

EFFECTIVE SCHOOL SECURITY SERVICE DELIVERY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The incessant tales of terror attacks, kidnapping and abduction of innocent students in our schools have become the travails of parents. Hostages taking from the nation's schools resonate from one part of the country to the other. Conflicts and insecurity in school environment have made the dreams of boarding schools elusive. The governments seem to have reneged on their statutory mandate and the national security core interest of safeguarding her citizens. Similarly, school administrators have not demonstrated enough commitment for adequate security of students entrusted in their care. However, this development undermines the National Security Strategy which underscores the belief and generally acknowledged the view that security is the cornerstone of development and progress. As education is the instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development, the security of our educational institutions has to remain paramount in the nation's security strategic plans. Effective security service delivery for schools and students devoid of attacks and conflicts must not be compromised if the philosophy and goals of Nigeria using education as a tool for socio-economic and political development is to be achieved. Interestingly, the concept of Child Friendly School as developed by UNICEF has been adopted by Nigeria to provide quality education through the promotion of Child Friendly Schools (CFS). The country is therefore, under obligation to provide effective security service delivery for sustainable educational development based on the convention of the rights of children (CRC) to learn under a child friendly school environment. The government and school administrators must show the political will and commitment to provide

effective security service delivery that would guarantee the security of students and the school environment as a statutory responsibility. More importantly, it is the right of students to learn in environmentally friendly schools devoid of external and internal threat to life.

Keywords: Insecurity, Security service delivery, Sustainable development, Education

Introduction

An appraisal of security service delivery is a focus on the effectiveness or otherwise of the security service delivery system (SDS) or examination of perceived service quality of security service delivery. The influence of four specific indicators of the SDS' are relevant in any discussion on effective service delivery which include: the effectiveness of frontline role performance (in this context the government and school administrators), the role performance of security agencies, their adaptability to the dynamics of security service delivery, the effectiveness of their coordination and the effectiveness of the service process' control on perceived security service quality of providing effective security to Nigeria students and institutions of learning.

A cursory look at security service delivery in institutions of learning in Nigeria gives a desperate and gloomy inference of governments failure in providing the statutory responsibility and core interest of safeguarding the citizens. In the same way school administrators and the security agencies had remained helpless and overwhelmed by the restive and incessant terror attacks, kidnapping and abduction of innocent students in our schools to the agony and disillusionment of parents and wards. The route of attacks, kidnapping and abduction of students from boarding schools and hostels have become a routine and round the clock affair. From Chibok and Dapchi in Bornu State to Kagara in Niger State, from Kankara in Katsina state to Degembe in Zamfara state, innocent and helpless students are at the mercy of bandits and criminals who kidnap to rape and monetize innocent and helpless students as condition for their release (Nigerain Leadership Newspaper; 2021). Criminals and hoodlums have turned the schools to a slave market.

The schools and campuses have become crises ridden and no longer an environment conducive for teaching and learning. Conflicts and insecurity in school environment have made the goals of boarding schools elusive and shattered dreams. The institutions of higher learning as well has become death zones and unsafe in the hands of cult groups. The existence of cultist groups on campuses has made life unsafe and meaningless to both staff and students as non members are bullied and opposing groups of cultists are constantly at war

with each other. Drugs abuse, rape and sex for marks are other crimes in schools that have been inflicting emotional and psychological injuries on victims and parents.

In the higher institutions of learning, the story is not different. There are rampant cases of kidnapping, abduction and extra judicial killings (Oladepo, Awoyinfa and Adefarakan, 2018). Some have blamed isolated school locations as one of the factors responsible for the high rate of insecurity and banditry in institutions of learning. Instances of violence abound; the kidnap of three female students in March, 2016 in a school at Babington Macaulay Junior Seminary, Agunfoye-Lugbusi, Ikorodu, in Lagos State is case in point on insecurity blamed on isolated location of schools (Arinze, 2020). Arinze further stated that in July 2016, police arrested an undergraduate female suspect who kidnapped her friend, in order to make money from the latter's parents. The suspected kidnapper was said to be students of Babcock University, Ilishan, Remo, and Ogun State, Nigeria. In March 27, 2017, the kidnap of an undergraduate student of Caleb University, located at Imota, off Ikorodu, Lagos State, Nigeria (Ojukwu (2017). The location of these schools and the security measures in and around where the crimes of kidnapping occurred was said to have contributed to the perpetration of such crime. Perhaps solutions could be found in establishing schools with a more responsible leadership in a areas of more effective security service delivery. Community involvement, law enforcement officials and community-based organizations and student participation are all necessary if effective security service delivery is to be achieved in the schools in Nigeria for sustainable education of the Nigerian children.

Security and Service Delivery

The concept of security and its delivery are intertwined as the absence of service delivery is also lack of security. The Nigeria National Security Strategy underscores the belief and generally acknowledged the view that security is the cornerstone of development and progress (National Security Strategy (2019). Every security challenge, irrespective of where it occurs, potentially puts at risk the livelihood and well-being of every citizen as security is vital for national cohesion, peace and sustainable development more especially in the educational sector.

The concept of security is synonymous with feelings of being safe, freedom from attacks and protection from physical harm. Security of students implies presence of factors in the school environments that enhance peace and

happiness so as to spur the students to effectively function in their hostels and classrooms. Security is the protection of life and property of a person'. It is a high degree of protection against danger, damage, loss, and criminal activity. It also refers to a situation in which individuals in an environment live in peace and enjoy the protection of fundamental rights. Security of students underlines a safe school environment that encourages peaceful co-existence, positive school climate and cordial interactions among teachers and students devoid of internal and external threats..

All these are essential prerequisites for a healthy and peaceful environment that could engender educational development. Security should also be present or forestall in advance any form of harm or threat to life and property. The quest for security is recurrent and as threats continue to multiply, insecurity and fear emerge with as the most dominant need for security service delivery from institutions and entities with the statutory mandate of providing security. Security though a robust term, is used to describe all measures taken to discover, assess and contain threats from hostile intruders. A secure school environment embodies all facilities (human and non-human) provided to ensure safety of lives and properties and guarantee a peaceful atmosphere for students and teachers to pursue their legitimate learning activities without fear of threats or hindrances. According Adibe, (2010) security is the state of being free from danger or injury, the freedom from apprehension, anxiety, or care; confidence of power of safety; hence, assurance and certainty .To have security is to be safe, secured, protected and to enjoy peace of life; that is, the state of being or feeling secure; freedom from fear, anxiety, danger, doubt; something that gives or assures safety, tranquility, certainty, protection and safeguard. In an objective sense, security means the absence of threats to acquired values and in a subjective sense, it means the absence of fear that such values will be attacked

On the contrary insecurity is seen as a breach of peace and security that leads to recurring conflicts and wanton destruction of lives and property which now characterizes lives in Nigeria schools. Service delivery on the other hand is a systematic mechanism of providing individuals and groups with special needs with most appropriate programmes. In the context of security service, it entails the provision of innovative and proactive security network characterized by new ideas that are germane to the security challenges of the target group, the schools, students and staff. Nigeria schools are now more than ever needed an effective and qualitative security service delivery to contain the high level of banditry, kidnapping and other forms of conflict in Nigeria schools.

Nigeria Schools and Security Service Delivery

The fundamental basis for the social contract of citizens and the state is security of life and property. It is on this basis of that in the social contract the people willingly surrender their rights to government to oversee their security and protection. From that perspective, the government embodies a security mechanism to avoid, prevent, reduce, or resolve violent conflicts and threats to life and property. .

The security service delivery in Nigeria schools has been proved to be a source of concern to many. For instance, the Global Peace Index (GPI) of Nigeria as surveyed from 2007 to 2012 showed that out of 158 countries surveyed, Nigeria was 117th in 2007,129th in 2008 and 2009,137th in 2010,142nd in2011 and 146th in 2012 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2019). The absence of security had led to lack of peace which is a vital value that is elusive to Nigeria school environment for quite a long time now. Recent security challenges in schools have proved that the lives of Nigerian students are continually at risk from one form of security challenge or another.

The security challenges may be an unfortunate attempt to diminish the values of boarding schools. At secondary school levels students in hostels and boarding schools learn to take care of themselves from a really young age, which turns them into an independent individual for life. **There are as well planned** and exciting programmes for students in boarding schools with the added advantage of living and interacting with students from different backgrounds. All in all boarding schools take complete care to provide students with an environment where they are not only nurtured to the core but are made to have love in a second home.

Unfortunately, the students in hostels and boarding schools at all levels of the educational system have witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity such as; banditry, kidnapping, assassination and, murder most of which had led to loss of lives and destruction of school property. There is a general atmosphere of siege and social tension on the school population. No place can be qualified to be regarded as school if it does not possess the basic security measures that guarantee safety of lives and properties. Parents and students across the country live in fear of targeted attacks on schools by criminal elements and groups. Hostages taking in the nation's schools resonate from one part of the country to the other. The nation's education sector had been witnessing security lapses manifesting on the daily basis.

However, despite the frequent abductions of students and school children, most private and public schools remain without adequate security,

thereby putting school children at risk. Majority of the schools are without perimeter fences, or the fences are either bad or partially broken. Neither the security agencies nor the school administrators are concerned with the prevailing security lapses in their schools. It is expected that a school environment ought to be a reference point for safety and tranquility: The school layout and organization needed to be governed by the principles of crime prevention through environmental design, physical security. The locks, alarms, safety lighting and more should have epitomized the school environment. Every school private or public has to provide private security guards to assist the law enforcement agencies in protection of students in hostels, schools and dormitories. In collaboration with the communities and parents, the law enforcement agents should constitute emergency response teams in time of security needs.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs also recognizes the significance of security as the precondition for survival. Insecurity in institutions of learning has led to untimely death of students and even children in schools. A responsible government has the statutory duty of security and protection of her children from physical threats and violence because every activity depends on the presence of this essential service . There is the need for awareness, avoidance, planning, protection, preservation, alarm, deterrence and decisive action against all forms of criminality against students. Abayomi., Matswamgbe., Onwurah., Okpewho &.Mohammed, (2005). Security addresses the risk of harm due to intentional criminal acts such as assault, burglary or vandalism. The process or means of delaying, preventing, and protection against external or internal dangers, loss, criminality and other actions that threaten, hinder or destroy has to be nipped in the bud. Schools are supposed to be among the safest places for children to be, while their parents are at work. Unfortunately, the violent reality of schools today makes one wonder how students are able to learn in such volatile environments. Students in schools are often very much in danger of being harmed.

Options are to be considered to improve school and campus security. Legislators in the national assembly have to review the 25-year-old law that forbids a police presence on campuses. The significance of security as the precondition for the survival of the Nigerian people is the spirit of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in its provision in section 14 (1) (b) that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government Balogun, (2003). The duty conferred on the government by this provision has not been substantially and substantively discharged as the prevailing high level of human insecurity in the schools demonstrates.

Management of the institutions should strive to eradicate every issue of crime, student unrest, theft, cult activities and others that affect safety of lives and properties in the institution as there are palpable security challenges occasioned by neglect on the part of the management and government. All these had led to destruction of valuable properties and loss of lives in Nigerian Universities. The service and enforcement of Law enforcement agencies are also involved in providing first response to emergencies and other threats to public safety. The core mandate of security service is a duty with enormous challenges whose effectiveness is relative and proportional to the level of training and equipment needed for effective service. In a study carried out by Etor., Etudor-Eyo and Ukpabio, (2020) on the provision of security facilities and security personnel service delivery in Universities in Cross River State, Nigeria, the finding of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between provision of security facilities and security personnel service delivery. Based on the findings, it was recommended that the administrators should provide adequate security facilities such as hand guns, CCTV, tear gas, bullet proof vests and so on for effective security personnel service delivery.

Effective security service delivery cannot be more critical in any other sector than in education with larger proportion of the population with budding youths who are the leaders of tomorrow. As education is the instrument “par excellence” for national development, the security of our educational institutions has to remain paramount in the nation’s security strategic plans. Security service delivery for schools devoid of students’ restiveness and terror attacks must not be compromised to make the philosophy and goals of Nigeria education to be attainable. The Child Friendly Schools as espoused by UNICEF and adopted by Nigeria for a Child Friendly Schools (CFS) must be promoted. The country is under obligation to provide effective security for her children for sustainable education. Incessant terror attack and dehumanization of the Nigeria child in schools undermines the National Security Strategy which underscores the belief and generally acknowledged the view that security is the cornerstone of development and progress. The educational institutions as centers of teaching and learning should guarantee the fundamental right of the child to live.

Role of Government in School Security Service Delivery for a Sustainable Development of Education

The development of people and societies are intertwined with security, therefore security is a necessary condition that must be prevalent for development to strive. The development of a society is not only tied to

infrastructural and human development, but it also includes a commensurate development in the educational subsector. It is in relationship with the importance of national security and human development that the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provided in section 14 (1) (6) that, the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary objective of government. It is in time with this constitutional provision that Alimba (2018) posited that the security of schools has become indispensable in this era of pervasive terrorism as schools are singled out for attacks by terrorist. These attacks have resulted to total destruction of schools plants, death of teachers, nonteaching staff and even students leading to fragmentation of school programmes. This development has impeded access to education, promoted students drop out in schools and it has adversely affected teachers' interest in school. The upsurge in insecurity in schools provides for an understanding of security and security measures that will deter and promote safety in schools in order to enhance effective teaching and learning for the development of sustainable education.

The task of providing security in schools is a collective responsibility involving individuals, organizations and government. But, as it is provided for by the laws of the land, the primary goal of government is to protect and defend the state and its territorial integrity (Morgan, 2007). This is because government has been a central actor in security affairs as it was considered the main concern of government to protect lives and properties. Security as a concept embraces all aspects of societal prospects and human endeavour geared towards promoting freedom and safety of people and their properties. Therefore, guaranteeing safety of social institutions and individual properties is physical security and as such school security relates more to personal and physical security, this is basically because the school has both human and material resources.

Considering the unique status of education in every society, it is therefore the responsibility of government to ensure that safety measures are put in place in schools to safeguard human and material resources (Lawrence, 2007). According to the author those safety measures in schools are referred to as school security. It is also worthy to emphasize that since schools are complex organizations (because of people from different backgrounds) government should ensure the adoption of an effective school security plan that will ensure the protection of stockholders and facilities in schools from violent crimes and attacks through articulated policies and methods. The focus of school security should be aimed at a well-developed security safety plans as well as proper risk assessment. In a study conducted by Ozmen, Dur and Akgul (2010) on school security problems and ways of tackling them. The findings

revealed that the absence of legislations and regulations in schools was responsible for some of the security challenges witnessed in schools. The study recommended that government in her responsibility to protect lives and properties should enact laws that will regulate and minimize security challenges in schools. The implication is that government at all levels should ensure the enactment of laws that will ensure adequate security in school and that the laws should prescribe appropriate punishment to serve as a way of curbing school security challenges for the sustainable development of education.

Security measure on their own are approaches that can be adopted to protect and manage school violence, reduce security risks and ensure that the school environment is safe for learning (Mohammed, 2014). The author asserted further that as part of security measures to ensure school security, government should develop an emergency action plan taking into consideration the school environment, threatening conditions, problem sources and that every personnel in the school should be actively involved in preventing and handling destructive situation in order to ensure a sustainable educational system. According to Laura (2014) security measure are functional and operational methods that make schools free from crimes, threats and risks. It also emphasizes conduciveness in schools to ensure effective teaching and learning. In the author's views this can be achieved through such measures as the provision of a communication line to interface with necessary security units and organizations for timely supports and assistance in challenging situations. It is pertinent to state that a good security network is dependent on effective communication system for a timely prevention and intervention during security situations in schools as this will ensure the achievement of an enduring and sustainable education system. It is the responsibility of government to ensure the provision of effective communication networks in schools.

Another major role of government in ensuring that school security measures work out for good is dependent on the fact that the measures are well planned and responsive to threats and risks emanating from within and outside the system. For schools to be properly secured, government security measures must embrace the following: human security measures, physical security measures, policy security measures and technological security measures.

Human security measures should incorporate the use of human elements as means of controlling and safeguarding lives and properties in schools. Human security system determines what decision should be made, how and nature of action to be taken. Aigbokhan, (2000) maintained that the human security element is often neglected, sometimes in a bid to save cost. The emphasis of human security measures is on the provision of security guards or

personnel in schools in order to ensure responsive security architecture in school for the purpose of effective teaching and learning which is targeted achieving at sustainable education.

Physical security measures emphasize putting in place barriers that will prevent access to school properties or facilities. Physical security measures in schools deter intruders from gaining access to schools and also detect attempted entry. Some of the physical measures that can be put in place to safeguard schools include the use of fence, locks and keys, safe and strong rooms, burglary proof, electronic equipments (CCTV systems, metal detectors etc.) and effective communication system.

Policies security measures in school involves policies formulated to guide the implementations of security measures in schools and security system. The absence of appropriate security policies may render the security apparatus put in place ineffective (Rogers & Schoeman, 2010). The implication is that the effectiveness of other security measures is dependent on the policies put in place to regulate operational patterns.

Technical security measures in schools are technologies and strategies of applying machine, tools and professionals or technical knowledge for the promotion of safety in schools. The provision of technological security systems in schools such as CCTV cameras, protective lightings, alarms and security gates will help in reducing insecurity in schools. The use of technological security measures is a more efficient security measures in schools as it is more dependent and reliable if properly installed and managed.

While contributing to security measures in schools, Nakpodia (2010) emphasized that appropriate disciplinary measures should be enforced in schools to forestall incidents of insecurity or security threats. In the author's opinion very strict punishment or sanctions should be prescribed for the members of the school community who a found to be constituting security threats. The interpretation is that disciplinary measures put in place in schools will help to prevent the re-occurrence of activities that constitutes insecurities in schools.

In order to ensure security in schools staff and students' security training should form part of the school training and re-training manuals. Government should ensure that periodic training programmes are organized for the staff and students in schools in order to ensure security in schools and for the achievements of a viable and sustainable educational system. Policies regarding school security should incorporate the maintenance of a good relationship with families in order to create awareness about security problems and for timely intervention. This relationship between schools and parents will

also ensure the involvement of parents and guardians in the maintenance of security in schools.

It is also very important that security committees be created in schools to ensure that matters relating to security challenges in schools are noted early and for timely intervention. These committees should ensure regular interface with the security agencies so that issues relating to school insecurity are addressed on time and appropriately. The recruitment and training of guidance counselors in schools will go a long way to alleviate security challenges in schools. The role of government in school security services delivery cannot exhaustively be discussed in a discourse of this nature, because of the roles of government in protection of properties and lives in the state. Therefore, the responsibility of government in ensuring adequate school security service delivery is very enormous and inevitable.

Conclusion

Security is a first-order or necessary precondition for the development of human beings and society. Therefore, security is the most basic need of human beings and societies. School security service delivery implies the absence of fear and also conceived as protection from danger, violence, fear, and want that impair, or capable of impairing the full development and existential wellbeing of citizens. . As a result, the armed forces, police and intelligence agencies as primary tools for preserving national security need to be up to their responsibilities in defending the students in schools and hostels.

The core national interests as defined in Nigeria's National Security Strategy are the security and welfare of Nigeria people. In order to properly articulate government's strategy for combating these security challenges, there is need for a strategic plan in form of a document to guide security agencies in conception of ideas, formulation of policies and conduct of operations so that every single agency to protect students at school.

The very essence of putting in place security measures in school is to ensure safety and prevent schools from becoming theatres of insecurity. This is base on the fact that a safe school is a secured school for effective teaching and learning. It is therefore the responsibility of government to ensure secured schools which will promote smooth running of academic activities. This can be achieved though the provision of appropriate and adequate security measures in school. Installation of modern technological security gargets and formulation of policies and legislations that will guarantee school security services delivery for the purpose of achieving a viable and sustainable educational system.

Suggestions

In the course of highlighting the roles of government in providing school security service delivery the following suggestions were made:

1. Appropriate security measures that will incorporate human, physical, policy and technological security measures should be put in place in schools.
2. School – community partnership in promoting school security should be encouraged.
3. Security action plan should be developed for all schools.
4. Appropriate communication channels should be maintained within and outside the schools.
5. Staff and students should be trained and retrained on security matters.
6. Security committees should be constituted in schools to handle security matters.
7. There is need for school environmental design (SED) or school mapping to help to help prevent safety and health hazards.
8. Schools and institutions of learning should have a natural surveillance policy of arranging physical facilities and features in schools to ensure maximum security and visibility.
9. There is need for conscious activities to control who come into the school. Visitors to schools should be guided because every visitor is a potential threat.

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