

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

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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.

Index terms— insecurity, schools, northern nigeria, human capital and school children.

1 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. ??kintokunbo (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

2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

44 the devastating effects of the prolonged school closure from COVID-19, adding insecurity concerns to the basket
45 of challenges could lead to its irrecoverable collapse.

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

52 It is worrying that seven years after the abduction of 276 girls of Government Girls Secondary School, Chibok,
53 Borno State, which attracted global dimension as attacks on schools have now become common. Though the
54 news that 27 students at the Forestry College, Kaduna regained their freedom after 56 days in the kidnappers'
55 den offered a crumb of comfort, there is a seeming lack of enthusiasm by the government to secure the freedom
56 of students when abductions occur hence abductions of students continued.

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

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

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

101 2 Statement of Problem

102 In Nigeria, students have been risking their lives for education. Like in most parts of the world, schooling comes
103 with its fair share of challenges but when students risk losing their freedom or lives at school, our tomorrow
104 is under attack. Where going to school is tantamount to charging into battle amid a swarm of bullets, what
105 chances do the average Nigerian child has for a better education? Although these abductions did not begin

106 recently, it has become frequent in recent times. For more than eight years, the conflict in the Northeast and the
107 resulting humanitarian crisis is devastating the lives of millions of children, students, women and their families.
108 With children under 15 years of age accounting for about 45 per cent of the country's population, the burden
109 on education and other sectors has become overwhelming. The risk of schooling in Nigeria today is death.
110 This development has grossly affected education which is the key to developing human capital whose skills and
111 knowledge promote national development. Federal government in the bid to tackle the ugly situation introduced
112 A "safe school programme" which was drawn up to provide teachers, parents and students with comprehensive
113 information on safety skills; empower school communities with appropriate guidelines; provide schools with the
114 information and skills required to conduct customised risk and threat audits of their establishments. Government
115 also closed many schools and higher institutions in the northern part of the country, but all these ventures appear
116 not to have solved the problem. The ugly situation persisted. It therefore, becomes penitent to identify strategies
117 to further manage the insecurity of schools, salvage students' lives, and III.

118 **3 Methodology**

119 Descriptive survey design was adopted for this study. The population was secondary school teachers and students
120 in northern Nigeria. Simple random sampling was used to select two states out of the 19 northern states in
121 northern Nigeria, namely, (Zamfara and Kaduna states). From each the sampled states, 15 schools were randomly
122 selected while 10 teachers and 15 students were accidentally picked from each of the sampled schools. The total
123 sample was 100 teachers and 150 students (250 respondents). Two research questions and two null hypotheses
124 guided the study. The instrument was a researcher developed questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Insecurity
125 of Schools in Northern Nigeria (QISNN). It has two sections (A and B), Section A contains the demographic
126 information of the respondents while section B contains 21 items structured under four likert scale of strongly
127 agree (SA, 4points), agree (A, 3points), disagree (D 2points) and strongly disagree(SD,1point). The instrument
128 was face and content validated by four experts from two universities in the northern Nigeria, namely; federal
129 university Gusau in Zamfara state and Kaduna state university. The instrument was pilot tested using split half
130 method on 12 teachers and 24 students outside the study area to determine its reliability. The results obtained
131 were correlated using Spearman rank Order(Spearman rho) correlation coefficient and it yielded a coefficient of
132 0.78. The researchers trained 4 research assistants to help in administering the instruments to the teacher and
133 students in the sampled schools. Direct delivery technique was employed in administering the instrument to
134 ensure 100% return. Mean and standard deviation were used in answering the research questions while t test
135 statistical analysis was used to test the null hypotheses. The decision rule was 2.50. Mean scores of 2.50 and
136 above are accepted while below 2.50 is low and thus rejected. On table one above, it could be seen that, the
137 students rated all the items high except items 3 and 6 which was rated moderate by teachers and students alike.
138 They have mean scores of 2.50 and 2.65 respectively. The teachers rated items 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8 high and items
139 2, 3 and 5 they rated moderate and low. Items 9 and 10 were rated moderate and low respectively by both
140 categories of respondents. On table two above, it could be observed that both teachers and students responded
141 positively to all the items, except item 6 which was rated low by both categories of respondents.

142 **4 IV.**

143 **5 Results**

144 **6 Research question one: what are the causes of insecurity of 145 schools in northern Nigeria**

146 **7 Hypothesis one:**

147 No significance difference exists in the mean rating of the responses of teachers and students regarding the causes
148 of insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria. On table three above, it could be seen that the calculated t value
149 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
150 hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is no significant difference in the opinions of teachers and students on the
151 causes of school insecurity in northern Nigeria. In other words the opinions of the two categories of respondents
152 are the same.

153 Hypothesis Two: No significance difference exists in the mean rating of the responses of teachers and students
154 regarding how insecurity of schools could be managed in northern Nigeria to enhance human capital development.
155 It could be observed from table four above that the calculated t value of 0.87 is less than the critical t value of
156 1.96 at 248 degree of freedom and 0.05 level of significant, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is no
157 significant difference in the opinions of teachers and students on how school insecurity in northern Nigeria could
158 be managed.

8 V.

9 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 findings is in line with ??yabo (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, reevaluation 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.

10 VI.

11 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.

12 VII.

13 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

217 concessions from the government. Recently, abductions have become more profit-driven, involving organized
218 and unorganized criminal groups. The profit dimension to the kidnappings easily complicate Nigeria's security
219 problems, as they become more frequent given the high level of poverty and youth unemployment in the region
220 amid the stark absence of legitimate economic opportunities. If education is to survive, it is crucial to urgently
221 change the current dynamics and make schools safe again. This crisis requires swift and comprehensive action,
222 both in prevention and supporting victims to minimize long-term damages.

223 **14 VIII.**

224 **15 Recommendations**

225 The researchers recommend the following; 1. Governments should employ or enrol kidnappers or terrorists that
226 laid down their weapons into skills endeavour. 2. If arrested kidnappers are found guilty, they should be punished
227 according to the provisions of the law irrespective of who they are or know 3. Children and their parents who fall
228 victim to armed kidnapping groups cannot be left unaided. Government must ensure that they mentally recover
229 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



Figure 1:

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in northern Nigeria

Figure 2: Table 1 :

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Insecurity of Schools in Northern Nigeria: Implications for Human

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SN 1 2 Research Question Two: How could insecurity of schools in northern Nigeria be managed t

- 3 Addressing societal issues.
- 4 National participation ~~consciousness~~
- 5 Comprehensive threat assessment of schools
in the entire Northern region,
- 6 The development of a strong community
support network to ensure affected communities are not left be

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Figure 3: Table 2 :

3

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				

Figure 4: Table 3 :

4

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				

Figure 5: Table 4 :

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