

INSECURITY IN NIGERIA: A FACTOR IMPENDING SUSTAINABLE TERTIARY EDUCATION IN NORTHERN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The paper discussed various forms of insecurity, their effects on higher education in Nigeria. It defined education and insecurity. Insecurity therefore, was defined as a situation where lives and property are vulnerable and are left at the mercy of terrorists, criminals or rebels. Insecurity in Nigeria has escalated to a worrisome dimension and can be traced to corruption, bad leadership, inequality and illiteracy. Dimensions of insecurity discussed include hunger/malnutrition, bullying, child abuse, child trafficking, kidnapping, armed robbery, terrorism, accidents, and disasters. It was observed that education and security are inseparable. Consequently, a nation's security must be intact for education, (especially at a higher level) to be sustained. Major problems facing education due to insecurity were highlighted and recommendations given for progression towards sustainable higher education in Northern Nigeria. Among which is the total eradication of insecurity and corruption.

Insecurity, a household word in many parts of Nigeria especially in Northern part of Nigeria has escalated to worrisome dimension in the last decade. The concept has been defined as a situation where lives and properties are vulnerable and are left at the mercy of terrorists, criminals or rebels. Insecurity has been linked to corruption, poor leadership, inequality and illiteracy.

Lister (2012 :14) expressed more fears noting that Nigerian government made no significant effort to calm things down as far as insecurity in Nigeria is concerned. Abamara et al (2015) added that insecurity is an unsafe feeling a state of mind filled with self-doubt and vulnerability. In addition, it remains a feeling of being a target for having a feeling of overwhelming fear, investment for development, hunger/extreme poverty and homelessness by many.

Although security of lives and properties remains government's priority responsibilities, the Nigerian government has failed her citizen in the pertinent area of

constitutional responsibility. The 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria reiterated that security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government; while Omeyibe and Akpomera (2013) also affirmed that security is a concept that is of supreme importance to the state.

Insecurity, especially in the North-east where insurgency has ravaged infrastructures and claimed thousands of lives remains an insurmountable mystery in the wheel of educational progress especially in tertiary institution. Looking critically at the insecurity as a feeling of general unease or nervousness that may be triggered by perceiving oneself to be vulnerable or inferior in some way, or a sense of vulnerability or instability which threatens one's self-image or triggering emotional insecurity (Online Dictionary, 2015), the impact of insecurity on the implementation of tertiary institution or academic sustenance becomes very obvious. The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2004) stated that security is a condition of being safe or protected (p 619). This by implication explains the fact that insecurity on the other hand, impedes learning as learning is unsafe and unprotected.

The two major variables that contribute immeasurably to the totality of man's achievements, academic and otherwise, revolve around the inherited potentials (genes) and the moderator of the genes, the environment. Ekanem, Elizabeth and Ekefie (2011) related that humans are born into different environmental conditions and the child remains the product of his total environment. The students environmental condition determines to a very large extent his/her academic achievements. Idowu (2002) emphasized that children from remote villages will behave differently from others who come from cities due to environmental influence. A hostile environment due to insecurity hinders significantly, the implementation of tertiary education especially in the Northern part of Nigeria.

Conceptual Framework

Ewentan and Urhie (2014) observed that although various attempts have been made since after the cold war to redefine the concept of security in a broader view placing more relevance on individuals than state, since national security/development and humans rights remain basic yardstick for unveiling or dimystifying the concept security. Approaches abound in conceptualizing security in order to aid the full comprehension of insecurity. The paper on insecurity intends to explore the total meaning and implication of the concept of security for the purpose of earlier statement. Nwanegbo and Odigbo Kruhmann (2003) as quoted by Ewetan and Urhie (2014) stated that attempts have been made in the past to dig further the concept of security from the level of the states to societies and individuals, and from military to non-military issues. According to Stan (2004) security entails the mechanism put in place in order to prevent, reduce or resolve violence, conflicts and threats that emanate from other states, non-state actors, or structured socio-political and economic conditions.

Developing further in conceptualizing the concept of security, Nwanegbo and Odigbo (2013) streamlined the various approaches under the two major groups:

- a. The Neo-realist theoretical strand which believes security to be the sole stake of the state;
- b. The post modernist (plural view) which opines that security is the major responsibility of non-state actors. Theorists believe that the true meaning of security is not just the essence of wars, insurgencies, hostility, and general threats and vulnerability, rather a deliberate individuals' economic security which naturally translates to state security being the major reason for most agitations.

Abubakar (2005) observed that international debate have emphasized the need for security to be seen as "the struggle to secure the very essence of life such as physiological needs (food, fuel, medicine, clothing and shelter. Oshia, (2009) reiterated that security involves freedom from danger or threat to a nation's ability to protect its cherished values and well-being of its people.

Insecurity on the other hand implies something quite different from the former. It is a negative feeling involving fear, anxiety, uncertainty and injustice, among others. Insecurity is danger or threat to life, Akintunde et al (2015). It also implies the existence of environmental force that denies one peace of mind, preventing one of effective functioning in the society or school. Ewetan and Urhie (2014) insisted that unsecured people are not only uncertain or unaware of what is likely to happen, but are vulnerable to the threats and dangers when they occur. In addition, that insecurity could be summarized as a breach of peace and security whether historical, religious, ethno-regional, civil, social, economic, and political, contributes to frequent conflicts leading to nation destruction of lives and properties.

Tertiary Education:

This is a form of Education done after high School level. This embodies Diploma, Undergraduate and Graduate certificates, and associate's, Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral degrees. Tertiary Education, more commonly referred to as Post Secondary Education, has to do with any undergraduate programmes that takes up to four years to complete. It is basically a level of schooling that takes the learner to a mastery level of a field of knowledge, perform extensively, research, programme goals and achieve professionalism.

Dimensions of Insecurity in Nigeria

Insecurity in Nigeria has since 1999 become a major item in national and international discuss. Almost a decade now, the nation is still trying to find lasting solution to various forms of insecurities. These social unrest/insurgences constitute threats to the cooperate existence of its citizens and to the maintenance and survival of its democratic political system. Such security challenges are diverse and complex, ranges from political disagreement to criminal activities with alarming dimensions and

consequences. The unexpected bombings on inspected or soft targets in the society by the notorious, and dreadful sect (Boko Haram) is also a huge challenge to government, its citizens and international community (especially border nations). Atriming this, the daily Sun (2012) reported Inuwa (commissioner of state) as saying that the Boko Haram issue is not just a form of problem, it is a Nigerian, as well as a regional problem.

Boko Haram began their evil enterprise in the North-east and gradually spread their tentacles to Abuja the seat of power and its environs (the United Nation's building in Abuja, the police Headquarters, the 25th December 2011 bombing of St. Theresa Catholic church, Madalla in Nigeria (the 2012 Easter bombing in Kaduna, the massacre of innocent students at College of Agriculture Yobe stare, Kaduna, Kano, Plateau, Gombe and Zamfara states).

Forms of Insecurity

There are three very common forms of insecurities:

Type I: Insecurity due to failure or rejection

Type II: Insecurity from social anxiety

Type III: Insecurity emanating from perfectionism

Types of Insecurity:

(a) Health insecurity, (b) Social insecurity, (c) Financial /economic insecurity, (d) Environmental insecurity, (e) Political insecurity, (f) Food insecurity, (g) Job insecurity, (h) Gender/sexual insecurity, (i) Emotional insecurity and (j) Climate insecurity

Effects of Insecurity on Sustainability of Tertiary Education: (Especially in the north-east)

Security of any learning environment is pivotal to sustainable learning. Healthy school activities thrive in safe environments (an environment devoid of security threats), security remains an inevitable variable in the business of education and sustainable learning generally. At the moment, the security of institutions of learning is of basic concern to educational stakeholders especially at the tertiary level, where students could easily be addicted and conscripted into the rebel array called "Boko Haram"; female students are vulnerable to sexual abuse by the dreaded sect.

According to Patterson (2008) security challenges trigger traumatic disorder and toxic stress that affect learning negatively. In addition, stressful conditions make children to experience neurobiological changes. Akintunde et al (2016) reiterate that insecurity engenders fears in students making them to study in an atmosphere of stress. In addition, the fear of being attacked at any time causes lack of concentration in learning activities and students' lack of concentration in learning activities, (Hurwitz, 1996). Consequently, it leads to students' lack of confidence, negative thoughts,

affects their creative processes, memory and attentions due to fear, anxiety and general frustration.

The tertiary institutions, like all other institutions of learning in the North-east struggle to sustain learning despite the huge investment by the Nigerian government on security in the North-east. Many researchers have concluded that insecurity and wars have untold negative effects on learning of at all levels. Adagba et al (2012, Adeola et al (2012) and Gustorfissov-Wright et al (2014) all agreed that insecurity affects learning negatively and therefore, impedes sustainable tertiary education. The actual intent for attacks on lecturers, teachers, students and schools in the North-east not important, the bottom line is that the effect of all the attacks on staff, learners and learning facilities remains unquantifiable. Parents, staff, students, AID workers, NGOs were compelled to withdraw to more safe areas leading to skeletal school services and in some more danger zones, total shut-down of schools in the past. With calm gradually returning in 2018 many are still reluctant to resume due to such climate of insecurity with the insurgence new method of mass kidnapping and killing of soft-targets, (Otu, 2015), Adagba et al (2010) and Akpobibo, 2008).

In trying to fight terrorism and to ameliorate the incidence of crime, the Nigerian government has embarked on criminalization of terrorism by passing the Anti-terrorism Act in 2011, installation of Computer-based Closed Circuit Television cameras (CCTV) in some parts of the country, enhancement of surveillance as well as investigation of criminal related offences heightening of physical security measures around the country aimed at determining or disrupting potential attacks, strengthening of security agencies through the provision of security facilities and the development and broadcast of security tips in mass media, (Azazi, 2011). Severally, the Global Peace Index (GPI) has not shown much improvement, therefore, Adagba et al (2012), Uhamuangho and Alufara (2012) insist government needs to do more for better results.

In a region traumatized by violence as the North-east of Nigeria, lecturers, teachers, parents and students are acquainted very often with fluctuations in the school calendar and decide to stop or continue their education based on their estimate of the general security climate in their immediate environment. Even when schools continue operating, students may not attend after a threat or an attack.

- Poor school attendance due to insurgency or crises on the region (North-east) is a regular feature, students miss school for days due to insecurity challenges.
- Closure of schools: Government had to close down many schools in crises-prone areas for several months. Borno state is a typical example, (Akintunde et al, 2016).
- Vandalization of school facilities: Facilities like school buildings are destroyed during insurgency or crises. Many schools were burnt down by insurgents making school facilities inadequate, thus learning is grossly affected.

➤ Half-baked graduates: Some institutions that may not be closed, end up with half-baked graduates due to insurgency in the region. The school calendar is hardly spent, thus leaving much academic work undone.

Another significant effect of insecurity on sustainable tertiary education is emotional insecurity. This state of insecurity affects drastically the school environment and results to psycho-social issues (emotional insecurity). Okudosiri (2013) maintained that emotional insecurity is basically feelings of general uneasiness triggered by perceiving of oneself to be vulnerable, thus a threat to one's self-image or ego affecting learning negatively.

Udeozor (2002) observed that the learning environment include the school buildings, school farms and gardens, sports ground and laboratories, libraries, workshops, water, electricity, communication gadgets, stationeries and so on. The interaction of the aforementioned and the human resources in the tertiary institutions bring about learning.

Peace and tranquility remains the best antidote for a successful teaching and learning exercise, especially in tertiary institutions. When tertiary and indeed all institutions of learning maintain peace and security, tertiary education will be sustained. Although the effect of insecurity on sustainability of tertiary education is unquantifiable, there are so many other ills bedeviling Nigeria generally. Among such ills affecting sustainable tertiary education even in the North-east are; armed robbery, cattle rustling, kidnapping (like the team of Geologists from Nigeria Research Institute to the North-east), political thugery ethno-religious conflicts, organised violent groups, economic-based violence, sexual abuses and human trafficking among others. Crimes are generally attributed to youths who dropped out of school, it is rather scary what the future holds for thousands of youths in tertiary institutions in crises prone-zones like the North-east.

Okorie (2011) affirmed the above, stating that Nigeria North-east has suffered fear of one attack by one extremist group or the other. Maccauley (2004), opined also that poor people in developing countries frequently face relatively high risks from such things as domestic violence, crime, sickness and unemployment. Conquering with the above, Alegre (2008), Saleh (2011) and Ekanem Elizabeth and Ekefie (2011) as their studies revealed that insecurity of school environment, negatively affects sustainable academic achievement in tertiary institutions and others.

Causes of Insecurity

Insecurity in Nigeria has been very often attributed to the following:

(a) Corruption, (b) Bad Leadership, (c) Poverty, (d) Gross discrimination/marginalization, (e) Lack of Good will, (f) Porous Borders and (g) Ethnic/boundary disputes

Sababa (2015), in his empirical studies of causes of insecurity in the North East, streamlined these variables as major causes: Poverty, Massive Unemployment and

Religious Wars against other faiths as the major causes of Islamic insurgency in northern Adamawa and Borno States of Nigeria. The acute poverty, made the youths more vulnerable, as they are easily lured to unleash violence on the Nigeria state according to Sababa (2015). Brainwashing of these unemployed and uneducated youths remains a significant tool in the hands of the Islamic sect (Boko-Haram) and wanton Politicians, the researcher insisted.

➤ According to world press (2013).

Insecurity is in the nature of being human. It is a common place, even if most people make serious effort to disguise it. Too many rejections mostly, everyone has had significant experience of the things that undermine confidence. But, what makes for more than the usual amount of insecurity? The following however makes for more than the usual amount of insecurity.

➤ **Temperament:** As opined by Dr Gerald Stein, September 12, 2015 little human personalities can be different from the moment of birth. Just as not all children have the same colour of eyes, hair, height etc neither do they have the same temperament. Pre-school kids have distinctive and lasting characteristics on such dimensions as being reactive vs. calm, tending to approach or avoid new situations and being introverted or extroverted. While not guaranteeing fractured confidence as an adult, inborn qualities can make a contribution to it.

➤ **Overly critical parenting:** Security can be undermined by parents who are too critical, neglectful or frankly abusive. Sometimes neglect is unavoidable, as it tends to be in families where there are lots of children or the parents are working long hours outside of the home to put food on the table. But sometimes insecurity develops because of something more subtle. If you are born to extroverted parents and introverted (while your siblings are more like your folks), not quite fitting in. If your dad was hoping for an athlete and you are an artist, the same sense of parental disappointment might be hard to miss.

➤ **Bullying:** Kids can be targeted by the classmates for all sorts of reasons including the way they look, where they live, how they dress and racial, religious or ethnic differences. Gender matters too, especially if you are the sole female or male in a particular subject, course or activity. (Physical, engineering, nursing, home-economics cooking lessons, games and so on) with a wise guy class/room mate who makes fun of you and the teacher hasn't the capability to stop it, as some students may witness in school.

➤ **Body Image:** In a society filled with spectacularly beautiful advertising images, it is difficult to be plain; and worse yet, unattractive in any way. Too tall, too skinny, too fat- God help you. Too much acne, bad smell, bad hair, lack of finely tuned motor coordination, same problem. All these contribute to the sense of insecurity felt in students.

- **Learning Problem:** This can take the form of a learning disability, attention deficit, hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or even being average in a school filled with high achievers.
- **Multiple changes of residence/transfer for new schools:** Being the new kid is not usually fun, especially for introverted young people who struggle with fitting in and finding friends. Insecurity can follow.
- **Parental overprotection:** When parents prevent their children from doing things that are simply a part of growing up, they can communicate to the child that he/she isn't up to the task. Moreover, they rob the young one of the chance to grow from experience, learn what they need to know in the social sphere, and become more confident. He may also be at risk of being seen as "different by his/peers".
- **Parental Expectations:** Even an objectively accomplished person can be insecure if he feels he has failed to reach that standard set by parents for him/her, unless he/she throws off this requirement by acts of self-examination or therapy.
- **Guilt:** A student who has some guilt about something others don't know about (an adopted child, epilepsy, HIV, Cancer, Alcoholic, into drugs, a cultist and so on) such things could make the child feel insecure and vulnerable.
- **Being in someone's shadow:** While a student has a lot to gain as a brother or sister of an extraordinary person who may have made a name in one's sphere or the other, it may on the other hand create a high bar to any kind of recognition of the student in his/her own right. This can cause insecurity.
- **Isolation:** Children whose living conditions offer little opportunity to socialize with peers are at a disadvantage. The extroverted among them are more likely to have more confidence in social arena. These isolated kids may not have mastery/confidence in coping with challenges of peers may cope with.
- **Life failures:** The frustrations of life can take their toll. Confidence might be determined by too many job-loss goals unfulfilled, rejections, relationship failures, examination failures and general failures in other competitions too can cause a student to feel insecure. Note also that, if a student's confidence depends largely on just one thing, a lot of that thing can be quite devastating, for some students, one factor alone may not cause a significant change in feelings until two or more of the above interact or interplay (Gerald, 2013)

Summary

By way of summary, insecurity in schools has a lot of impact on students' behaviour from all that the paper has highlighted. Although insecurity in Nigeria has been regionalized, militia groups have been making their intolerable acts felt in other parts of Nigeria and beyond. Consequently, students (schools) and companies around the areas affected by insurgency have suffered a great loss of cash, welfare, low-workforce and poor production level. www.myfmacialintelligence.com.

It is imperative therefore, for the affected students to be given personal counseling by trained psychologists because of all the consequences highlighted by the paper. As unpalatable as insecurity is, its emotional consequences cannot be estimated in a hurry.

Counseling Implications

Students need to go for counseling from counseling psychologists in their environment. Traumatized students, will receive same rays of hope and proper guidance by calming their troubled minds and assisting them to gradually adjust in order to sustain their tertiary education.

Conclusion

For every meaningful education to thrive, security and absolute peace is SACO-SANT. This paper therefore, concludes that all tertiary institutions (and indeed other schools) in Yobe, Adamawa, Borno, Gombe States and entire Nigeria affected by insurgency, must be rebuilt urgently while the students in such trouble-prone areas including Benue, Plateau, Taraba States and so on, are rehabilitated for re-adjustment/sustainable tertiary education.

Recommendations

1. Security personnel should be given the right intelligence training, equipment and good insurance coverage to enable them do preventive crime detection, rather than curative measures.
2. People who volunteeringly give useful information to the security Agents should be highly rewarded and protected too.
3. Corrupt leaders should be prosecuted to serve as a deterrent for up-coming leaders.
4. Students should be encouraged to focus more on their own positive changes, strengths and adequate skills acquisition, to prevent unemployment after school.
5. Counseling psychologists should be assigned to schools in areas affected by insurgency for immediate succor to students/staff.

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