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Impact Of Insecurity On The Education Of The Girl-child: The Role Of Basic Educators In Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
Education is regarded as a basic tool for social, political and economic development of any kind in the society. Females constitute more than 50% of the world's active population. Despite this, they face a number of inequitable difficulties that limit their potentials in promoting personal and collective development. The girl-child has suffered a lot in the hands of terrorists and in other aspects like kidnaping, poverty, rape, slavery, prostitution, trafficking and abuse, due to lack of education. The paper examines the conceptual analysis of Insecurity and its negative effects on the education of the girl-child in Nigeria, implication for educators, and concludes by suggesting that the educational sector should provide adequate training and motivation for staff and students in various aspect of security education to ensure patriotic social participation and protection of lives and properties.
Keywords: Insecurity, Girl-Child, Education, Basic Educators.

INTRODUCTION

Insecurity in Nigeria has been very alarming since independence; it has penetrated various facets of our lives on a larger scale. Nigerians have in the past decades been experiencing national insecurity, social insecurity; economic insecurity, political insecurity, and health and food insecurity as well as educational insecurity among others. The government at various levels is always blamed for her inability to provide effective security to the citizenry. It is a constitutional matter that the security and welfare of the people are the primary purpose of government and therefore government is responsible for the security of lives and property of the people. Successive governments and administrations, due to negligence and corruption, have failed to provide security to the citizenry. Shortly after independence, Nigeria was thrown into a long period of civil war that lasted for more than 13 months. Thereafter, it has either been political or religious crisis, intra or inter-ethnic crisis, militia activities as is been observed in Niger Delta, kidnapping, terrorism and recently insurgency as in the North-eastern Nigeria. These crises as noted by Aondoawase and Margaret (2016) have not only extended their tentacles to education but have caused more insecurity to the education of the girl-child in Nigeria. With these, the educational development of the girl-child in Nigeria is badly affected as they cannot even access education due to insecurity in their various places.

In this paper, conceptual analysis of Insecurity and its negative impact on the education of the girl-child in Nigeria are discussed. This is done with specific reference to basic educators, who are encouraged to share ideas in the areas of security education, eschew institutionalized corruption,

ethnic and religious intolerance in the management of the affairs of their institution. In addition, basic educators should maintain state structures and global interdependence by utilizing new technologies to curb insecurity in their communities that may that might impact on girl-child education negatively.

Insecurity

The use of the concept of insecurity varies sometimes, having political undertone which may result in controversies. Etymologically, the term emanates from a Latin word "insecuritas" meaning "a state of being unsafe" (Petrilli & Ponzio, 2022, P.193). It implies absence of security which directly means there is no protection from harm or threat to any of the vulnerable and valuable assets. Eons Intelligence (2021) defined Insecurity as the resultant chaotic aftermath when an individual or groups of individual feel trampled upon or that their needs are not met. Conversely, Achumba, Ignomeroho and Akpor-Robar in Onifade, Imhonopi and Urim (2013) noted that insecurity is the antithesis of security and has affected such common descriptors as want of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, want of confidence, state of doubt, inadequately guarded or protected, instability, trouble, lack of protection and being unsafe, and others. They consider insecurity to be inability to take defensive action against forces that portend harm or danger to an individual or group that make them vulnerable. Without doubt, all forms of insecurity in the society are basically motivated by the desire to attract personal or collective gains. These may not always be necessarily based on absolute but relative objectivity when considered on the scale of rationality. For instance, terrorists may pursue objectives that aim to change society by challenging fundamental values, while another may seek modification within the frame work of the existing value scheme. Quite a number of the cases have assumed a global dimension and are apparently predicated on similar causes and effects.

Causes of Insecurity

Ganu (2012) identifies some causes of insecurity to include youth unemployment, poverty, environmental degradation, neglect of infrastructural development and so on. On the other hand Onocha (2014) identifies the causes to be associated with socio-economic, political and religious factors. He cited the clashes between farmers and herdsmen, intolerance and misconception among different religious and political groups and lack of trust among different ethnic groups as examples. Ocholi (2013) notes with seriousness how political and community leaders and parents have spent much time trying to defend regional, religious and tribal interest to the detriment of Nigerian unity. A clear example is when opposition parties had criticized the declaration of the state of emergency placed on states in the north to check the excesses of the insurgents.

Commenting on this issue, Eons Intelligence (2021) further pointed out that lack of proper funding for security agencies entrusted with the sole protection of lives and properties in Nigeria rests with few thousands of security agents and agencies who are ill-equipped to guard the population of over 210 million people. The Nigerian security personnel are at odds in terms of the sophistication of their arms and ammunitions against these bandits and insurgents'. Hence, in the face of combating terrorism, the security personnel tend to suffer more causality which psychologically affects their morale; thereby making them reluctant to forestall future imminent attacks when availed with intelligence reports. The outcome therefore is that security personnel are easily enticed with bribes and gifts from the perpetrators of these crimes, thereby exposing the lives and properties of both residents and citizens. The statistics of deaths by region as a result of insecurity in Nigeria is shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Statistics of Deaths by Region

North Central	North East	North West	South East	South South	South West
10,119	44,247	12,743	3,020	5,710	3,534

Source: Statistics from Eons Intelligence (2021)

Girl-child Education

When a country shuns education of any section of its population, progress and development appear to be reduced. Female illiteracy has been identified as one of the major obstacles of social, political, religious and economic development in most countries of the world, particularly Nigeria. From the Rights approach as espoused in the convention on human rights of the child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all form of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW, 2009), it is the right of every girl-child to be educated. Over 120 million children (majority girls) are denied access to basic education. This is a challenge of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Education For All (EFA) goals. Failure to achieve results in this area will perpetuate entrenched inequalities and condemn yet another generation of children (girls) to a life of ignorance, poverty and misery (Wright, 2003). There can be no significant or sustainable change in society and no significant reduction in poverty until girls receive the basic quality education they need, to take their rightful place as equal partners in development, (Wright, 2003). To capitalize on the potential of its people, and ensure healthier, more educated, empowered and productive citizens, Nigeria must invest in educating girls who will be the mothers of the next generation (Bilkisu, 2014). Educated women are more likely to use health services and to have fewer and better-nourished children. Girls who are educated will also contribute to future economic growth. With the insecurity which has displaced and pauperized parents, the issue of meeting basic needs of food, shelter, safety and surviving violent attacks will now take precedence over sending their children to school.

Conceptual Analysis

The conceptual frame work of this paper is focused on Utulu, (2013). In Utulu analysis on insecurity viewed terrorists as a group or individuals challenging the state's monopoly through the use of violence and terror to address their grievances and waging attacks against fellow citizens who may be innocent. Utulu further went on to say that terrorism sometimes have political undertone which may result in controversies. That repressive governments who refuse to listen to civil agitation, are confronted by civil disobedience and violence. Utulu concluded by saying that it is generally known that terrorism is an act that has no respect or values for human life. It is also known to have claimed many lives of innocent citizens and rendered millions of people homeless, economically handicapped and psychologically devastated.

Insecurity in Nigeria Education and the Development of the Girl-child.

The National Policy on Education (NPE) (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2009) is very clear on the role education play in the development of individuals at various levels that would enable them to be successful in life and contribute to national development. The Nigerian Educational system has been structured from pre-primary to the tertiary level with several agencies to control and oversee the smooth running of the system. However these agencies have not been provided with enough security to combat the insecurity faced by the educational sector, particularly the education that would enhance the growth and development of the girl-child in Nigeria. An x-ray of the insecurity in Nigeria with particular focus on educational sector would illustrate the fact that most Nigerian children cannot access education for effective development. There is always a negative impact on the educational development of the girl-child, the school and the community. This is where the children do not attend school regularly. A child who misses school has missed a carefully planned sequence of instruction (Umaru and Terhemba, 2014). However, due to insecurity, children are kept off school for many days, months or even years as the situation is presently in Kachia, Zango-Kataf, Birnin Gwari and Igabi areas of Kaduna State, without studies. Obi (2015) further pointed out that, scores of girls and boys have been missing in Nigeria, abducted, recruited by armed groups, attacked, and used as weapons or forced to flee violence.

No accurate statistical records have been provided on the number of such children from series of crises around the nation. Direct attacks have been recently targeted at educational institutions in the country where the helpless innocent children especially girld-child is the prey. The case of Chibok girls is still fresh in mind while that of Mubi in Adamawa, Potiskum in Yobe, Bauchi, others recently in Niger, Katsina, Kaduna, Zamfara, Kebbi and so on, are examples of such attacks on educational institutions. What those children miss from home? The emotional wounds and suffering they have endured, including seeing their parents and siblings killed, raped, tortured and abducted (Obi, 2015) requires effective counselling before such children may go back to schools. Criminal activities such as

earlier mentioned above have contributed immensely in increasing the rate of school drop-out of the girl-child, which in turn is a factor perpetrating juvenile delinquent activity in the country.

There is also increase in migration leaving many areas inhabitable, horrific, useless and unclean. Migration has increase the population of other areas leading to congested homes, overcrowded classrooms and increase in social vices and engagement in risk-taking behaviours of which the girl-child is the most affected. Such social vices include rape, prostitution, unwanted pregnancies, abortions, drug abuse, among others. Some risk-taking behaviours the girl-child get involved are sexual activities, aggression, use of substance, truancy and so on (Tanko, Bahago & Anakwe, 2022). Families are separated from each other leaving children like orphans. If the girl-child is denied access to educational activities then it means that the aim of education cannot be achieved. The advocates of girl-child education would find it difficult to convince parents to send their children particularly girls to school when their safety cannot be guaranteed (Bilkisu, 2014). Parents are equally disturbed that government has earned a reputation for being incapable of protecting their children. In addition to the menace of insecurity and compounding the worsen situation of the girl-child is what Shehu (2013), expresses as an existing gender disparity in Nigeria as a result of culture, social, religious and largely poverty especially in the north. Shehu cited areas in which the girl-child's plight is aggravated to include.

a. When one needs a house help, it is the girl-child.
b. When the family needs income, the girl-child is sent to hawk, exposing her to many dangers.
c. When the family has little income for education, it is the girl-child that will be sacrificed for the brother – believing that she will end up being another man's wife
d. For quick recognition, she is traded; giving into marriage to a man she does not even love, turning her into a wife and a mother overnight.

The attacks and deaths statistics cause by insecurity between 2018 and 2021 is in Table 2.

Table 2: Attacks / Deaths Statistics by Insecurity between 2018 and 2021

Year of Attacks/Deaths	Attacks			Weapon used				
	Boko Haram	Kidnapping	Robbery	Bombs	Guns	Machetes	Suicide	Deaths
January to June 2021	87	2943	60	36	889	51	3	5800
2020	198	328	123	84	1330	70	8	9,694
2019	212	300	77	61	1035	52	11	8,340
2018	192	138	75	39	783	53	36	6,565

Source: Statistics from Eons Intelligence (2021)

Implication for Basic Educators

Basic Educators are expected to be professionals who are responsible, patriotic and contributors to the development and progress of their societies through an effective utilization of education (Utulu, 2013). Howard and Tranghber (2009), remark that a successful approach by educators to counter insecurity requires diplomacy and international cooperation. In this case Basic Childhood Educators need a paradigm shift from prior emphasis previously placed on military-centred security which currently seems to be yielding minimal results to placing emphasis on human-centred security measures. Therefore, soliciting contributions of civil society in Nigeria towards the elimination of insecurity and violent extremism cannot be overemphasized (Eons Intelligence, 2021). Other measures can be through sharing ideas in the areas of security education, eschew institutionalized corruption, ethnic and religious intolerance in the management of the affairs of their institution, and maintain state structures and global interdependence by utilizing new technologies to curb Insecurity in their communities.

To reduce the impact of trauma during conflicts, Onocha (2014), outline the following activities:

i. Evacuating the children to a protective and nurturing environment where safe drinking water, food, safe sleeping space, and relaxation could be provided.
ii. Provision of relief materials: beddings, clothes, drugs, etc.
iii. Provision of safe learning environment. This will help reduce break in school program and encourage continuity in learning.

iv. Counseling: encourage and give hope to those who lost their parents and properties during the crisis.
v. Organize storytelling, singing, dancing, etc., to cheer them up.
vi. Provision of play and play materials, and recreational activities to occupy the children time.
vii. Skills acquisition jobs should be taught such as weaving, knitting, beads, shoes and soap making, etc. to help them busy and self-reliant in future, P. 37).

Other activities that Basic Educator could do to help the children in a refugee camp could be:

a. Setting up a conflict resolution committee to mediate the aggrieved parties.
b. Create conflict prevention and resolution committee to mediate the aggrieved parties.
c. Improvise emergency kits.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

When a country shuns the education of any section of its population, progress and development appears to be reduced. Nigeria cannot afford a situation where half of its population is not exposed to education which is one of the guaranteed basic rights of an individual. Educated mothers guarantee their own survival, wellbeing and that of their children. Development in all its ramifications can only be guaranteed by quality basic education. The goal of education is to drive development and progress through wise utilization of available human and material resources. This is true because education as a process of instilling positive changes, attitudes, values and skills, without regard to demographic affiliation can make credible difference, as it provides happiness among the citizens. This happiness is a product of a peaceful and healthy environment that is embedded in the ingredients of education. The activities of terrorists in different parts of the country are destroying the foundation of education, through the bombing of infrastructure, and human capital that are being processed in the educational institutions in the country which has had serious implication for educators in different dimensions.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the above, it is recommended that:

1. Basic Educators are encouraged to share ideas in areas of security education with students.
2. Sexual violence, insecure school environment and inadequate sanitation that adversely affect girls' self-esteem, participation and retention need to be addressed.
3. Institutionalized corruption, ethnic and religious intolerance in the affairs of institutions should be discouraged
4. Adequate security should be provided to prevent destruction of life and properties.
5. Use of global interdependence through new technologies to curb terrorist's activities should be encouraged.
6. Citizens should be provided with orientation on ways that will provide information to security agencies on the infiltration of terrorists into their communities in general and schools in particular.
7. Government should provide up to date training and motivation for teachers to ensure patriotic and effective social participation, so that the staff and students are not attracted by terrorists groups in whatever manner to join and cause chaos in their communities.
8. Basic Educators are encouraged to use improvised instructional materials and other teaching aids and activities in refugee camps.
9. Government should impose strict security measures in girls' schools to guard against kidnap and other vices.
10. Government need to gear up efforts to raise hope and confidence in both the parents and wards who may have concluded that western education is really forbidden.

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