

INSECURITY CHALLENGES IN NIGERIA: ITS IMPACT ON SCHOOL ENROLMENT.

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Abstract

Nigeria has been battling with Boko Haram since its emergence in 2009 with ideologies that are averse to western education. This ideology of theirs portends danger for the nation struggling to reduce the numbers of out of school children. This insurgence group has kidnapped, killed students, teachers, and lecturers. They also destroyed buildings in their onslaught against western education. Worst still these security has snow balled into other regions of the country and it manifest. This research effort seeks to measure the link insecurity in Nigeria with enrolment taking in retrospect of several attacks on schools update, causes of insecurity and discussing their effect. This work has established that insecurity challenged prone areas, government response to the issues is either school closure, merging schools in area that are safe for learning and relocating schools from area where threat is rife, These approach to solving the problem is creating another as thousands of schools closure will result in high out of school children which government and partners agencies are working assiduously to reduce. It is therefore recommended that government should deploy technology and human resources to ensure schools in the country are safe for learning.

Keywords: Insecurity, Challenges, Nigeria, impact School, Enrolment.

1.0 Introduction

Insecurity is a major problem that humanity is faced with today. This challenge is so rampant that it dominates the mass communication media all over the globe and is not peculiar to Nigeria (Obarisiagbon 2019). For instance, the Middle East has become an epicenter of violence since the leader of Al-Queda; Osama Bin Laden, bombed The World Trade Centre in New York, United State of America on September 11th 2001. Since this incident occurred, war and threats of wars are the common feature or order of the day. The

pervading threats of wars are not limited to developing nations but manifest in various forms of intra national wars (Sanni 2015). It is noteworthy to say that Nigeria as a nation has had its fair share of insecurity since its independence ranging from civil war 1967 - 1970, activities of marauding Fulani herders, Bokoharam insurgencies, armed robbery attacks, kidnapping, political/religious crisis banditry, ritual killings, police brutalizing citizens, customs and smugglers activities. (Ndubuisi-Okolo,2019, Obarisiagbon 2019, Adebisi 2019, Sanni 2015). With all these issues to contend with, Nigeria seems to be

suffocating or grappling under the spate of insecurity (Omede, 2015) as regions where there are reasonable level of peace are now worse hit by this problem. This has led to residents across the six geo political zones to sleep with one eye open. To solve this problem, the federal government has increased the budgetary provision for the ministry of defense and anti terrorism act was enacted by the legislature (Ewetam 2013, Ndubuisi-Okolo, 2019). The act highlight preventive measures, prohibition and combating act of terrorism, the sponsorship of terrorism in Nigeria and prescribes penalties for any offenders of this provision (Oyebode 2012) in spite of government efforts at combating and containing this challenge, they appear to be lost, overwhelmed, and incapacitated as the spate of insecurity continue to rise with no end in sight at nipping this problem in the bud. On a scale of global peace around the world, Nigeria is poorly rated and stands at 148 out of 163 rated countries. On the other hand, based on Global terrorism index, (2020) Nigeria ranked third among 83 countries around the globe. This connote Nigeria is not safe to live in and nationals are at high risk of attacks. As a consequence, insecurity has become so topical in Nigeria that it generates a lot of empirical investigations detailing the various atrocities perpetuated under its diverse manifestation (Sanni 2015 and Kalu 2018). Literatures abound linking insecurity to social economic problem. However, a major issue that has not received adequate attention in the existing literature by researchers is the diverse challenges insecurity poses to smooth running of education in the country.

This is a major gap in knowledge that this research effort is intended to fill.

2.0 Brief Literature Review

2.1 Insecurities in schools

The 1999 Nigeria constitution highlights the main duty of government is to guarantee safety of lives and properties of citizens as enshrine in the constitution. Regrettably, school as subset of the nation is facing serious threat from insecurity in which school administrator could not ensure safety of wards under their watch in the face of dare devil extremist sects and banditry going on across geopolitical zones in Nigeria unleashing terror on the teeming citizens. News of missing, abduction of students in schools, teachers, and lecturers is recurring events are often victims of unpredicted massacre that generates insecurity in the school. It is reported that terrorist sect attacks had sent over 900 innocent people to early grave, still counting since 2009. Checks on the number of casualties in their attacks revealed that majority of the victims were innocent Nigerians, such as school age children and women. In recent times, schools in Nigeria have witnessed increasing number of security problems. This security concerns were diverse and complex, ranging from suicide bombing to criminal activities with alarming dimensions and consequences.

2.2 Causes of Insecurity

The causes of security challenges in Nigeria according to several researchers are not limited to the point explained below (Obarisagbon, 2019)

Unemployment: This can be said to be an instance when able bodied youths that are readily available to work and could not find any. On yearly basis, citadel of higher learning churn out many graduates in numbers who regrettably, are thrown into the labour market with no hope in sight for jobs. This further compound the worst situation at hand (Nwagbosa 2012) National Bureau of Statistics, (2020) put Nigerian unemployment rate at 33.33 percent in fourth quarter of the same year. These barrage or armies of idle hands are precarious or red flag to having a secured environment, as with every other citizen, they will strive to earn a living. In their quest in search for a livelihood, if not a success, some might result into self help syndrome which eventually will make them turn to crime as a fast money spinning enterprise. This one out of three Nigerians has continued to endanger school children from attending schools on account of high rate of kidnapping among other social ills in the society.

Illiteracy: can simply be described as having an inability to read or write. This lack of skill can make people enter in agreement or be recruited by insurgent or cause of action that they do not fully understand the implication. There have been a link between having a secured space with the level of literacy. Some of those without education are myopic and decision or

judgment reached by such can be devastating, because often time it's not well thought-out. such group of people on account of monetary gains or petty rewards detonate bombs that could kill many. The National of Bureau Statistics (2010) noted that the figures does not favour the north eastern state even before the insurgency commenced.

Poverty: is living below a dollar according the World health organization in other words those who lack or strive to meet up the life necessities which include food shelter and cloth. These brackets of people are vulnerable and the chances of being lured or turning to crime to solve their immediate need are high. The rate of poverty in the northern part of country is very high. This is possibility for it being the epicenter of insurgency in the northern Nigeria and its has impacted negatively on the and damages to school is

Extremism: is the advocacy of extreme measures or views religion fanatics is a risk factor that fan the ember insecurity in a nation such as Nigeria which is multi religious in nature. Such extreme views, by people who practice other faith might ignite or spark conflict which would eventually hinder school closure, schools facilities being destroyed some examples of such instances in the past are not limited to; The maitatsine riot in Kano, Kala-Kato violence in Bauchi State, Madala, burning of churches in Niger State in 2011 and series of arson and burning of churches in the North remains fresh in the memories of Nigerians

Porous border: Nigeria is a West Africa country bordered by Republic of

Benin in the west, Chad and Cameroun in the south and Niger in the north. It is argued that a more holistic approach is essential when looking at border issues, considering the nexus between peace security and development (Blum, 2014) The unfettered access of human and goods through its land border has immensely contributed to insecurity in the country (Obarisagbon, 2019). This has led to influx of goods/ arms and ammunition of various kinds which include light, small, and heavy weapon. Edeko (2011) estimated that about 5.6 million arms have been used to stir up crisis in Nigeria. These weapons end up in the hands of criminal/unguided elements that in turn wreck havoc or perpetrate violent crime against nationals. Also, the influx of people through the border, without any background check, as done in other advance country, is responsible for uncontrollable influx of migrants, mainly youth from Chad, Niger and Benin as the bane of the insecurity in Nigeria. The effect on school children is better imagined and not experienced.

2..3 Attack of schools in Nigeria since 2010

Schools attacks in Nigeria in the last decades or in recent times have gained a lot public attention. Most of the recorded cases took place in the north eastern part of the country where Bokoharam operations are deep rooted. This sections present the details of some of the dastardly act that has rocked the education sector in the last years.

Mamudo Secondary school was attacked on the 6th of July 2013. It was gathered that 41 students and some staff were killed in that attack. While parents of

the affected students were still brooding and grieving over their losses. Another attack was carried out on the 29th of September 2013 in Gujba College where 44 students were maimed. Also, on the 25th of February2014, in the space of five month, Federal Government college Buni Yadi was attacked. The assailant rounded up dormitory school and set it on fire. 59 fatalities were recorded with 24 school building set ablaze. Prior to this time book haram had issue a threat that student should stay out of school or be killed. With this attack, it became clear that the insurgent group were serious and true to their ideology that is at variance with western education, while jilters were sent down the spines of most parents. By 14th of April2014, Government girls secondary school was attacked in Chibok Local government area of Borno State and abduct 276 girls who were writing exams. The previous attacks earlier mentioned were not given publicity as the case of the Chibok girls. It became a global campaign on how to return the captive school children back to their respective parent. It is worthy of note that some of the school girls have been rescued while others are still with their abductors where their fate cannot be determined by anyone.

At about 8 pm on Monday 2nd march 2016, some group of armed men attacked Barbinton Macaulay Junior Secondary School in Ikorodu Lagos State where 3 students were kidnapped (Punch Newspaper 16 June 2016). Yet, another incident of school attacked happened on the 13th of January, where ten students and staff Nigeria Tulip International school Isheri ,

Ogun State. By the 16th January 2017, two teenage suicide bombers detonated bombs in University of Maiduguri which killed 3 people including a professor. By the 25th of May 2017, some 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, 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 On the 11th December 2020 over 300 students were kidnapped from Government Science Secondary School kangara in Kastina state. On the 17 December 2021, the boys were all released to the state government. The spate of insecurity continues in schools, on the 17th of February 2021, 27 students, 3 staff and 12 of their relatives were kidnapped from kangara, in Niger state. However, there were released by 27th February 2021.

Similarly, 26th February 2021, the abduction of 279 female students aged between 10 -17 from the government girls science Secondary school, A boarding school in Janegbe Zamfara state. Although, by 2nd of March they girls were all released. On March 11th 2021, the Afaka kidnapping took place where armed gunmen attacked the federal college of forestry mechanization in Mando Kaduna state and abducted 39 students which comprised of 23 females and 16 males were abducted. 10 of the victims have regained their freedom while 29 are

still with their abductors. In the same vein, Green Field University kidnap happened on the 20th April 2021. The kidnappers abducted 23 students out which 5 students have been killed a and a member of staff. The problem has snowballed into the other political zones. Northwest and middle belt south west and south are being terrorized by bandit This act of terrorism is even worst as school children are kidnapped and released on the basis of exchange for money.

3.0 Impact of security problem in school

One of things that have continued to reinforce insecurities and agitations culminating into cordiality and violent crimes of varying degrees in the country is lack of will by the political class to penalize or bring the full wrath of law on those found culpable based on the provision of the constitution. Since Boko haram emerged, several attacks had been done on schools with varying degree of casualties This has led to closure of more 802 schools in the north east, 489 school building are in a state disrepair while 1392 were vandalized and later reconstructed in Borno Yobe and Adamawa state. As a consequence (UNICEF 2013), the numbers of school enrollee have reduced significantly because of the available facilities to take in students/ pupils or pupils each school would have accommodated have diminished in numbers. Also, the alarming incidences of kidnapping across state in the north west have worsen the situation in the country particularly in the north where out of school children is high owing several factors Besides the vandalism of school infrastructure, the palpable fear and psychology trauma parents

and abducted students are subjected in these states are enough discouragement to keep children at home/ out school thus reducing school enrolment. In the last two years, North west and north central are now bedeviled with this insecurity. Although no much destruction has been recorded in terms of damaged done to school building, but the frequency of attacks is worrisome. As a consequence, schools in suburb are closed, while schools having dormitory/ boarding house facility have been closed down until the security situation in the country improved. Of equal importance, the national examination council had postponed the entrance exam into unity schools which was earlier slated for May 29th 2021 to June 5th 2021. The reason for the postponement was as a result of low numbers of students who enrolled to sit for examination. The one week extension is to enable states with low registration of candidates to register more students for the examination (Guardians newspaper). However, the low number of enrolled students to take this entrance exam can be adduced to spate of insecurity in Nigeria as unity schools are built across the six geological zone including North west and north east and north central which is now famous for school children/students kidnapping for ransom is high This is a major drawback to government and global partners efforts at ensuring the nation meets the Sustainable Development Goal 4 by 2030 which is providing access to education for all citizens. It was reported that the Afaka students gained their freedom by 5th of may. The government is making effort on how to relocate their school to where security is guaranteed. The big question now

is, are there structures to accommodate all the students of this college? Do government have enough facility to accommodate all other schools in the north west and middle belt where same challenges is being experienced?

4.0 Conclusion

No development can take place in an environment devoid of peace be it infrastructure or human capital development which education offers. The rising figure of school closure /school merger relocation of schools and the spate of kidnapping of schools children for ransom in Nigeria have taken a negative toll on the education system by drastically impacting negatively on number of enrollee in such insecure prone areas.. This measure by government to prevent the repeat of such occurrences is adjudged as reactionary as instrument of state should be deployed to put this assailant on their back foot. On the parents' part, it is extremely herculean to permit their wards to attend school when their safe return is not assured or guaranteed. The teachers and students are petrified to their bone marrow as learning would be impracticable in such an atmosphere filled with fear of unknown or uncertainty; student will not be able to concentrate on their studies. The number of students enrollment in school has reduced significantly. Ultimately, this set back will hamper the vision 2030 goal SDG Goal 4 which is to educate all citizens. It is recommended that government should re-strategize and deploy modern technology to gather intelligence so as to be 10 steps ahead of this criminal elements disrupting learning from taking place in Nigeria schools

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