



EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

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**EDUCATION AS PANACEA TO SECURITY CHALLENGES IN
NIGERIA: A MANAGEMENT OPTION**

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Abstract

This study investigated the role of education or the lack of it in creating security challenges. It also tried to determine how education could serve as a preventive measure against insecurity and the role of management in all of these. The research design adopted was a descriptive survey method. The study sample consisted of 250 male and female lecturers, non-teaching staff members and students, using the captive audience sampling technique. Efforts were made to include people who have experienced insecurity personally or witnessed it. Three research questions were asked while the data gathering instrument was a researcher-made structured and semi-structured questionnaire entitled "Education and Security Challenges Questionnaire" (ESCQ). Data collected were analyzed, using percentage and rank ordering statistics. The findings of the study indicated that lack of quality education, resulting in half-baked products, was a major cause of insecurity in Nigeria (54-96%). Education was also perceived as a problem (96%). It was recommended that schools should be made more accountable for quality education and that there should be enforcement of merit in the appointment of school heads and teachers at all levels.

Key words: Education, management, Nigeria, prevention, security,

Introduction

Insecurity has no boundary and comes in various forms from internal threats by trigger-happy criminals to political coup attempts and resistances as well as externally originated or sponsored

insurgency. Examples of countries where insecurity abound include Afghanistan, Palestine and Israel, Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Somalia, Lebanon, Liberia, and Mali. While the world is no stranger to religious wars, the recent religion-based insurgency in parts of the world is becoming a thorn in the flesh of the comity of nations. Insecurity in Nigeria can be traced to the ancient wars and communal clashes as slave trading. As these events subsided and or were abolished, colonialism came in (mainly Western education). Western civilization came with colonialism. Western education came into Nigeria through the South, While Islamic education made its journey through the North. The meeting of these two civilizations has never been easy in Nigeria, resulting in threats to security in different forms. Nigeria, in the last few years, has been having its own share of the insurgency and deadly crimes with all its attendant ugly consequence – destruction and death. Apart from the “Boko Haram” called “area boys” who torment motorists and land developers, cult boys who kill and main rivals and innocent citizens, armed robbers, kidnappers, and so on in the southern part of Nigeria. The response to these ugly challenges has been military option involving more soldiers and police, more weapons and hence more funds, resulting in more deaths and destruction of alternative to guns for curbing solution. The pertinent question is – are there peace? Some people have suggested education as interim and more effective alternative to military clamp down (Utomi, 2013) and Nigeria has tried it on the Niger Delta militant through the Amnesty programme of late President of Nigeria Umaru Yar-Adua. However, with the differences in the terrain across the country, culturally and economically, will education serve as a panacea to violent reactionaries in Nigeria? While education is considered an eye opener, it can be argued that the educated elites can also be problems of Nigeria, using their position to manipulate the largely ignorant population. But the alternative to education, according to an adage, is ignorance, which can be very expensive. While global powers have accented to education as a root and catalyst for individual and national development, the dividend of education appears to depend on how well it is managed. Education can produce great minds and leaders, while a poorly managed one can prove counter-productive.

Literature Review

Insecurity can be said to refer to the breach of peace and security, whether historical, religious, ethno-regional, civil, social, economic and political that have contributed to conflicts which

Nigeria has witnessed over the years resulting in wanton destruction of lives and properties. From (2000) emphasized security as a need to belong and avoid loneliness. The need for security manifested in efforts to defend and protect oneself against dangers, in needs for order and continuity, and in aspirations for inner, mental balance. The desire for wanted security is to protect and prolong our lives people can be vulnerable in their relationships and people may also see each other as threats and enemies. Security issues present moral questions on how society is organized and how laws and rules govern security. Security demands political decision to alleviate insecurity in society and to guarantee security. The amount of legislation resulting from these demands can be huge in different spheres of life such as areas of protection against crime and child protection. William (2008) developed a research project on insecurity, its causes and methods of coping. Six areas of security were identified:

- 1) Existence of security.
- 2) Social relationships and community.
- 3) Social security at the level of social security system.
- 4) Cultural and humanistic issues.
- 5) Traditional security (inner security in a country and national security).
- 6) Modern, ecological security related to national and manufactured environments.

In Nigeria, the high wave of armed robbery is primarily responsible for the high level of insecurity. It is also argued that politics is extremely competitive and elections are perceived as "zero-sum" contests" (Yuguda, 2013). One can posit that Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented levels of insecurity in the form of inter and intra-communal and ethnic clashes, ethno-religious violence, and bomb explosion have been on the increase, leading to enormous loss of life and property (Nwachukwu, 2012). However, certain institutions and agencies are specifically charged with the responsibility for the security of life and property. They include the Police, State Security Agencies, the Military, Immigration, Prison services and recently National Security and Civil Defense Corp (NSCDC).

Improper funding of the police and other security agencies is the major cause of insecurity in Nigeria. Equipment are not provided such as communication equipment, sophisticated arms and ammunition so that the security agencies will be able to contain these criminal gangs. Allowances

and salaries of their security agencies are not paid on time. Also as a result of high graduate unemployment, this army of unemployed force themselves into police, military and other paramilitary agencies. The fallout of such a situation will be trying to cover lost ground by enriching themselves illegally and colluding with criminal gangs (Oladepupo, 2005). Closely linked with this is the inadequate personnel that promote insecurity. The International Institute for Strategic Studies cited by Olonisakin (2008) captures the police- population ratio in Nigeria as 1:450, Nigeria has failed to meet the standard set by United Nations for effective policing.

Security problems, according to Albert (2012), are:

1. Communal violence (e, g. Jos crisis and the conflict between farmers and herdsmen).
2. Political assassinations (between 2001 and 2012).
3. Electoral violence in some states e.g. Osun, Oyo, Kwara, Edo, Kaduna, Kano.
4. Youth militancy, Odi crisis in 1999, MEND, MASSOB, OPC.
5. Oil theft, illegal oil bunkering and sea piracy.
6. Kidnapping and hostage taking in South South which spread to South East and Delta States.
7. Sharia crises in the North especially in 2000 and 2001.
8. The Boko Haram crisis.

Boko Haram seems significant at this time because it threatens Northern unity, Nigeria's unity, dents Nigeria's image and weakens its internal security image.

Real and Imagined causes of these crises, according to Albert (2012), are.

1. Resources Lack of resources for all citizens leading to poverty. Stealing of nation's wealth by leaders thereby promoting inequality.
2. Values- promotion of ethnicity and cheap religiosity.
3. Psychological needs -The political class create ethnic and religious groups and the elite recruit youths for violence.
4. Communication gaps lack of open access to information" which promote rumours and wrong information.

In most if not all the crises, youths are involved, and this is attributed to "lack of sound youth development programmes" (Albert, 2012). Lookman (2013) even blamed Nigerians as being responsible for the country's security challenges as the elite encouraged praise-singing while they left the masses in abject poverty. "Almajiris" walk the streets with plates in hand, begging for food with little or no concern from the leaders. Esspin (2013) observe that years of neglect have left Nigeria with poor quality public education. Many schools fail to provide even basic opportunities for learning. School buildings and facilities are inadequate. Teaching standards management of education is weak and often ineffective.

Teaching standards are low.

On causes of insecurity in Northern Nigeria, Yuguda (2013) also enumerate them as ownership and access to resources (land and territory), economic inequality and narrowing opportunity, conflicts and unhealthy competition around ethnic and religious identities as well as the feeling of lack of respect. Others include appointment into traditional headship positions, the deterioration in personal and inter group relationships and widespread impunity injustice and disregard to rule of law.

On Forms of security threats in Nigeria, Nwagboso (2011) identified the following

	Security Threat	Year	Political Zone
(1)	Niger Delta	1999/2007	South-South
(2)	Jos Crisis	1999-till date	North-Central
(3)	Kidnapping, ritual killing and armed robbery	2007-till date	South-East
(4)	Boko Haram Crisis	009-till date	North-East North-Central North-West

Source: Nwagboso (2012) Field Survey

On fighting terrorism, Utomi (2013) said rather than spend trillions on security, Federal Government has to look beyond the immediate and have a long-term strategy to organize terrorist groups. It is time to educate the masses so that they value lives and properties. He suggested education because it increases their level of consciousness, expands the scope of how they can earn income and get to a level of self-fulfillment that cannot make them available for ideologues fighting different agenda. He also suggested a Paulo Frier's pedagogy of the oppressed which is a community-based entrepreneurial approach to activity learning that can transform and empower in a short period of time. He further suggests that education should be heavily subsidized to offer free and qualitative education up to secondary school level, using social enterprises, faith-based agencies to complement and compete with direct government funding of educational institutions. Terrorists are not easy to fight, according to Utomi (2013); rather than fighting them with trillions of naira spent on security, we must target the tending terrorist in a policy of catch-them young and spent trillions on education and what guns and bombs cannot do, education will do, by making people value their lives. The insurgency can be curbed with education laced with the right values. The suggestion of Albert (2012) "better investment on peace education for the youth" and quoting Ndoma-Egba (2012), a senator, said "the only time we can feel safe in our society is when everyone is educated".

The focus of this paper is to examine the role of education in the security challenges currently facing Nigeria and to explore ways of using education especially through its management to combat these security challenges. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

- (1) to find out how education or lack of it has contributed to security challenges in Nigeria.
- (2) to identify how education can serve as a preventive measure to insecurity in Nigeria.
- (3) to determine the best management measures that can make education a preventive tool against insecurity.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. In what ways has education or the lack of it contributed to security challenges in Nigeria?
2. In what ways can education solve the challenges of insecurity?

3. What role will management play in the use of education as a weapon for security challenges?

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive survey method was used to collect data on the contribution of education to the security challenges in Nigeria as well as how education, through its proper management, could be used to combat these challenges. The design was appropriate for the data collection, with the use of a questionnaire entitled “Education and security challenges Questionnaire” (ESCQ).

Population and Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of this study comprised the educated elites in Nigeria. Sample were drawn from the six geopolitical zones of the country, using captive audience sampling technique. A total of 250 participants using lecturers and postgraduate students from universities in these zones for the study sample. The aim was to cover as many people as possible in the immediate environment who have witnessed or experienced insecurity. In recent times, there has been visible movement of people in different parts the country to Ilorin due to security threats. Purposive and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents to the questionnaire.

Research Instrument

An instrument entitled "Education and security challenges Questionnaire (ESCQ) was designed to collect relevant data from the study participants. The ESCQ had two sections, A and B. Section A sought personal information such as the state of origin and academic qualifications of the respondents. Section B contained items on the ways education or lack of it has contributed to security challenges in Nigeria, ways it can solve these challenges as well as the roles of management in the use of education as a weapon to combat the security challenges. The items were responded to with Agree and Disagree options. Percentages of the frequencies of respondents to each option were found.

The ESCQ was face and content-validated by three experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation. Reliability of ESCQ was carried out on 10 respondents outside the

sample, using the test -retest method within an interval of three weeks using Pearson product moment correlation statistic. The analysis yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.82.

Procedure for Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data for the study were collected by the researchers with the assistance of postgraduate students in the universities used for the study, through the administration of copies of ESCQ. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages to answer the research questions. The ESCQ was used to collect data on the roles of education in the on-going security challenges in Nigeria as well as how education, education, through its management, can be employed to address these challenges.

Results and Discussion

Research Question 1: In what way has education or the lack of it contributed to security challenges in Nigeria?

Table 1: Contribution of Education to Security Challenges

S/N	Items	Agree	%	Disagree	%
Elite					
1.	Educated elites in Nigeria create security challenges	90	36	160	64
Society					
2.	High level of illiteracy make many Nigerians Gullible and is a major cause of insecurity	220	88	30	12
3.	Poor acceptance of western education fuels street children who readily participate in violence	210	84	40	16
4.	Formal education does not promote traditional values	150	60	100	40
Average Contribution		193	77	57	28

School System					
5.	The School curriculum does not consciously promote leadership training	170	68	80	3
6.	The educational system promotes cheating and hence corruption in the society which infuriates the youth	140	56	110	4
7.	Indiscipline I high in schools and make students prone to violence	210	84	40	1
	Average Contribution	173	69	77	3
					1
Educational Product					
8.	Schools are producing half-baked and disgruntled graduates	160	64	90	3
9.	Lack of employable skills among graduates is a major cause of insecurity	240	96	10	4
10.	School products are lazy and want to get rich quickly	210	84	40	1
11.	Schools are producing graduates who cannot think for themselves	180	72	70	2
12.	Education without employment is an invitation to violence	230	92	20	8
	Average Contribution	204	82	46	1
					8
	Overall Contribution	165	66	85	3
					4

The results in Table 1 indicate that education contributed tremendously to security challenges in Nigeria. The educated elites have been somehow exonerated from contributing to security challenges (36%). This is expected as education is supposed to enlighten recipients and probably because those perpetrating insecurity activities are either not properly educated or not at all and in most cases unemployed. However, contrary to this finding, Lookman blamed Nigerian elites as being responsible for the country's security challenges as they encouraged the school system itself

in form of school curriculum leading to indiscipline (69.3%) and culminating into half-baked products that lack critical thinking skills and other employability skills (81.6%). Other contributions were high level of illiteracy and inadequate promotion of traditional values by the education given (77.3%). The overall contribution of education to insecurity is 66%. The resultant effect of youths in Violent activities in the society.

As evident in Table 1, the perception of majority of the respondents is that the elites are not responsible for the security challenges in Nigeria. This may be contrary to public opinion because most of the respondents might have considered themselves as part of the elites. The common feeling an experience is that the rich elites, especially the political class, use the youth as thugs and thus fuel insecurity, particularly during elections (Albert, 2012). It is assumed in this research that several factors in the education sector could have contributed to security challenges in Nigeria and the strength of each was tested in this study including the societal factors, internal factors in the school and the quality of the educational output. From Table 1, some factors stand out; items 9, 12, 2, 3, 7, and 10. In items 9 and 12, 96% and 92% of respondents, respectively, pointed at lack of employability skills and unemployment of school graduates as contributing to security challenges.

It is thus important that education laced with the right values be employed to curb insurgence of violence within the society (Utomi, 2013). Fayemi (2013) identified the three strands of Boko Haram, as economic, political and religious Boko Haram. The economic Boko Haram was perceived as more devastating because lack of economic opportunities had made it possible for those with political and religious agenda to exploit an army of idle hands to recruit for their selfish intentions. In the same vein, Albert (2012) attributed the involvement of youths in crises to lack of sound youth development programmes.

Research Question 2: In what ways can education solve the challenges of insecurity?

Table 2: Ways by which Education Solves Security Challenges

<i>S/N</i>	<i>Items</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>%</i>
1.	Education can cure ignorance that make people gullible	250	100	0	0
2.	Education can improve family life	240	96	10	4
3.	Educated people cannot be easily manipulated	200	80	50	20
4.	Educated citizens will not fight other people's battle	180	72	70	28
5.	Education raised people's living standard	220	88	30	12
6.	Education makes people value their life	220	88	30	12
7.	Education helps to raise people's self-worth	240	96	10	4
8.	Only good quality education is solution to insecurity	200	80	50	20
9.	Formal education is not necessary if jobs are available	60	24	190	76
10.	Education of every child is the solution to cheating of the masses by the elite	210	84	40	16

Table 2 gives the various roles of education in solving security challenges. These roles include removing ignorance (100%) and manipulation (80%) as well as raising people's living standards and improving family life (88% and 96%, respectively). Quality formal education is seen as a possible solution to insecurity. For instance, worried by the menace of insecurity confronting Nigeria, Oloyede (2012) called on the security agencies to allow academic research into the activities of the Boko Haram group in order to allow for a better understanding of the sect and prevent further loss of lives and property as a result of its activities. Oloyede (2012) concluded that using first-hand information about the sect to conduct a proper research into their activities would help to get to the root of the problem, stressing that education is very important in the quest for peace in Nigeria.

Research Question 3: What roles will management play in the use of education as a weapon for security challenges?

Table 3: Use of Education as a Management Measure for Insecurity

<i>S/No</i>	<i>Item</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Rank</i>
<i>A</i>	26% actual funding of education		7
<i>B</i>	Enforcement of UBE law on compulsory education		8
<i>C</i>	Better coordination of education agencies by the Federal Ministry of Education		5
<i>D</i>	Rationalisation of some educational agencies to remove role conflicts		6
<i>E</i>	De-centralisation of educational system to give more power to the states		13
<i>F</i>	Making schools more accountable for quality education		4
<i>G</i>	Compulsory education for adult women up to age 30 years with vocational curriculum		10
<i>H</i>	Merging of ‘Almajiri’ system with formal education		11
<i>I</i>	Provision of ‘Almajiri’ schools within the family environment in the affected Northern states		12
<i>J</i>	Enforcement of merit in the appointment of schools heads and teachers at all levels		3
<i>K</i>	Leadership training in schools		9
<i>L</i>	Fight against corruption throughout the society		2
<i>M</i>	Enforcement of justice and equity in Nigeria		1

In Table 3, the preventive measures for tackling insecurity, based on the management of the education system, were ranked. Governmental and societal roles of enforcement of justice and fight against corruption ranked 1 and 2 while merit in the appointment of school heads, accountability, better coordination and rationalisation of educational agencies followed. Other measures included better funding of education, enforcement of UBE law on compulsory education leadership training and review of Almajiri' system of education. These measures are tailored to make education more functional, its recipients more skilled towards their useful engagement. In line with this finding, Nwagboso (2012) was of the opinion that to combat the security challenges facing Nigeria towards economic development, education is a vital tool. Towards education for

economic development, there is the need to emphasise critical thinking skills in the curriculum so as to develop the necessary life skills in the graduates (Ijaiya, et al., 2010).

Conclusion

An unsecured society is always accompanied with tensions and anxiety. Education or lack of it has been found to contribute tremendously to some of the challenges in Nigeria in the areas of high level of illiteracy, indiscipline schools, and lack of employable skills among graduates culminating in unemployment, which is an invitation to violence. For quality functional education to combat these challenges, better funding, coordination, accountability, enforcement of justice and fight against corruption with some of the mandatory management measures.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made. Efforts should be made to improve the literacy level among Nigerians. This could be accomplished through improved access to and equity in the provision of education. Towards this end, free and qualitative education should be given up to senior secondary school level. This might constitute a means for Nigerian government to address the socio-economic deprivation and severe wealth inequality among its people manifesting in poverty, unemployment and uneven development.

There is the need to incorporate critical thinking skills into the teaching and assessment aspects of the curriculum towards the acquisition of necessary life skills (including employability skills) in youths. This type of education would fight any form of insecurity.

The quality of education needs to be improved through the collaborative funding by governments at the local, state and federal levels. Instead of trillions of naira spent on security, more money should be spent on education. It is recommended that at least 26% of the yearly budgetary allocation be earmarked for education.

There is the dire need to rid the Nigerian society of corruption and instill accountability in the education system. The starting point should be leadership by merit in governance as well as in the appointment of school heads and teachers at all the levels of the education system.

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