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Keywords: *insecurity, schools, northern nigeria, human capital and school children.*

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Insecurity of Schools in Northern Nigeria: Implications for Human Capital Development

Dr. Bridget Onwuasoanya [α], Dr. Irene Yakubu [σ] & Dr. Saminu Ismail [ρ]

Abstract- The purpose of this paper was to find out how insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria could be managed to enhance human capital development in the country. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population was secondary school teachers and students in northern Nigeria. The sample was 100 teachers and 150 students drawn from the population. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument was a researcher developed questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Insecurity of Schools in Northern Nigeria (QISNN). It was structured under four likert scale. It was face and content validated by four experts from two universities in the northern Nigeria, namely; Kaduna state university and federal university Gusau in Zamfara state. The instrument was pilot tested to determine its reliability which yielded a coefficient of 0.78. Direct delivery technique was employed in administering the instrument. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation and t test statistical analysis. Results amongst others are: insecurity of schools could be managed to enhance human capital development by enforcing laws and policies, Eliminate the network of organised crime used by perpetrators; creating jobs for youths, resolving the difference that trigger kidnappings; strengthening institutions & law enforcement agencies, addressing societal issues, national consciousness & citizen participation as well as Comprehensive threat assessment of schools in the entire Northern region.

Keywords: *insecurity, schools, northern nigeria, human capital and school children.*

I. Introduction

Education system in Nigeria has continued to suffer from perennial multipronged insecurities ranging from terrorism to the violent, ethnically tinged herder-farmer clash, kidnappings of students, banditry and abduction which have taken the lives of several students, pupils and teachers. Insecurity of schools is a situation where by the school, students, pupils and teachers are open to attack, danger, treat or lack of protection. Akintokunbo (2021) sees it as a state of vulnerability, conflict, threats to human security, intense violence characterized by fighting, killings, injury and serious danger to the school system. In this paper, kidnapping, banditry, insurgency, killings are classified as insecurity. The recent spate of mass kidnappings of school children and students in northern Nigeria arguably represents the gravest existential threat and crisis to the education system. Writing on insecurity in Nigeria education system, Olusola (2012) lamented that the high rate of insecurity in schools is crippling Nigeria education system. He calls for urgent intervention of the federal government and stake holders before Nigeria education system will fall like a bag of sand.

In less than three months between December 2020 and March 2021, more than 600 school children have been kidnapped. A more worrisome situation which policy makers, curriculum planners, stake holders and educational administrators had frowned at is the fact that the height of insecurity is more pronounced in northern Nigeria, which is already the most educationally disadvantaged region of the country. According to UNICEF, (2021) estimated 10.5million out-of-school children in the country, 69 percent come from the North, where cultural practices and economic deprivation limit children's active participation in school, particularly females. The Boko Haram crisis, with its debilitating effects on economic and education systems, is also heavily concentrated in the northern region of Nigeria (Mohammed, 2014). Now, with the spate of recent school kidnappings, community and parental trust in the education system had gone down significantly, and the problem of access to quality and equitable education become severely amplified. Furthermore, with Nigeria education system still recovering from the devastating effects of the prolonged school closure from COVID-19, adding insecurity concerns to the basket of challenges could lead to its irrecoverable collapse.

Obasi (2021) warned that the latest mass kidnapping of Nigerian school children underscores that the crumbling of human security in Africa's most populous nation is worsening into a deeper impairment, hollowing out Nigeria's education system to create a "lost generation" of youth across the country. Obasi regretted that, one in five of the world's out-of-school children is a Nigerian. He calls on Nigeria and international policymakers not only to focus on the immediate crises of kidnappings, Boko Haram's extremist violence, and conflict between farming and herding communities but to urgently rescue and buttress the country's damaged education system.

It is worrying that seven years after the abduction of 276 girls of Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok, Borno State, which attracted global

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outrage, things have taken a more dangerous dimension as attacks on schools have now become common. Though the news that 27 students at the Forestry College, Kaduna regained their freedom after 56 days in the kidnappers' den offered a crumb of comfort, there is a seeming lack of enthusiasm by the government to secure the freedom of students when abductions occur hence abductions of students continued.

Adesulu (2019) reported that about 800 students, including those of higher institutions, have been abducted in coordinated attacks on schools in mostly northern states of the country in the last six months. Punch news editorial (2021) gave the breakdown of abduction of students and pupils to includes 344 school children of Government Science Secondary School, Kankara, and 80 pupils of Islamiyya School, Mahuta, both in Katsina State; 27 boys at GSS College, Kagara, Niger State; 279 school girls of Government Girls Secondary School, Jangebe, Zamfara State; 39 students at the Federal College of Forestry Mechanisation, Kaduna; 23 students at Greenfield University, Kaduna; and three students at the Federal University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State. While some of the students were lucky to be freed, others like Dorothy Yohanna, Precious Nwakacha, Sadiq Muazu and Benjamin Habilla were all brutally murdered. Several others are still in captivity, while their parents scramble to pay ransoms. Also, there have been no reports of any of the attackers being brought to book despite repeated assurances by the President and state governors. Despite the closure of schools for over six months nationwide last year, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, states have once again been forced to shut over 60 mostly boarding schools in vulnerable areas due to insecurity.

Education is generally known to be the best legacy any country can give to her citizens because it guides attitudes, leads to good activities and help the entire society live cordially with one another. Educational sector in Nigeria has been the engine room of all other sectors because of its role in building and developing human capital through training. Recently, it suffers setback caused by debilitating, exasperating and humongous incessant kidnappings carried out by bandits (Malala, 2016). If the education system suffers set back, how could it contribute to human capital development? From the time the first incident of students' mass abduction occurred in 2014 in Chibok Boronu state, academic activities especially in secondary schools are carried out in phobia and uncertainties of where would be the next target. Parents in rural areas who were forced to enroll their children into schools are using students' abduction as excuse for preventing them from going. Teachers that often sacrifice their times and efforts in teaching students are now left to the mercy of God because securities operatives stationed in schools often times take to their heels whenever kidnappers come to cart-away students. (Mohamed,et,. al. 2016) noted that increase in students' kidnappings has become a big threat to the future of students. This is because these students are trained in school to become human capitals that use their expertise to manipulate the course of nature and contribute to national development.

Human capital is an indispensable resource that is needed to achieve productivity in any organization. To effectively manage any organisation, human capital is needed. While education is the key element of human capital theory, it is viewed as the primary means of developing knowledge and skill because level of education is a way of quantifying the quality of labour in any country. (Gyang, 2011), Human capital is the economic value of the abilities and qualities of labour that influence productivity, such as education. Human capital recognizes the intangible assets and qualities that improve worker performance and benefit the economy. These qualities cannot be separated from the people who receive or possess them through education. In other words investment in education is investment on human capital. Jaiyeoba (2015) stated that investment in human capital development is a strategy for achieving greater output. Therefore, improving individuals for personal and organizational efficiency and effectiveness is the focus of human capital development. Investment in human capital through quality education has become widely recognized by states as one of the most potent strategies for concretizing both short-term and long-term development plans in the face of the prevailing global economic crisis. If students and pupils who are human recourses sent to acquire skills and training in school are being killed through abduction and kidnapping, the country automatically will run short of human capital in no distant time. Though fighting insecurity in school, kidnapping and abduction is a costly endeavour, schooling in Nigeria does not have to be a suicide mission. Therefore, the country should rather spend money, time and attention where it matters than hand security of schools to unscrupulous elements of society who could do nothing.

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Source: Femi Adesina's Facebook Page; Punch Editorial Board, May 2021

Figure 1: A cross-section of the rescued students of Government Science Secondary School Kankara, Katsina State. Nigeria

II. Statement of Problem

In Nigeria, students have been risking their lives for education. Like in most parts of the world, schooling comes with its fair share of challenges but when students risk losing their freedom or lives at school, our tomorrow is under attack. Where going to school is tantamount to charging into battle amid a swarm of bullets, what chances do the average Nigerian child has for a better education? Although these abductions did not begin recently, it has become frequent in recent times. For more than eight years, the conflict in the Northeast and the resulting humanitarian crisis is devastating the lives of millions of children, students, women and their families. With children under 15 years of age accounting for about 45 per cent of the country's population, the burden on education and other sectors has become overwhelming. The risk of schooling in Nigeria today is death. This development has grossly affected education which is the key to developing human capital whose skills and knowledge promote national development. Federal government in the bid to tackle the ugly situation introduced A "safe school programme" which was drawn up to provide teachers, parents and students with comprehensive information on safety skills; empower school communities with appropriate guidelines; provide schools with the information and skills required to conduct customised risk and threat audits of their establishments. Government also closed many schools and higher institutions in the northern part of the country, but all these ventures appear not to have solved the problem. The ugly situation persisted. It therefore, becomes penitent to identify strategies to further manage the insecurity of schools, salvage students' lives, and protect education system to enhance human capital development in Nigeria which is the burden of this paper.

a) Research questions

1. What are causes of insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria?
2. How could insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria be managed to enhance human capital development?

b) Hypotheses

1. No significance difference exists in the mean rating of the responses of teachers and students regarding the causes of insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria.
2. No significance difference exists in the mean rating of the responses of teachers and students regarding how insecurity of schools could be managed in northern Nigeria to enhance human capital development.

III. Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population was secondary school teachers and students in northern Nigeria. Simple random sampling was used to select two states out of the 19 northern states in northern Nigeria, namely, (Zamfara and Kaduna states). From each the sampled states, 15 schools were randomly selected while 10 teachers and 15 students were accidentally picked from each of the sampled schools. The total sample was 100 teachers and 150 students (250 respondents). Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. The instrument was a researcher developed

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questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Insecurity of Schools in Northern Nigeria (QISNN). It has two sections (A and B), Section A contains the demographic information of the respondents while section B contains 21 items structured under four likert scale of strongly agree (SA, 4points), agree (A, 3points), disagree (D 2points) and strongly disagree(SD,1point). The instrument was face and content validated by four experts from two universities in the northern Nigeria, namely; federal university Gusau in Zamfara state and Kaduna state university. The instrument was pilot tested using split half method on 12 teachers and 24 students outside the study area to determine its reliability. The results obtained were correlated using Spearman rank Order(Spearman rho) correlation coefficient and it yielded a coefficient of 0.78. The researchers trained 4 research assistants to help in administering the instruments to the teacher and students in the sampled schools. Direct delivery technique was employed in administering the instrument to ensure 100% return. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while t test statistical analysis was used to test the null hypotheses. The decision rule was 2.50. Mean scores of 2.50 and above are accepted while below 2.50 is low and thus rejected.

IV. Results

Research question one: what are the causes of insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean score and standard deviation of teachers and students responses on the causes of school insecurity in northern Nigeria

SN	Items	Teachers- No 100			Students- No 150		
		X	SD	Dec	X	SD	Dec
1	Unemployment	3.41	0.21	high	2.86	0.24	high
2	Corruption	2.50	0.29	mod	3.14	0.28	high
3	Greed	2.50	0.29	mod	2.50	0.28	mod
4	Quest for economic gain	3.20	0.28	high	3.00	0.31	high
5	Political demand	2.34	0.21	low	3.01	0.31	high
6	perpetrators are not punished	2.82	0.24	high	2.65	0.28	mod
7	It is a lucrative business	2.96	0.31	high	3.33	0.32	high
8	No youth empowerment	3.23	0.31	high	2.80	0.30	high
9	Lack of comprehensive school security policy to guide action	2.50	0.29	mod	2.50	0.29	mod
10	Incompetent school security guards	2.10	0.28	low	2.00	0 27	low

Mod -- moderate

On table one above, it could be seen that, the students rated all the items high except items 3 and 6 which was rated moderate by teachers and students alike. They have mean scores of 2.50 and 2.65 respectively. The teachers rated items 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8 high and items 2, 3 and 5 they rated moderate and low. Items 9 and 10 were rated moderate and low respectively by both categories of respondents.

Research Question Two: How could insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria be managed to enhance human capital development.

Table 2: Mean score and standard deviation of teachers and students responses on how insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria could be managed to enhance human capital development.

SN	Items	Teachers- No 100			Students- No 150		
		X	SD	Dec	X	SD	Dec
1	Enforcing laws and policies	3.00	0.26	high	3.22	0.24	high
2	Strengthen institutions & law enforcement agencies	2.80	0.29	high	3.14	0.28	high
3	Addressing societal issues.	2.97	0.29	high	3.00	0.26	high
4	National consciousness & citizen participation	3.20	0.28	high	3.00	0.26	high
5	Comprehensive threat assessment of schools in the entire Northern region,	2.84	0.29	high	3.01	0.31	high
6	The development of a strong community support network to ensure affected communities are not left behind	2.00	0.21	low	2.15	0.28	iow

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7	Re-evaluation and revamping of the Safe Schools Initiative	2.96	0.26	high	3.00	0.26	high
8	Addressing the long-term insecurity threat	3.00	0.26	high	2.80	0.27	high
9	Eliminate the network of organised crime used by perpetrators	2.98	0.26	high	2.86	0.25	high
10	Resolving the difference that trigger kidnappings	2.77	0.25	high	2.66	0.23	high
11	Job creation for youths	3.00	0.26	high	3.05	0.26	high

Mod --- moderate

On table two above, it could be observed that both teachers and students responded positively to all the items, except item 6 which was rated low by both categories of respondents.

Hypothesis one: No significance difference exists in the mean rating of the responses of teachers and students regarding the causes of insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria.

Table 3: Result of t-test analysis of the differences between the mean scores of teachers and students on the causes of school insecurity in northern Nigeria.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level of sig	t calculated	t-critical	Decision
Teachers	100	2.77	0.27	248	0.05	0.79	1.96	Ho Accepted(not Significant)
Students	150	2.87	0.29	248				

On table three above, it could be seen that the calculated t value of 0.79 is less than the critical t value of 1.96 at 248 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant thus the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is no significant difference in the opinions of teachers and students on the causes of school insecurity in northern Nigeria. In other words the opinions of the two categories of respondents are the same.

Hypothesis Two: No significance difference exists in the mean rating of the responses of teachers and students regarding how insecurity of schools could be managed in northern Nigeria to enhance human capital development.

Table 4: Result of t-test analysis of the differences between the mean scores of teachers and students on how insecurity of school in northern Nigeria could be managed to enhance human capital development.

Groups	N	X	SD	DF	Level of sig	t calculated	t-critical	Decision
Teachers	100	2.79	0.29	248	0.05	0.87	1.96	Ho Accepted(not Significant)
Students	150	2.92	0.31	248				

It could be observed from table four above that the calculated t value of 0.87 is less than the critical t value of 1.96 at 248 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is no significant difference in the opinions of teachers and students on how school insecurity in northern Nigeria could be managed.

V. Discussions

For research question one, respondents expressed that unemployment, corruption, greed, quest for economic gain, Political demand, not punishing perpetrators severely, taking kidnapping as a lucrative business. lack of youth empowerment, lack of comprehensive school security policy to guide action are the causes of school insecurity in northern Nigeria, these facts were acknowledged by Olawale (2016), Otite (2012) and Udo (2015) who stated that corruption of Nigeria political leaders and ambitions to be rich overnight by Nigerians have made them involved in activities that foster insecurity in schools. In agreement to the findings above, Adedeji and Marco (2021) pointed that unemployment and greed of politicians have made Nigeria descent further into the pit of state failure in her inability to protect school children and students from banditry because most of them rely on these evil menaces to satisfy their political ambitions. People nowadays wish to live the life of their dreams without any hardship; they take risk by indulging in all activities including kidnapping just to get money. Also the

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findings is in line with Iyabo (2021) who stated that Kidnappings for ransom has become so normalised and institutionalised that it now bears the mark of legal enterprise because perpetrators are not severely punished.

On managing school insecurity in northern Nigeria for enhancing human capital development, the two categories of respondents expressed that; enforcing laws and policies, strengthen institutions & law enforcement agencies; addressing societal issues, national consciousness & citizen participation, comprehensive threat assessment of schools in the entire Northern region; job creation for youths, re-evaluation and revamping of the Safe Schools Initiative and addressing the long-term insecurity threat amongst others. These were in line with Olusola (2021) and Omeje (2021) who noted that, Federal government must as a matter of fact, create job for the youths to engage them. Government must address causal factors such as poverty, injustice, nepotism, marginalization, corruption, amongst others, if Nigeria must get to the root of the issue. In schools, students must be taught how to respond to security emergencies. They must be taught basic self-defence and evasive skills that make it harder for kidnappers to simply whisk students off without a run for their money. Also in line with the findings, Barna (2014) suggested that schools must invest in their security infrastructure to make themselves less vulnerable to kidnappers. Schools must also arrange with law enforcement agencies for periodic patrols and inspections within and outside the school fence to ensure there are no ongoing breaches. O'Malley (2010) in agreement noted that the network of organised crime used by perpetrators must be eliminated in order to save schools from attacks. He lamented that once education system is attacked, human capital will diminish and its development halted.

Also in agreement to above findings, Ojo (2021), Nadabo (2013) and Odidi (2014) stated that when institutions are strengthened and allowed to work with adequate autonomy, the rule of law will take its course. They stressed that the privileges afforded to terrorists and kidnappers by the present Nigeria government is one of the strongest motivators of the menace today. No matter how well-intentioned, these soft policies are prolonging the fight. This is why Omeje (2021) warned that shutting down schools means succumbing to the treat of Boko haram.

VI. Implication of Findings

The findings of this study have some implications on Nigeria education system and human capital development. The finding that insecurity of schools are caused by poverty, unemployment, lack of youth empowerment and quest to be rich without working hard affect the school system. This implies that when school system is attacked, it will result in poor enrolment in school, school closure, increase in the number of internally displaced school children and students, killing of students and teachers, poverty and increase in number of out of school children. This consequently hampers human capital development because it is only school can develop human resources into human capital through skill impartation and training.

On managing insecurity in school, it was found that the federal government, as a matter of urgency should create jobs for the youths, enforce laws and policies, strengthen institutions & law enforcement agencies, address societal issues and inculcate national consciousness in Nigerians, eliminate the network of organised crime used by perpetrators and resolving the differences that trigger kidnappings. This implies that Nigerian policymakers, school leaders, and communities must effectively and creatively come together to help reverse the current economic, social and education dynamics to avoid a catastrophic collapse. Again, with more Nigeria youths getting killed due to increasing state of insecurity in the country, experts have warned that constant loss of human capital may affect economic growth. With security education, the Nigeria education system will be strongly built and salvaged to produce strong human capital in knowledge, talents, skills, abilities, experience, intelligence, training among others things.

VII. Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that Nigeria's breakdown in security is particularly attacking education, notably in the country's north. The event was ideologically motivated, and designed to extort concessions from the government. Recently, abductions have become more profit-driven, involving organized and unorganized criminal groups. The profit dimension to the kidnappings easily complicate Nigeria's security problems, as they become more frequent given the high level of poverty and youth unemployment in the region amid the stark absence of legitimate economic opportunities. If education is to survive, it is crucial to urgently change the current dynamics and make schools safe again. This crisis requires swift and comprehensive action, both in prevention and supporting victims to minimize long-term damages.

VIII. Recommendations

The researchers recommend the following;

1. Governments should employ or enrol kidnappers or terrorists that laid down their weapons into skills endeavour.
2. If arrested kidnappers are found guilty, they should be punished according to the provisions of the law irrespective of who they are or know

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3. Children and their parents who fall victim to armed kidnapping groups cannot be left unaided. Government must ensure that they mentally recover from their trauma
4. Government should provide a central tenet of any intervention strategy that seeks to limit the adverse impacts of kidnappings on education

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