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CONFRONTING INSECURITY IN NORTH CENTRAL BOARDING SECONDARY SCHOOLS: CHALLENGES AND WAY FORWARD

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Abstract

Education is a sound investment that is expected to enhance economic growth of individuals and the society. With the rate which parents continue to withdraw their children from schools and making future leaders roam about on the street is alarming and need a lasting solution to it. The paper centers on confronting insecurity in North Central boarding secondary schools: challenges and way forward. The paper seeks to examine the concept of security, insecurity and secondary education. The paper also examine causes of insecurity challenges of insecurity in school and suggested way forward to control the rate of killing, poverty, withdrawal of students from schools in North Central. It concluded that if suggestions are followed, could assist to control or reduce the effect of security challenges in schools.

Keywords: Insecurity, North-Central Boarding, Secondary Schools, Challenges, Way Forward.

Introduction

Education is the process of learning and the acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, moral, belief and habit. Fafunwa (2004) sees education as the aggregate of all the processes by which a child or young adult develops the abilities, attitude, knowledge, competence and other forms of behavior which are of positive value to the individual and the society in which he lives, Ramalan (2010) defined education as everything that is learned and acquired in a life time: habit, knowledge, skills, interest and personality. Garba (2018) contended that education is the conscious efforts of preparing students through monitoring, teaching and learning for their role in future. According to Yunus (2023) education is effort that are deliberately chosen to influence and assist children with the aim of improving knowledge, physical and morals that can gradually deliver the child to the highest goals in order for the child to live happy and beneficial to himself and the society.

Education remains the viable instrument for academic progress, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of any country. It constitutes the largest

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enterprises/industry in Nigeria, that is why the government continues to ensure that funds, school facilities, instructional materials, teaching personnel and a beneficial learning environment are made available for the sector. In support of the above assumption, Abdulkareem, (2011) Fasasi (2008) and Akinnubi (2010) stated that education is the engine that drives the growth and development of a nation.

Education is the best legacy a nation can give to her citizens especially the youths. This is because education is very important in the development of any nation. Education is the most important foundation which paves the future roadmap for an individual. Education holds the key to the development of quality human resources needed to transform the country's economy. It is in view of the above importance of education that Nigerian government budgeted substantial proportion of its annual allocation to education.

However, with the discontinuity in education as a result of insecurity, it is difficult for students to get educated to enhance their performance in the class (Amadi and Urho, 2015).

Ediyang and Ubi (2016) opined that insecurity affects students because it makes them not to be adequately taught, which affect their output after graduation. Insecurity heavily affects secondary education in North-Central Nigeria. It leads to closure of all institutions of learning in the country, displacement of students, roaming about of future leaders on the streets, phone snatchers and so on. The prominent indices for these occurrences are traced to insecurity and poverty in our youths. Nigerian education system is destroyed by farmer herder, bomber, unknown gun men, hired killers, armed robbery, terrorism, banditry, kidnappers, political thuggery, religious crises, cattle restorer are persisting in North-Central Nigeria which affects secondary education consequently, there is need for rethinking of strategies to tackle these difficulties. Jumare (2020) opined that it could be as a result of inadequate fair distribution of national resources.

Efforts were made by Nigerian government to offer education online, radio and television learning in the affected areas. It is in line with the above, that the paper dwells in confronting insecurity in North-Central boarding secondary schools: challenges and way forward.

Concept of School Security

School security is the protection of vital core of all human lives and properties in a way that enhances good teaching and learning environment (Goje, 2017). Similarly, Campbell (2007) sees school security as all the strategies and procedures required to coordinate the diverse activities of the school, protect and manage school violence, reduce security risks and ensure that the school environment is safe for teaching and learning.

Concept of Insecurity

Insecurity is the feeling of unsafe or vulnerable to physical harm or threats. Insecurity according to Uchenna (2014) is external or internal defect danger, loss, criminal and other individual or actions that threaten hinder or destroy an organization steady state and deprive it of its intended purpose for being.

Concept of Secondary Education

Secondary school education referred to the stages of education following primary education usually for students between the ages of 11 to 18. It is built upon the foundational skills and

knowledge gained during primary education, preparing students for further education, vocational training or entry into workforce.

Secondary education consists of the second year of formal education that occurs during adolescence. It is characterized by transition from the typically compulsory, comprehensive primary education for minors, to the optional, selective tertiary post-secondary education for adults.

Secondary education according to National Policy on Education (2014) is the education children received after primary education and before the tertiary stages. In line with the objectives of its emergence, graduates of this system are earmarked for full employment and purposeful attainment of the individual's self-realization, skill acquisition for self-employment and one's ability to contribute to the promotion of the wellbeing of the societal members.

As the first stage where some degree of specialization is introduced, secondary education not only determines the fate but also dictate the place of education at primary and tertiary levels. The ultimatum objective of primary school leavers is to gain admission into secondary school. Similarly, the primary consideration of every secondary leaver is how to proceed to good higher education. The job of the management of secondary school is therefore, not so much on the teaching or skills but for moulding of character. Most students in secondary school find themselves in the adolescent stage.

Causes of insecurity in secondary schools in North-Central Nigeria

There are several causes of insecurity in secondary schools in North-Central Nigeria, some of which are as follows:

1. Inadequate Trained Security Personnel: most of the security personnel in schools were either not trained or grossly undertrained. Many are aged and as such may not be able to protect anything. This has made the school open to issues bordering on insecurity without any challenge. According to Jumare (2020), in Chibok, Dapchi and Damaturu, there was no resistance on the part of the security men on duty.
2. Inadequate /Absence of Security Facilities: inadequate and or absence of state art security facilities have made insecurity a big challenges to many schools whose lives are lost. Security men only hold sticks, while the criminal hold sophisticated weapons and devastating explosive. This enables the criminal to have their way.
3. Inadequate fair distribution of National resources: poverty in Nigeria and indeed, Africa has been attributed largely to poor and unfair distribution of national resources. This was also attributed to pushing other poor citizen to fight and destroy government properties. Therefore, this has been attributed to the cause of insecurity in schools.
4. Porous Nigerian Borders: porous borders here mean a border where persons, animals and materials could come in or go out anytime without control or checks. This has brought about increase in arm trafficking that leaves communication in the hands of insurgent and other criminals. It also enables them to attack without fear.
5. Increase in violent doctrine in Religion: increase in violent doctrine in religion denotes increase extremism in teaching wrong ideologies to the youths. The youths are misguided through

wrong philosophy that most time pushed them into crimes. This becomes as cause of insecurity in schools.

Challenges of School Security in North-Central Nigeria

There are several changes to school security in North-Central Nigeria, some of which are as follows:

a) Inadequate trained personnel
b) Inadequate and non-availability of security gadgets
c) Low communication network among security agents
d) Insufficient trained facilities
e) Inadequate motivation among security men and women
f) Absence of good policy and security issues in Nigeria
g) Slow prosecution processes in courts in Nigeria

Impact of insecurity in schools in North-Central

Effects of insecurity in schools in North-Central are inexhaustible. However, thee following are some of the impacts.

1. Economic Effects: economic effects of insecurity imply the economic loss created in the schools and other school service provider in and around the school premises. This loss, in the long run affects the economy of a nation. At the local levels, school closes due to insecurity. It stops sales of goods and services and many more. This at the end reduces incomes to the school, government and other individuals.
2. Emotional and Psychological Effects: insecurity creates emotional and psychological distress on students and on everybody. The effect slows down students' performance.
3. Loss of Lives and Properties: insecurity in secondary schools in North-Central Nigeria has claimed several lives and properties. Lives of teachers and students were lost in large number in North-Central part of Nigeria. This has made several students to desert schooling in the region, coupled with its backwardness in school attendance in Nigeria. Many teachers lives were lost creating a lot of gaps in meeting global standard of student-teacher ratio. Insecurity has caused unquantifiable damage on classrooms, laboratories, staff offices, staff quarters and school facilities among others in North-Central Nigeria. These effects have caused backwardness in education.
4. Underutilization of School Facilities: when schools are under lock and key, all classrooms, halls, hostel, offices, sport facilities, staff offices and other school spaces will not be in use. This affects routine maintenance of the facilities, which may result to damage.
5. Reduction in School Attendance: due to the closure of schools for a long period of time, many students resort to dropping out of school. Many students end up in moving to other towns, while others to Internally Displaced Persons' Camp (IDPS). This has added to low school attendance in Nigeria (North-Central) which Education For All (EFA) had explained in the year 2015.
6. Loss of Time: loss of time mean out of school. This has affected both teaching and learning activities. This has resulted to unnecessary extension of time. Student's period of completion has increased by years. This loss may not easily ne regained and must attract additional cost.

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Way forward

The following are the types of strategies needed for the control of security challenges in schools:

a. Human security strategy: human security strategy means the use of human being in providing security to schools. Human security could be deployed through employment or contract.
b. Animal Security Strategy: animal security means the use of animals at check point to detect criminals and illicit materials. Dogs and other trained animals can be used in these types of security. The use of animals gives good result.
c. Technology Security Strategy: technology security strategy is the use of machines and other gadgets to detect and assess criminals or movement of illegal materials. These machines could be scanners, cameras and video machines. This machines checks and provide quality information unlike human being.
d. Physical Security Strategy: physical security strategy can be use to cease the menaces of insurgents. Lombaard and Kole (2008) contended that physical security provides the following among others:

i. Deter intruders from entering the premises
ii. Detect the attempted entry or presence if any intruder gets through the physical security barriers or measures in place.
iii. Limit the harm that can be done if any intruder manages to gain entry without being detected.
iv. Detain the intruder by using silent alarm or alerting a security patrol.

e. Technology security gadgets strategy: technology security gadgets such as:

i. Protective lighting
ii. Alarm
iii. Security gate
iv. Metal detectors
v. Use of intercom system

f. Existence of a policy on security: this provides guideline on procedure in the event of any security challenges. The policy is expected to explain duties and responsibilities of stakeholders in the school regarding security issues.
g. Provision of Channel of Communication: communication channels play a vital role in crime prevention. The channels need to be put in place in the event of any challenges.
h. Ensure the existence of security committee: existence of security committee could assist in reviewing situations and providing possible preventive measure in the school.
i. Train stakeholders on security Tips: the training of stakeholders on security tips could assist to prevent or reduce the gravity of the challenge. Stakeholders in school security include: students, teachers, security personnel, host community, school management support staff and PTA officials.
j. Preparedness: preparedness implies that school managers are expected to make sure that all stakeholders mentioned above are on the alert to act in the event of any security challenge. Preparedness reduces fear and anxiety in any situation before and during security challenges. A prepared security system stands a better chance of reducing harm and causalities than those without it.

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k. Response: at this stage, it is assumed that all that is to be put in place are put in place to respond according to available information. Response is always determined by the level of preparedness which uses the available information as it is shared within the school system.
l. Recovery: recovery implies a set out process aimed at getting back to normal after an incident. Recovery process requires an action plan with a committee depending on the gravity of the incident. At the first stage, information gathering is required, information sharing among stakeholders costing of damage, recovery of lost items and designing of action plan f coming back to work. If steps, are followed it could assist to control or reduce the effect of security challenges in schools particularly North-Central Nigeria.

Conclusion

Concerning security challenges in North-Central Nigeria secondary schools will reform education system in Nigeria. It will bring about development, because where there is no peace, development cannot take place. Control insecurity will contribute to economic growth:, psychological distress on students will be a thing of the past. Performance will improve, population will grow, school facilities will be utilized fully, school attendance will increase and there will be no extension of time.

Recommendations

The paper concluded and proffered recommendation such as:

1. E- learning should be encourage since, it enhances teaching and learning process
2. E-learning should be financial by government, philanthropist and non – governmental agencies
3. Network should be extended to rural areas for network coverage
4. Bandits in our farmlands requesting for certain amount of money before accessing our farmland, should be discourage because doing as, is empowering them.
5. Youths should be gainfully employed.
6. Economic sector should be reform t fit in unemployed youths
7. Education sector should be reform to cater for all
8. There should be innovation in prevent the occurrence in government policies with regards to insurgency.

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