



## MANAGING POVERTY AND INSECURITY IN NIGERIA SCHOOLS

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### **Abstract**

*This paper review centersit's discussion on "Managing Poverty and Insecurity in Nigeria Schools", secondary data were used to support the point raised in this work. The data were sourced from print materials and online publications by recognized institutions and individual authors. The paper identified unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, marginalization, political factors, international influence and communalcrisis as the bane of insecurity in Nigeria. The paper also identified loss of man power in educational institutions, poor quality of Education, destructions of infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, closure of Educational Institutions, discouragement of educational pursuit by children, internal displacement of learners, reduction of private investment in Education and inadequate funding of Education as the impact of insecurity on school administration in Nigeria. In order to address the challenges of insecurity on schooladministration in Nigeria, this paper recommends among other things: That government should ensure that, the political will to fight all forms of insecurity in the country through the application of best strategies are honestly and sincerely put in place.*

**Keywords:** Poverty, insecurity, schools, managing, Nigeria.

### **Introduction**

Nigeria is a nation blessed with intellectuals, technocrats, and abundant mineral resources, yet majority of the citizens areleft in abject poverty. In recent times, Nigeria has witnessed amongst others the following forms of crimes, like financial crimes, transnational organized crimes, armed robbery and other related forms of stealing, kidnapping, farmers herdsman clashes, political assassination, vandalization of government infrastructures, in surgency by Niger Delta militant and terrorism by Boko Haram sect (Adegoke, 2015, Osawe, 2015). Poverty is one of the factors responsible for the emergence of thesemilitant groups involving the use of heavy weapons for mass destruction of lives and properties. It has become a major problem widely acclaimed nationally and internationally as demanding urgent attention especially in sub-saharan African countries, Nigeria inclusive (Abat,2006, Ikyase, Namo,



2018). In Nigeria today, the poor living conditions of majority of her citizens has reached dangerous dimensions and have defied solutions offered due to institutional fragility of the state and high level corruption in the country.

The administration and management of education rest on federal, state and local Governments. Thus, in the country's constitution, education is on the concurrent list, but the Federal Government is empowered to regulate the sector, engage in policy formation and ensure quality control. Also, the provisions of the constitution allow each tier of government to focus its responsibilities mainly on each level of education. The federal government is directly responsible for tertiary education. The state takes care of secondary education, while the local governments handle primary education. Despite this arrangement, the federal government is expected to support the state and the local government in counterpart funding to enhance the quality of education in the country (NEEDS, 2014)

The administration of the education system is done through the ministries of education at the federal and state levels, as well as statutory bodies referred to as commissions. There are commissions and agencies established for different sub sectors of the education system and are charged with various responsibilities for the subsectors.

The federal ministry of education (FME) is responsible for the coherence of the national policy and procedures and for ensuring that the states policies operate within the parameters of the national policy as adapted for local needs (moja, 2000). Coordination of policy at the political level is handed by the national council of Education, the highest policymaking body chaired by the Federal Minister of Education, and all the state commissioners of Education. This body advises the joint consultative committee on Education which consists of all the federal and state Directors of Education, Chief Executives of Education statutory bodies, and Directors of University Institutes of Education (NEEDS, 2014).

School administration is the arrangement of school input in an order for the smooth realization of the school objectives. School administration is the process of organizing and arranging school resources to implement school programmes with the aim of achieving the school objectives. School administration is the systematic way of placing, ordering and arranging both human and materials resources for the execution of school programmes with the aim of achieving the set objectives of the school.

The effectiveness of the school administration depends on the qualities and quantities of both human and material resources available for the implementation of the school policies and programmes. The various human resources required for effective school administration include the teaching and non-teaching staff while the material resources include infrastructural facilities like administrative blocks, classrooms, toilets, libraries, laboratories, electricity, water, internet services, white boards, ICT Facilities etc. The administration of education in Nigeria is under threat because of the high level of insecurity. This is affecting the social, political and economic aspects of the country. Educational sector is one of the sectors seriously affected by insecurity challenges. That is why this paper is concerned with the effects of insecurity on the administration of educational institutions in Nigeria.

### **Concept of Insecurity**

Insecurity have been defined by different scholars. According to Achumba, Ighomereho and Akpor-Robaro (2013) insecurity is the antithesis of security and has attracted such common descriptors as want of safety, danger, state of doubt, inadequately guarded or protected, instability, trouble, lack of protection and being unsafe and others. Oluyomi & Grace, (2016) sees insecurity as concerned with feelings of uncertainty, dangers or threats to life while Hassan, (2014), viewed insecurity as a negative feeling involving fear, anxiety, uncertainty and injustice among others that cannot be guaranteed, the result may be frustration or insecurity. Insecurity is a threat to learning. Prevailing peace or conflict within communities around the school often has ripple effects on the teaching and learning activities of such schools. For Beland (2005), insecurity is the state of fear or anxiety streaming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection. It refers to lack or inadequate freedom from danger.



This definition reflects physical insecurity which is the most visible form of insecurity and its feeds into many other form of human and national security of a state is compromised by internal and external forces or interests exacerbated by the former's weak or poor economics, military and/or human resource development conditions (Onifade, Imhonopi & Urim, 2013) Insecurity is the state of being subject to danger or injury, anxiety, fear, worry, uncertainty, unsureness (Paul, 2015). Best (2006) defined insecurity as degenerated stage of conflict, threats to human security, intense violence characterized by fighting, death, injury etc occurs. Olamosu (2000), viewed insecurity as a state or condition in the life of social unit, system, organization or society in which the existence of a problem assumes critical dimension to the extent that the survival or existence of the social system or structure is threatened. From the above definition insecurity can be assumed to mean state of been afraid of attack from any part of the environment.

### **Concept of Poverty**

The perception of what constitute poverty has unfolded over time and varies amongst nations in size and scope. Therefore, universally accepted definitions have become very difficult to emerge (Akwara, Akwara, Enwuchola, Adekunle & Udaw, 2013). However, there are universally accepted indices of what constitutes poverty. These indicators are grouped into three broad categories as contained in the universally accepted definition to mean absolute, relative and material poverty. Absolute poverty means the inability of a person or group to provide the material needs for physical, subsistence and protection of human dignities such as food, shelter, clothing potable water, healthcare services, basic education, transportation and gainful employment. Relative poverty means the inability of certain section of the society to satisfy their basic needs as well as inadequate income to enhance active participation in societal activities to the extent that it limits the actualization of one's potentials. Material poverty is the absence of ownership control of physical assets such as land and other resources that land produce or the subsists on land such as animals and birds (UNDP, 1996 & 2010, UN, 1999). In a nutshell, poverty is a lack of access to empowerment, income and healthcare services.

According to Nwagwu (2014:22), "to be poor is to be powerless. It also means being despised and looked down upon. It means being lacking things that translate into good, physical mental health. Karlmax noted that it is the to the class structure in economics. The extent of an individual wealth is the determining factors for success in a number of crucial areas, including the chances to live and obtain possessions and education that are highly valued in society". Poverty therefore is an abject state of being in which an individual is incapable of utilizing resources around him to improve himself economically, socially politically or otherwise.

In the view of Jolaosho (1996), poverty means a man's inability to afford decent food, shelter, clothing and recreations which are the basic necessities, life of life without these necessities, lose is miserable and short. According to Adefolalu (1992), poverty is caused by what may be called 'exogenous forces' or forces outside an individual's control such as overpopulation, high standard of living, high cost of living, inadequate education, unemployment and environmental degradation and is also caused by forces that operate within the victims as exemplified by individual responsibility and welfare dependency and are thus self-created.

Poverty can also rise from changes in average income or changes in the distribution of income when there is cut in salary, loss of job or source of living or even retirement from well-paid service, then poverty is obvious (Garga, 2015). In view of Oduwole (2015), the causes of poverty in Nigeria include environmental degradation, inappropriate macroeconomics policies of Nigerian governments, low productivity low wages in the informal sector and low economic growth, a lag in human resource development, large family size, a fall in the real value of safety nets, inappropriate planning and neglect of the private sector, limited growth of investment and technological innovation, retrenchment of workers and increase of ghost workers in payroll of many states and high level of corruption in the country. The effects of poverty from the foregoing include severe malnutrition, food insecurity, illness,



child and elder abuse, drug dependence, high rate of disease, homelessness, depression, high rate of mortality, eviction, high rate of crime and violence among others.

### **Forms of Insecurity In Nigeria**

There are many forms of insecurity in Nigeria. Oluwa (2014) in Bassey (2016) listed the following as types of insecurity in Nigeria which include: Militancy in the Niger Delta Region, clashes between Fulani herdsmen and farms, Ethnic conflicts, religious conflicts, cold war among ethnic nationalities, area boys syndrome, gang conflicts and cults wars, kidnapping, robbery, mob attacks and lynching of suspected criminals (an act which could be premeditated), ritual killings involving innocent people, police brutality and extrajudicial killings.

Educational institutions are the most affected institutions in recent times. Nnamdi (2021) outlined reasons why educational institutions are being attacked by insurgents. For one, schools are first targets. They often have weak security with or no fences, and guards are few and poorly trained. State and federal security forces are likely to be an impediment as they are stretched woefully across the length and breadth of the country. Secondly mass abduction of children is an issue that requires urgent attention. They attract far more national and international media coverage and tend to stir more public coverage, than kidnapping adult villagers or travelers on high ways. The media forces the government almost immediately into negotiations and may result in quicker government concessions to speed up the children's release. Thirdly, kidnappers appear to be highly motivated by the concession they can extract in exchange for releasing abductees, although state and federal officials have repeatedly denied making any. Hard evidence remains slim but there have been several reports since the Chibok Case 2014 of governments paying ransom, releasing armed group members from detention or agreeing to halt military operations.

### **Factors Responsible for Insecurity in Nigeria**

There are many factors responsible for insecurity in Nigeria. Some of these factors include: unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, marginalization, political factor, international influence, communal crises etc.

### **Level of Insecurity in Nigeria Schools**

The Nigeria educational system is the largest in Africa. It comprises the early child education, basic education, junior secondary school education, senior secondary school education and the higher education. The Nigeria primary school education is plagued with insecurity challenges. In Yobe State, primary and junior secondary schools have virtually disappeared into local government areas since 2013 when public senior secondary schools were relocated from Gujba and Gulani to Damaturu, the state capital (Human Right Watch, 2016).

Secondary school education is one of the levels of education mostly attacked in the Nigeria educational institutions. In April 2014, Boko Haram group abducted 276 school girls from government secondary school in Chibok, Borno State. Some of the girls initially escaped but none were rescued and 219 remained missing as at this moment. Another attack on Zannamobarti Primary School in Damasak, also in Borno State, in November 2014, led to the abduction of an estimated 300 young students. None of the children have been returned to their parents (Human Right Watch, 2016).

In February 2014, 59 boys were killed during a Boko Haram attack on the Federal Government College Buni Yadi in Yobe State. Guardian (2020) reported that hundreds of Nigeria pupils are missing, with many feared to have been abducted after gunmen attacked a secondary school in North Western Katsina State. A large group of men armed with AK-47s overran the all-boys government science secondary school in Kankara on Friday night, shooting local security, said government officials. The attack is suspected to have been carried out by "bandits". Then Katsina State Governor, Aminu Masari said officials were combing through the nearby forest for 333 students and contacting parents "to ascertain the actual number that has been kidnapped". The Nigerian higher institutions are not left out of



the insecurity challenges. It has been shown that many of the Nigeria tertiary institutions are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve their goals because of the problems of insecurity (Paul, 2015). Many attacks have been launched against different higher institution in Nigeria resulting into closure and disruption of academic programmes of the institutions. Gunmen have attacked a teacher training college in the Nigerian city of Kano, with officials saying at least 15 people were killed (BBC, 2014). The blast at Kano State School of Hygiene reported by (Guardian, 2014). On July 25 a group of geologists and technologist from the university of Maiduguri were ambushed by Boko Haram insurgents at Magumeri area of Borno State. The contingent was on a “national assignment” – exploring for oil in Lake Chad. They had collected soil samples and were on their way back to town when the insurgents struck.

According to reports, about 12 soldiers, who escorted the academics, were killed. Some staff of the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) on the team were kidnapped. The army had claimed it rescued. Some persons among the oil exploration, but it later recanted and apologized for misforming the public. (The cable 2017) Ogunode et al, (2021) submitted that the insecurity challenges has assumed formidable dimensions forcing and country’s political and economic managers and indeed the entire nation, to ruin and loss of their ones, investments and absence of safety in most parts of the country. The number of violent crimes such as kidnappings, ritual killings, carjacking, suicide bombings, religious killings, politically-motivated killing and violence, ethnic classes, armed banditry and others have increasingly become a regular signature that characterizes life in Nigeria since 2009.

### **Effects On Insecurity On The School Administration In Nigerian Educational Institution**

The effects of insecurity in the administration of Nigerian educational institutions include loss of manpower in educational institutions, poor quality of education, increased educational spending, destructions of infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, closure of educational institutions educational wastage, discouragement of educational pursuit by children and encouragement of foreign education and internal displacement of learners.

- i. **Loss of Man-Power in Educational Institution:-** The administration of educational institution depends on the quality and qualities of professional teacher available. In security in Nigeria is affecting the administration of educational institutions because many professional teachers have their lost lives due to the problem of insecurity in the country. This act has reduced the number for the effective administration of school especially in the northern part of the country. Insecurity in Nigeria, is responsible for the death of professional teachers in Nigeria. Many professional teachers, school administrators and students have been killed because of insecurity in the country. According to the cable (2019) citing the United Nations Educational Scientific And Cultural Organization (UNESCO) says Boko Haram has killed 2,300 teachers in Nigeria’s North-East since the beginning of insurance in 2009. The implication of this is that the quality of education has fallen.
- ii. **Poor Quality of Education:-** One of the objectives of school administration is to ensure delivery of quality education in all educational institutions. Insecurity in Nigeria is contributing to poor quality education because school scheme work and syllabus are not covered in most educational institution due to school closed down. Many educational institutions in the country are always been closed due to insecurity. The inability of those educational institutions to cover their scheme of work and syllabus is reducing the quality of education. For instance, the entire educational institutions in Borno, Kaduna and Kano states were closed down because of insecurity, many students were forced to go home while teaching and learning stopped. Upon resumption, the students were asked to start their examinations. Insecurity forces students to graduate without covering the stipulated scheme of work for the term due to school closure, as a result of attack from insurgents. Paul (2015) submitted that graduates produced through insecurity end up not having the requisite knowledge and skills to operate in their work places, they rather become a liability.



The ultimate effect is poor performance of organisations and hence the national economy. This could be one of the greatest problems facing the Nigerian economy today since the incidences of insecurity in the educational system are quite high. Insecurity is a virus that needs to be exterminated because of the negative multiplier effect it can have on education and the larger development of the nation. "If researches and field works cannot go on because of the challenges of insecurity, then the educational sector and the whole concept of national development will be on borrowed time" said ASUU. The union stated further that apart from having the negative potential of lowering the quality of manpower produced by the universities "the larger picture is that it has the capacity of crippling the entire educational system. The larger consequences will be utterly grievous". Punch (2020). Some schools are not closed down by government but end up turning out half-baked graduates as a result of insecurity. Schools are not able to spend stipulated number of months per term. Schools in unsafe areas lack adequate qualified teachers. As such, students are not properly taught (Olyomi & Grace, 2016)

### iii. **Destructions of Infrastructural Facilities**

Another effect of insecurity in the administration of education in Nigeria is the massive destruction of infrastructural facilities. School administration depends on the availability of infrastructural facilities to implement educational programmes. Many school facilities like classrooms, administrative block, ICT facilities, tables, chairs and desks have been destroyed by insurgencies and Boko Haram members in the Northern part of the country. Human right watch (2016) reported that "Boko Haram has destroyed nearly 1000 schools and displaced 19000 teachers. "The education needs assessment found that out of 260 school sites, 28% had been damaged by bullets, shellings or sharpened, 20% had been deliberately set on fire, 32% had been looted and 29% had armed groups or military in close proximity. Between 2009 and 2015, attacks in north-Eastern Nigeria destroyed more than 910 schools and forced at least 1,500 to close down (HRW, 2016). School buildings and facilities are destroyed during insurgency or crises. Many secondary schools have been burnt down by insurgents. School facilities become inadequate (Olyomi & Grace, 2016).

### **Brain-Drain**

Administration of school is impossible without adequate man power to man the classrooms and to carry out other academic services within the schools. The insecurity in Nigeria and especially in the Northern Nigeria is causing mass movement of professional. Teachers from one state to another leaving many educational institutions without teachers. Many teachers and lectures are resigning their appointment due to insecurity in Northern Nigeria. The implication of this mass migration of teachers from this region is that, less teachers will be available to teach and this may affect quality of education because, there will be inadequate professional teachers to attend to the students. In (2021) Ogunode et al global education monitoring report (GEM), of the UN agency said 19,000 teachers have been displaced in the region, affecting access to education. Mamman, ASUU President said, "About 70 lecturers left, about five died and three held hostage by Boko Haram". The admission figure of students have been dropping since insurgency started in 2012. We don't know what will happen to the admission of students in subsequent year. "The exit of some lecturers has affected research and learning because, some are specialists in their fields. Usually, such exodus affects accreditation of some programmes and courses" ([www.pmnewnigeria.com/2017](http://www.pmnewnigeria.com/2017)).

### **Closure of Educational Institutions**

Administration of school is saddled with the responsibility of ensuring stable academic calendar and implementation of programmes as planned. The insecurity in Nigeria have led many states government order closure of all educational institutions in their state to prevent further attack.



Further attacks. Borno state ordered the closure of all educational institutions in the state because of insecurity. Human Right watch (2016) submitted that in Borno, one of the most affected states, schools at all levels have been closed in 22 out of 27 local government areas for at least two years, and public secondary schools in the state capital, Maiduguri, only reopened after internally displaced people (IDP) Who occupied most of the schools, were relocated elsewhere. The crisis caused by the BokoHaram insurgency in North-east Nigeria means that over 57 percent of schools in Borno, the worst-hit state, are closed, even as the new school year begins (UNICEF, 2017). Timothy (2021) submits that since the recent wave of kidnappings by criminal gangs demanding ransom, many state authorities including those in Kano, Yobe, Niger and Zamfara, have ordered the closure of boarding schools. Nnamdi (2021) noted that, concerns about the students safety have prompted governors of six state in the region- Niger, Kano, Kastina, Jogawa, Zamfara and Sokoto a well up Yobe in the North East, to shut some or all boarding schools, particularly in the most Vulnerable local government areas, until adequate security arrangement is restored. Nigeria union of Teachers spokes person Emmanuel Hwande says the closures will have consequences. It will disrupt the free flow of academic calendar, the flow of the children's education pursuit. It will subject the children to trauma". he said. UNICEF says the closing down of schools is not the best approach (Timothy, 2021).

**Discouragement of Educational Pursuit by children:-** One of the functions of school administration is to ensure effective student administration and enrolment but, Security in the country is discouraging parents and children from coming to school because of the fear of beenkidnapped or been killed in Nigeria, especially in Northern Nigeria, Many parents have decided to keep their children at home instead of being killed and kidnapped at schools where safety is not guranteed. In the face of security threats in Nigeria, parents considered pulling their children out of school. Timothy (2021) observed that UNICEF says the recent spate of abductions in having a huge negative impact on education in Nigeria."At a time when the pandemic is rife, and some parents have withdrawn their children from school, or have not sent their children back to school, the insecurity and threats to educational facilities can only compound an already difficult situation", said Peter Hawkins, UNICEF Nigeria country representative while Nnamdi (2021) observed that the attacks could reduce attendance once schools reopen. Already, many parents say they no longer consider schools safe. Many Muslim parents in the North west are skeptical of what they perceive as a western model of education, it is likely that some won't allow their children return.

### **Internal Displacement of Learners**

Insecurity in Nigeria and especially in the Northern Part of Nigeria is responsible for internal displacement of students. Many students have been displaced from their schools because of insecurity. Insecurity is affecting students' administration in Educational institutions across the country. Boko Haram whose name means "Western Education is forbidden" has made no secret of it strong opposition to education. Schools are often among the first targets when the terrorist group attacks communities. Ogunode et al (2021) notes, that the impact of insecurity include increase in the quantum of internally displaced persons, politically, social, disruptions and low economic growth.



### **Reduction Private Investment in Education**

Insecurity faced by the country is preventing investment in the development of educational institutions in the country because, such investment if embarked upon will be destroyed by the insurgencies attacking public and private educational institutions in the country. The government and some state government have resolved not to embark on infrastructural development of educational institutions for now, until when the security issues are for now until when the security issues are over. This actions is preventing investment on education and many private schools because of the fear of attacks. Oluyomi, & Grace, (2016) submitted that the child's learning is affected in that, he/she has limited number of schools to choose from as Government and private owners are unable to open new schools. A child that has flare for technical training may not get such a school to attend as proprietors are scared of establishing new schools in crises prone areas.

### **Inadequate Funding of Education.**

Inadequate funding of education in Nigeria in recent times, is linked to insecurity facing the country which demands huge funds that are supposed to be used for sectors like education and health. The school administration require a lot of financial commitment for effective implementation of the various educational policies and programmes. School administration is a very expensive project and it demands a lot of funds to secure the services of human resources and to procure the material resources for the implementation of educational services. It is unfortunate that funds that are supposed to be allocated for the development of education is been used yearly in security. Research has it that Nigerian government usually spend one trillion naira on security budget rather than spend on education.

### **Conclusion**

This paper concluded that insecurity have affected the entire educational institutions in Nigeria. The identified loss of man power in educational institutions, poor quality of education, destructions of infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, closure of educational institutions, discouragement of educational pursuit by children, internal displacement of learners, reduction of private investment in education and inadequate funding of education as the effect of insecurity in the Administrative of Educational institutions in Nigerian.

### **Suggestions And Way Forward**

The notion that poverty breeds insecurity has been a contentious issue within the academic arena. While some scholars believe that there is a direct link between poverty and insecurity, others argue that poverty, inequality, conflicts, and ill-feelings breeds insecurity.

To solve the identified problems in this paper, the following suggestions are made:

1. The government should develop the political will to fight all forms of insecurity in the country through the application of best strategies.
2. The federal Government should deploy security personnel to guide all educational institutions in the country. The government should increase the level of its security through employing dedicated and intelligent security personnel.
3. The Nigerian government should direct Nigeria police force to establish a department for school security The department should be saddled with the responsibility to providing security to all educational institutions in the country.
4. The Nigeria government should direct the security and civil defence to establish department of forest security. This department will prevent the kidnappers form using forest for kidnapping activities and hide-out.
5. The government should employ the engagement strategies and negotiation strategies to free the students in the hands of the kidnappers to engage the hands of the kidnappers to engage the bandits and other criminal elements in the country.



6. Consideration should be given to making poverty alleviation explicit constitutional issue and be incorporated in the nation's overall development /policy management framework.
7. The government of Nigeria should institute effective policies on birth control and family planning especially in the rural areas.
8. More research should be carried out on the perception of unemployed Youths towards government's policies and programs of poverty and unemployment reduction in Nigeria.

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