

THE INFLUENCE OF INSECURITY AND CHALLENGES ON WOMEN EDUCATION, GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

Insecurity is the phenomenon which spans the physical, psychological, economic, and other aspects of the individual which extends to the community. Nigeria has had a large dose of it in recent times from insurgency to kidnapping, robbery, social media and so on. Education describes the total process of human learning by which knowledge is imparted, valuable skills developed and faculties trained. Women are particularly vulnerable reason measures are needed for her protection. The content of women's education should be the reflection of the society's idea of the role assigned to women, Good governance produces economic efficiency by reducing transaction costs through the operation of the rule of law, transparency in government and corporate management and accountability for every institution and individual in society. Therefore, this study looks at the influence of insecurity and it's challenges on women education and a way forward on good governance in Nigeria. Moreover, if democracy is the desired way of organizing society, then good governance also requires participation, accountability, transparency and predictability.

Keywords: Insecurity, Women education, Governance

Insecurity represents or describes both a state of mind and a physical situation. People, and even animals and in recent time, inanimate things such as historical monuments and sites face insecurity arising from the activities of human beings. According to Osuala (2003), the idea of human beings needs are noted for natural disasters may not be regarded as sources or harbingers of insecurity since they are 'natural' anyway, are not regular, and can, except in the case of earthquakes, be predicted and avoided. Whenever people have a feeling of self-doubt, or feel vulnerable and susceptible to injury or harm particularly for a sustained period, insecurity is at work. It need not be physical threat to harm or even existential threat of a corporate variety such as the nation of Israel is made to feel by Iran and other neighbours. An emerging or subsisting threat to one's comfort, physical, psychological, emotional wellbeing and related others tantamount to insecurity. This is why in administration, one talks of security of tenure with respect to jobs. Whenever and wherever people feel that they cannot be certain of not being harmed whether physically or psychologically or emotionally, there is insecurity. Insecurity in this paper is viewed from a wide perspective.

Olana (2012) reviewed the state of insecurity in Nigeria is a deep and structurally entrenched crisis of development that creates conditions for inequality, poverty, and unemployment. This line of reasoning was trumpeted for some time during the tenure of Dr. Goodluck Jonathan as Nigerian President as the Boko Haram group kept creating tension and

insecurity across Nigeria. Crane (2007) of Council on Foreign Relations and Eme and Onyishi (2011) however agree with Katsina on the role of personal economics on insecurity in Nigeria. Crane (2007) submits that the inability of the Federal Government of Nigeria to deliver basic services to citizens is a prime cause of insecurity alongside religious fighting and violent attacks in the Niger Delta. Eme and Onyishi (2011) tag the economic aspect “wobble theme” in their exposition on the issue of insecurity in Nigeria. Fintell (2015) adds another angle to the type copy of insecurity: regionalized insecurity in which there is insurgency in the north, kidnapping in the east, ritual killing in the west, political assassinations nationwide. The implication of is that there are patterns of occurrences which can be studied for purposes of designing control measures. This does not imply that certain types of insecurity occurrences are restricted to certain regions.

Oluwa (2014) presents a fairly long list of types, causes, and effects of insecurity in Nigeria. For the types, are- militancy in the Niger Delta Region, clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farmers, ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, Gang conflicts and cult wars, Kidnapping, ritual killings involving innocent people, Police brutality and so on. Above issues raise conditions of insecurity because they could affect anybody. Even road journey that in the past used to be a source of relaxation and education have now become very hazardous because of mob attacks, robbery, kidnapping, police brutality, and the precarious nature of roads. The listing of causes of insecurity by Oluwa (2014) is also fairly exhaustive and instructive which are- Hunger/poverty illiteracy and ignorance, Unemployment, Systemic corruption, and Income inequality. The effects of insecurity, Oluwa (2014) notes, include increase in the quantum of internally displaced persons; political, social, and economic disruptions; and slow economic growth. All of above impact on the humans that occupy locations experiencing insecurity. Unfortunately, the most vulnerable are women.

Insecurity and the Female Gender

In South Africa, rape, from routine rape to corrective rape (on lesbians by straight males) is so common place. It is held that a woman is raped every 36 seconds in South Africa while one in every four males is said to have been involved in rape (Smith, 2009). India has been making news as young women are frequently brutally and mortally raped. The saga of the Chibok girls in Nigeria remains unresolved. How, then, can girls go to school when they are uncertain that they will not be violated and even killed? If we go back into time, women have for millennia been treated as second rate human beings. As at date, it is still unacceptable for women to drive cars in Saudi Arabia and even in the world’s number one democracy – the United States of America - women still receive salaries that are below those of their male counterparts and voting in elections was secured after a long battle. Interestingly Nigeria started from independence to accord women equal rights. Ubong (2003) has detailed the deprivations of women from ancient times to modern times. In the area of education, Wokocha (2005) notes that culture is women’s number one enemy in Nigeria. In the recent past, parents who had minimal income would allocate what they had to the male children. After all, educated or not, females would end up as mothers and cooks. Certainly, a cursory review would reveal a drastic change as increase in income and more enlightenment have seen more girls in schools, in some areas, the population of girls in schools exceeding that of boys.

Meaning and objectives of women education

Women's education can be regarded as a kind of knowledge given to women for enhancing their self-respect and self-dignity. This knowledge can be in form of formal, non-formal and informal education, it can also be in form of Adult Education, Community Development, Workshops, Seminars, Conferences and Training. Women's education is for making women to become economically independent and self-reliant (Bhasin, 2005), Women as mothers, are educators within their families, what they learn, they pass on to their children and their future generations (Osuala, 2003). Education for women is a development priority due to the dynamic potential of educated women.

Therefore, the main objectives for women's education are as follows:

1. To enable women to improve their family's health and diet.
2. To increase women's productive ability, thus raising their families' standard of living.
3. To give women access to appropriate technologies, management of cooperatives and the use of loan facilities.
4. To improve women's social and culture status.
5. To enable women to discharge their responsibilities more effectively {UNESCO, 2006}.
6. Helping women to fight their own fears and feelings of inadequacy or inferiority.
7. Educating women in all round development. That is mentally, socially, physically, psychologically, religiously and economically.
8. To make women participate fully in all the affairs of their nation and to be at centre of sustainable development.
9. To make women able to acquire their own basic needs of the society, like food, shelter, fuel, clothes and nurturing.
10. To enhance nation building in terms of economic and human development.

Women have now taken places in all our formal institutions of learning. Educated women have organised enlightenment programmes to enlighten Nigerian women on their roles in national development. Also workshops, seminars and conferences are organized to educate women on the means and ways of acquiring political and economic power. Adult Education classes are established in the rural areas. (Etesike, 2005).

There have been successful and innovative programmes such as using local extension agents in rural areas or establishing flexible educational initiatives that fit with women's schedules. Other projects include day-care centres for women who otherwise could not have attended courses.(Teigseler, 2007).

Insecurity and effect on women education

In Nigeria, insecurity as it affects women can be put into two broad groups:

- i) Institution-Based Insecurity In educational institutions and in particular at post-secondary levels, the following are observable:
- ii) Sexual harassment – Women are prone to sexual harassment than their male counterparts. Fear of not meeting sexual advances of teachers and administrators could have psychological impact on women and their performance at work place or school.. There are also proven cases of female students declared as having failed courses when they did not.
- iii) Economic constraints – the needs of women are more than those of men. Women from poor homes could find themselves constrained in meeting financial needs. This could

pose psychological insecurity. Meanwhile the financial demands of the courses are indeed sources of insecurity.

iv) Choice latitude - whether as a result of societal expectation or a result of upbringing, women sometimes find themselves constrained in career choice. This is described as “limited feminine fields” (Nwosu, 2012).

v) These include teaching, home economics, home making, and small scale business development for the few that are prepared to dare the tumultuous and unpredictable world of business. Ubong (2003) carried out a study on women and determined that many of them have aversion for business as a vocation because of the stresses and strains associated with the world of private business.

ii) Community-based insecurity

Every school is sited in a community and in any case, every child originates and grows up in a community. Insecurity arising from communities includes but is not limited to:

a) Culture, as already indicated, is regarded as the number one enemy of women in Nigeria (Wokocho, 2005).

b) Religion, particularly the ones that are against women education, some of which have been discussed above.

c) Institutionalized rape which makes women to be afraid of leaving their homes.

d) Family economics, which could force parents to keep their female children away from school or give them out as house helps or even marry them out at an early age. Also as already mentioned, for those of them that make the attempt, financial demands from lecturers and administrators could force them into hazardous activities that could be a menace to them physically and psychologically.

e) The impact of electronic communications as well as social media on the rising tide of insecurity in Nigeria appears not to have received much attention to date.

Good governance and a way forward

Governance has been variously defined as the management of society by the people, or as the exercise of authority to manage a country's affairs and resources. It has to be noted, however, that there has hardly been a consensus as to its core meaning, and as to how it could be applied in practice. The term does not yet possess a standard meaning nor has its meaning remained constant in the decade or so of its being accorded a central place in donor frameworks for development. The lack of specificity in the meaning of the term "governance" becomes apparent when we examine its historical evolution (Okoh, 2014).

The first duty of any government or administration in institutions/organizations is to protect lives and property proactively. All other activities of governance must be seen as coming after, for economic growth and strides in socio-political developments are for the living. No one builds schools, develops transport systems and infrastructural facilities, provides entertainment and health centres, and plants food for the dead. It is therefore an imperative that all administrations (school heads, village heads, local government administrators, state governors, President of Nigeria and others) must see citizens as first priority by way of keeping them alive, safe, and comfortable. For women, there is the need for sustained emphasis on their education and general welfare. Women are the mothers and society builders of the next generation (Fintell, 2015), The following need be pursued:

Sustained advocacy on women education, Sustained education on reproductive health focused on women, Sustained orientation directed at men to make them see women as the gender that must be protected rather than intimidated and violated. This should be done by socializing institutions – families, religious organizations, schools, social organizations, and communities (Osuala, 2003)

Conclusion

Insecurity is a plague that is international in nature. The persons/groups that make nations insecure continue to migrate and spread the gospel of hate across national boundaries. There is therefore the need for international action on a sustained basis to combat the rising tide. In Nigeria, nay developing countries, there is need for official action to manage the menace particularly as they affect women. There can be no growth and development in an atmosphere of insecurity. Not even the most advanced societies can claim to be enjoying high standards of living when citizens cannot enjoy the goodness of effort in peace. (Olana, 2012).

Good governance is predicated upon mutually supportive and cooperative relationships between government, civil society, and the private sector. The nature of relationships among these three groups of actors, and the need to strengthen viable mechanisms to facilitate interactions, assume critical importance. Good governance is a combination of, the following elements: participation, transparency of decision-making, accountability, rule of law, and predictability. Good governance is normative in conception. The values that provide the underpinning for governance are the values postulated by the defining actors and institutions (Okoh, 2014).

Recommendation

1. Women should be encouraged to always be decent in their life-styles particularly in their dressing to avoid rape and other social vices.
2. Women should be encouraged to participate in trade unions and collective bargaining to reflect the special needs of the women folk.
3. Women should be promoted into higher level skills and responsibilities in the occupational structure to have the need of security.
4. Special effort must be made to attract and train women for decision-making positions for good governance in Nigeria.
5. Systematic efforts should be made to ensure women's full integration and participation into the national development process to help solve the challenges of insecurity in Nigeria.

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