, it is lack of proactive security planning that have given rise to the recurrent and multiplicity of school related insecurity challenges. As no nation grows beyond its level of educational development, the need to adequately secure vulnerable school environment cannot be over-emphasized. There is need for the entire educational system and infrastructure to be securitized (Faist, 2015; Huysmans, 2016; Naujoks, 2015). Therefore, the study examined security education as a panacea for goal achievement in Nigerian secondary school.

It is understandable that parents, governments, and school administrators around the world are paying increasing attention to the issue of school crime, yet the safety of students and their belongings on school grounds is becoming a source of increasing concern for an increasing number of people. As a result of the students' youth and proclivity for crime and violence, concerned stakeholders are beginning to think about how to keep them safe in the classroom. Following these high-profile incidents, school violence has reached epidemic proportions and is now receiving widespread national attention. These days, a major or minor school crime is almost always reported in the media, or the subject of a government investigation or report, whether in Nigeria or elsewhere (Ayorinde, 2011). Insecurity is defined as a social illness that occurs as a consequence of the presence of a danger to human life and economic operations. When it comes to schools these days, no business can be considered one without having at the very least the bare minimum in terms of security measures in place to ensure the daily safety of students and faculty members as well as their property. Numerous instructors and students are inevitably involved in conflicts

that endanger the safety of both their own lives and the safety of the school's physical infrastructure. Whenever a person's well-being is reliant on the collaboration of others, and that cooperation cannot be depended upon, it may cause fear or dissatisfaction in the individual. Schools are threatened by a climate of dread, which jeopardises the education of pupils as well as the calm and quiet that should prevail both within and outside of them. As a result of this, schools' capacity to provide effective instruction to their pupils is jeopardised (Akintunde & Selzing-Musa, 2016).

Fighting, usage of deadly weapons such as firearms, machets, and other forms of violence in schools are all examples of security headache in Nigeria as a whole. Violence beyond the school setting and extended to the greater community includes abduction, Boko haram insurgency, rape and arson among others (Adejumo, 2014). On many occasions, the crimes are committed by students against other students, teachers, non-teaching staff and even the neighbouring community. For instance, in the year was 2007, Adeola Adeosun, a female student at Government Secondary School Garki in Abuja, was fatally shot by two of her school mates, Audu Sanusi and Shokolo Sabo, who claimed they shot her with a pistol they had discovered on their way to school, along with an AK47 and 22 live ammunitions, while walking to school. Also, seven male pupils were discovered raping an 18-year-old SS1 student inside one of the school's unoccupied classrooms in Ajao Estate Grammar School in Isolo, Lagos State, in 2006. (Adejumo 2014).

Teachers and school administrators in Nigeria are very concerned about the recent spate of school insecurity. However, in contrast to advanced nations, little has been done in Nigeria to undertake research that would have a good influence on the intensity of lowering school crime in Nigeria, despite the fact that advanced countries have done so. According to experts, the installation of electronic security systems on school grounds, which would allow every human and non-human component of the school grounds to be monitored around the clock, would be a good idea. Many people have also suggested that schools should have security officers accessible on the school grounds. Among those who have advocated this technique is Conklin, who (2007) refers to it as "target hardening." This includes any and all actions made to reduce the likelihood of students and faculty members committing crimes on campus. This may include placing all unneeded doors behind a locked door with a key. Target hardening also includes making certain that all school members adhere to the laws and regulations of the institution. In order to lower the occurrence of crime, the concept of Target Hardening proposes that every school member must be treated equally. Thus, school security is essential for the successful delivery of instruction and learning. Educative activities flourish in situations that promote the protection of people and property. It is believed that a well-secured learning environment that is free of security risks would improve learning outcomes. In accordance with this, Shuaibu (2015) said that security is a highly prized objective. However, for the interest of clarity, I'd want to define a few words that are associated with the subject matter in question.

Conceptual Clarifications

According to Akintunde and Musa (2016), security is perceived as a basic human need that contributes to effective learning. Psychologists proposed that security is crucial for human survival. Following the postulation of hierarchy of Needs by Abraham Maslow, the lower needs of man like food, shelter and security must be met before other higher needs like education or intellectual/cognitive needs (Akintunde, 2015). The inability to satisfy the need for security may cause stress in individuals and hinder them from pursuing higher level needs. On a general note, security can be seen as the state of safety, freedom from danger and protection from physical harm. By nature, human beings thrive in security and are instinctively driven by the need to maximize available resources to ensure their physical, physiological and psychological wellbeing. This implies that security is not only limited to protection from physical harm. Security also involves existence of environmental factors that instill peace of mind in an individual in order to empower him/her to function optimally in the society. Poor human relations between teacher and student can hamper students' mental health and cause insecurity. Poor infrastructural designs in schools

can expose students to insecurity problems like health hazards and stress. Some female students feel threatened as a result of rampant incidences of sexual abuse and rape in schools and the society (Akintunde, 2015). According to Shuaibu (2015), a safe school is one that fosters peaceful, positive or cordial relationships among students, teachers and administrators. Conversely, insecurity is concerned with feelings of uncertainty, dangers or threats to life.

Insecurity is a negative feeling involving fear, anxiety, uncertainty and injustice, among others. When an individual does not have control over a situation but has to rely on the cooperation of others that cannot be guaranteed, the result may be frustration or insecurity. Insecurity is a threat to learning. Prevailing conflict within communities around the schools often has ripple effects on the teaching and learning activities of such schools. Hassan (2014) identifies dread, worry, uncertainty, and injustice as some of the negative emotions that are related with feelings of insecurity. Anxiety and annoyance may emerge when a person has little control over a situation and is forced to rely on the cooperation of others, which cannot be ensured in every instance. Insecurity is a hindrance to learning. Johnmary (2016) remarks that insecurity is a real problem in modern society. A threat to national security might be anything that threatens to deplete human capital growth by causing structural damage, whether it's natural or social. According to Vornanen (2019), an individual's dread of loneliness may generate a subjective and objective feeling of inadequacy that alters the link between inner experience and external circumstances. Insurgency or terrorist organisations and their assaults in north-eastern Nigeria, say the authors, represent the greatest danger to human life and property in the area, lowering the region's human capital index. This, in turn, has a negative influence on the human capital index. Throughout the war, rebels have attacked a large number of educational institutions, killing and damaging students and property alike. This has been especially true of schools. It has been argued by Udoidem (2017) that insecurity in Nigeria is deeply rooted in the denialist ideas and practises that have their origins in ethno-religious practises. In Nigeria's security problems are creating economic slump and political turmoil, as well as the growth of religious conflicts, for example, the aggressive urge to engage in destructive behaviour against others, including acts of violence that are harmful or hazardous to human beings, animals, and property, and inform of violence, is considered a sign of insecurity by some. That the Nigerian state has been an insecurity-creating machinery that has only rarely shed its colonial traits is valid, according to Namadi (2007). The government has consistently used repression, oppression, and intimidation. As a consequence, it has no idea of establishing hegemony, forming consensus, discussing issues, negotiating, or upholding human rights or the rule of law.

Theoretical Framework

The study is premised on the theory of securitization which was propounded by the the societal security theorists Wæver, Buzan and Wilde (1998) from Copenhagen School (CS) but became popular among the constructivist studies (Theiler, 2010). The term securitization as was coined by Wæver (1995) is the process by which state actors transform subjects into matters of security concern that enables extraordinary measures to be taken in matters of security. According to Messina (2014), securitization is a process by which ostensibly non-security issues are transformed into urgent security concerns which are therefore portrayed as existential threats to a referent object by a securitizing actor who thereby generates endorsement of emergency measures beyond rules that would otherwise bind. It has also been conceptualized as process-oriented actions towards security threats which is contrary to materialist approaches of classical security studies. Unlike the classical approaches to security which focus on the material dispositions of threats (like the use of power, military capabilities and polarity), securitization emphasize how an actor can transform certain issue into a matter of security (threat) in order to allow for the use of extraordinary measures to address it. Even though most securitized issues do not pose essential threat to objective survival of a state, there is the need to proactively construct a pending security threat to an existential problem. Wæver et al (1998) characterized an existential threat as one that requires

immediate solution and if not tackled, everything else becomes irrelevant as we may not have the opportunity to deal with the consequences.

The framework for securitization allows for a threat to be probable, protracted and endangers the existence of the nation. According to the securitization theorists, when a subject is successfully securitized, a higher degree of attention and resources are devoted to it despite the existence of other subjects that might pose more threat but are unsuccessfully securitized. For instance, terrorism has been successfully securitized and receive more attention than malaria that kills more people than terrorism. Therefore, securitization of a subject plays a key role in attracting attention to an existential problem. The success of a securitization process depends on who securitizes (securitizing actor), what issues are securitized (threats), for whom (referent object), the audience (people), the reason for securitization, the conditions of securitization and the results of the securitization acts (Wæver and Wilde, 1998). The securitizing actor or agent makes the securitizing move or statement. The actor is the entity who initiates the move to securitize an issue. The move follows the establishment of an existential threat. This threat is an object or ideal that has been identified as being potentially harmful if left unchecked. A referent object or ideal is that which is being threatened and therefore needs to be protected. The audience are the target of the securitization act that needs to be persuaded to accept the issue as a security threat. For securitization act to be successful, it must be accepted by the audience regardless of whether the subject matter being securitized is a real threat or not. If a subject is successfully securitized, then it is possible to legitimize extraordinary means to solve a perceived problem. This could include declaring a state of emergency.

According to Wæver and Wilde (2018), securitization can be applied mainly on five sectors: military, political, economic, society and environment. However, securitization could equally be applied in many other sectors and further extended to unwanted outcome from successfully securitized sectors. For instance, the reign of Saddam Hussien led to the deployment of weapons of mass destruction and was successfully securitized. Consequently, there were concerns of human right abuse and societal problems which was also securitized. Similarly, the United States and Europe successfully securitized immigration due to the concerns of terrorist infiltration. As a result, extreme measures are applied through tight border controls as well as the classification of migrants from certain countries of origin, diaspora, emigration and citizenship as potential securitization issues (Faist, 2005; Huysmans, 2006; Naujoks, 2015).

Some of the School Attacks in Nigeria

Since the inception of this decade, a lot of school attacks have occurred in Nigeria. Even though most of these attacks were not reported in the media, their occurrence all over the country are not in doubt. Most of the reported cases of attacks took place in the northern part of Nigeria where the Boko Haram operations are more prevalent. In this section, an attempt is made to chronicle major cases of school attacks and insecurity in Nigeria which is by no means exhaustive. This may not be elaborate and comprehensive as these evidence were pieced together from different sources (Najoks, 2015). On the 6th of July 2013, a mass shooting occurred at the Mamudo Government Secondary Yobe State. It was reported that 41 students and a teacher were killed while Boko Haram sect claimed responsibility of the attack. While the pain and anguish of this attack was yet to ebb, another attack was carried out on the 29th of September 2013 in Gujba College in the same state where 44 people were killed. About five months later, precisely on the 25th of February 2014.

The Federal Government College Buni Yadi, Yobe State was attacked leaving 59 boys dead and the entire 24 halls in the college burnt down. This particular attack sent a signal that the Boko Haram sect was out to end every form of western education in Nigeria as parents and guardians became extremely terrified to send their wards to school. By the 14th of April 2014, the Boko Haram sect attacked Government Girls College in Chibok Local Government Area of Borno state and kidnapped 276 girls who were writing their exams. Among the earlier attacks mentioned above, this Chibok girls kidnapping received unprecedented

publicity and became a global issue as many interest groups emerged calling for the rescue of “our girls”. Some of these girls have been rescued while many are still in captivity where no one can say anything about their fate. At about 8pm on the 2nd of March 2016 in Lagos State, 3 students of a private secondary school, Babington Macaulay Junior Seminary, Ikorodu were abducted by unknown gunmen (Nwagu, 2016).

On the 13th of January, 2017, ten students and staff of Nigerian Tulip International College in Isheri, (formerly Nigerian Turkish International College) Ogun State were abducted. By the 16th January 2017, two teenage suicide bombers detonated bombs in the University of Maiduguri which killed 3 people including a Professor. By the 25th of May 2017, a group of gunmen attacked Lagos State Model College, Igbonla Epe and abducted 6 students despite the perceived security in the school. On the 19th of February 2018, in what seems like a repeat of the Chibok girls’ attack four years earlier, 111 school girls from the Government Girls Science and Technical College Dapchi, Yobe State were abducted. Even though most of the girls have been released, this particular case showed failure of the existing security architecture to proactively secure the volatile area as Dapchi which is very close to Chibok in the north-eastern part of Nigeria. All these attacks indicate vulnerability of schools which may escalate further into a bigger security and education challenge if not arrested. According to available reports, the number of school enrolment in the areas prone to these attacks have already diminished as a result. Table 1 and Figure 1 shows the percentage change in enrolment between 2012 and 2016.

Effects of Insecurity on Secondary Educational System

Stressful Studies: As a result of the poor impact on learning caused by security threats, traumatic disorders such as PTSD and toxic stress are common. Children's brains undergo neurobiological alterations when they are under stress (Patterson, 2008). Students' anxieties cause them to work in a tense environment. The dread of being assaulted at any moment affects one's ability to focus on learning. And pupils' lack of self-confidence as well. The ability of students to think clearly, generate new ideas, recall information, and concentrate are all compromised. Students do not perform at their best when they are overcome by fear, worry, and dissatisfaction.

Poor School Attendance: Parents in Nigerian secondary school are contemplating on taking their children out of school for safety purpose. As a result, a large number of pupils have been unable to attend class (Gustafsson-Wright & Smith, 2014; Nwachukwu, Abdullahi & Kyari, 2015). Due to security concerns, students may be unable to attend school for many days and kept at home for a lengthy period of time and female students are given away for marriage at a young age, depending on the circumstances (Kyari, 2015)

Closure of Schools: Due to security concerns, several secondary schools have been compelled to close by necessity for many months in disaster-prone locations. In the instance of the insurgency in the state of Borno, schools were closed in key cities (Ameh, 2015).

Vandalization of School Facilities: During an uprising or a crisis, facilities in schools like: buildings, stationeries, equipment, facilities and relevant materials that enhance effective teaching and learning are destroyed. On some occasions, schools were burnt into ashes which severely hinder the efficacy of the institutions in question.

Production of Half-baked Graduates: As a result of the insecurity, some institutions are not shut down by the government, and as a consequence, they continue to produce subpar graduates. It's impossible for schools to devote the required amount of months to each semester. Teachers in high-risk districts are severely understaffed. As a result, kids get subpar instruction.

Non-establishment of new Schools: The child's education is harmed since there are just a few schools from which to pick. To establish new schools, both government and private owners are unable. Owners are afraid to open new schools in crisis-prone regions, so a youngster with a preference for technical education may not be able to attend one of these establishments.

Strategies for Effective Security in Nigerian Secondary Schools

Conducive Learning Environment: When the learning environment is safe, secure, and pleasant for scholarship, students are more likely to achieve better in academic pursuance. When students are taught in a safe and supportive environment, they are more likely to learn and attain their full potential (Steinberg, Allensworth and Johnson, 2017). It is crucial to consider the surrounding environment, students' histories, and communities where they live while assessing school safety. When assessing school safety, it is even more critical to evaluate the rates of neighborhood poverty, crime, and social services in the children's home neighborhoods than the rates in the local vicinity of the school (Poston, 2019). Create an atmosphere that's safe and secure for students, such as the school climate and the way that students interact with one another and the physical state of the building. For students and teachers to succeed, they must be able to feel at ease in all aspects of their experience. All stakeholders must work together to accomplish this goal to provide safe and effective learning environments.

Behavioural Management: A reduction in disruptive and aggressive behaviour among students and staff may be one of the many benefits of fostering a positive school culture. Steinberg, Allensworth, and Johnson (2017) suggest the following strategies for creating a safe and child-friendly learning environment in schools:

Teachers Personality: Teachers set the tone of the school by demonstrating respect and rapport with the students and teaching them how to do the same with their peers. Learning to accept and understand their students' lifestyles and cultural origins, as well as building cross-cultural communication skills with their students, may help teachers create a welcoming environment for their students. When teachers and students work together, genuine compassion, openness, and sincerity are evident in the flow of ideas and information. It is important for instructors to help students understand the value of what they are studying, how it will affect their education and life, and how to apply what they have learned in real settings. For this reason, teachers must go beyond their own life experiences in order to connect with their students. Students are expected to work hard and aim for excellence in whatever they do, which means that teachers hold all of their students to the same high standards.

Build School Community Relationship: Students need to build relationships with the people in their lives outside of school as their academic success is influenced by their families. Supporting students' engagement with their families and communities via culturally responsive teaching practises is an important part of ensuring that all students feel included in the educational process. Educators may have a much greater impact on students' academic success and well-being when they spend time getting to know their students' families, making home visits, and connecting with local community services.

Effective Classroom Management: Classrooms need to be set up in a way that allows students to easily move around the room, provide personal space for students, organise resources for easy access, prominently display student work products, and make sure that print and non-print resources representing a wide range of backgrounds and viewpoints are readily available. The pillars of culturally sensitive classroom management are respect, personal and social responsibility, and a strong sense of community. Their beliefs and morals are reflected in their expectations of students and their behaviour toward them. They strive to instil in their pupils a strong sense of community, where each student recognises and appreciates his or her individual contribution to the overall success of the community.

Conclusion

The importance of education towards human capital and national development there is the need to deploy extraordinary measures to tackle the spate of attacks on school facilities in Nigeria. Securitization remains a veritable option as the security architecture of the nation seems to be overwhelmed by the ongoing insecurity challenges. Thus, political leadership failure and other systemic institutional uncertainties/irregularities that exists in Nigeria, it is lack of proactive security planning that have given rise to the recurrent and multiplicity of school related insecurity challenges. As no nation grows beyond its level of educational development, the need to adequately secure vulnerable school environment cannot be over-emphasized. It is possible to secure fruitful school activities with only one more effort. There is a need for both official and informal initiatives to provide a secure learning environment and mobility from home to school for efficacy to be maximally attained. Insecurity is an existential threat and therefore should be tackled through the deployment of extra-ordinary measures. The effect of these attacks have exacerbated the fragile school system (enrollment) in Nigeria.

Suggestions

The following suggestions were made based on the study:

1. The entire school system be securitized and placed on red-alert for the state actors to devote adequate attention and resources towards ameliorating this menace.
2. Government should implement policies that will improve security, education expenditure and national income in order to improve school enrollment.
3. Seminars, conferences and workshops should be periodically organized for secondary school administrators, teachers and students in order for them to be well groomed on security measures in the school system.
4. Synergy should be established between the secondary school administrators, security agencies and the communities where the schools are established.

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