

## IMPACTS OF SCHOOL INSECURITY ON EDUCATION OF NIGERIAN CHILD

By

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### Abstract

*Nigerian environment as a nation has encountered series of Insecurity with its impacts on the Education of Nigerian Child. This has affected not only the education of the Nigerian Child but also the economic situation, his overall development and the living condition of the child. Insecurity has affected investment, social interaction, peaceful coexistence and also posed a great threat to the growth and development of education in general. This paper therefore will examine the Impacts of school Insecurity on the Education of the Nigerian Child. Such impacts as lack of academic motivation, absence of positive attitude to school, lack of academic achievement, emotional development and others. Some measures are also recommended which includes - the involvement of Federal Government in maintaining adequate security to all the schools, the provision of infrastructure to facilitate effective teaching and learning to mention but a few.*

**Note:** *The impact of school insecurity on the education of Nigerian child.*

### Introduction

The education of Nigerian child has suffered a lot of challenges of insecurity which has affected the condition of the school environment. This insecurity is in form of environmental deterioration which symbolizes danger to everyone's security. Anything that reduces the quality of life such as conflict, scarcity of vital resources, environmental degradation or demographic pressures infringes on human security, is considered a threat to human security (Dhirathis 2011). For student to engage in school programmes successfully there must be conducive and safe environment. The terrorist group known as Boko Haram had threatened the education of the Nigeria child. This has resulted to loss of many lives and destruction of properties since 2009. The activities of this notorious group have created fear in the minds of every Nigerian more especially the education of our children all over the nation. This group made school environment uncomfortable and fearful to our children.

Education is the backbone of development and the greatness of a Nation. It is a tool of success and acquisition of knowledge which helps an individual to utilize his/her potentials in life. Presently, Education in Nigeria is Fraught with kinds of insecurity issues in schools.

Insecurity is when the individual is threatened by disease or when an individual is not safe in an environment. This kind of situation keeps everything to a stop, education of children is not left out. Forms of insecurity have no doubt brought a lot to bear in education of children in Nigeria. For instance, Boko Haram activities. Barna (2014) noted that Boko Haram is the name given to organization of AhlisunnahLidd'a Swati Wal-Jihad', the people committed for the propagation of the prophets teaching and Jihad. It is an Hausa phrase which means western education is a taboo. This name does not signify the full aim of the movement, which is to take

over the Nigerian Government and establish an Islamic state with Sharia and abolish western education like universities and civilization in general. These include the acceptance of Muslim civilization and rejection of scientific theories of evolution. This is not a welcome situation to education of Nigerian child. It has made a great impact on academic motivation of the learners level of achievement as well as emotional development on the learners.

### **School Environment and Insecurity in Nigeria:**

Nigerian environment is no more conducive for education due to insecurity at all levels of the school system. Environment which is the source of nourishment and sustenance of life of man on earth is now turn to be a terrorist state full of insecurity. We know that human beings have varieties of needs for the satisfaction of human life. These needs are met through different dimensions of the environment. These include physiological needs, security needs, belongingness needs, self-esteem needs and self-actualization. All these are opposite to the intention of these terrorists. Human needs are arranged accordingly. The last needs are crucial for human existence. It is true that human beings are insatiable because the moment a lower need is satisfied adequately, a higher need comes up. The final need is that of self-actualization which is relevant but differs from one person to the other. In all these when the environment is not safe and cordial, these needs cannot be achieved. There is need for re-assurance of safe environment in order for the learners' to participate actively and effectively in certain activities in a cordial school environment such as being more creative, attending school, participating in teaching and learning, motivation to learn and to participate in all school programs. In the same way the satisfaction and comfort in the school environment will help effective learning, but lack of feeling of psychological safety of school environment may affect learning. Therefore physiological wellbeing of learning is very necessary in a school environment. According to Obi (2016) psychological wellbeing is a good or satisfactory condition of existence of life. We all know that safe environment serves as stimuli for learner's to participate in school activities.

The school environment should be rich enough to satisfy the various needs of the learners' to help them to function effectively and to develop their cognitive status. This is done in a secured and safe school environment. But unfortunately, some schools are faced not only with the problem of Boko Haram but lots of threats from kidnappers, sexual abuse, drug addiction, fire outbreak, cultism and many others. Chika (2016) noted that school environments are flooded, with lots of acts that threaten the security situation of our schools, ranging from examination malpractices, drug addiction, gender violence, kidnapping, vandalism, armed robbery, and cultism which hinder performance of learners'.

However, in a school where any of the needs of the learners' are deprived, we know that such school environments are characterized by insecurity. An insecure school environment is that which the climate do not allow the learners', teachers, administrators, staff and visitors to interact in a positive non-threatening manner as stated by Uzoka and Ononuju (2016)

One of the major attributes of the school environment is the availability of effective teaching and learning. Effective quality education can only be achieved through the provision of a safe and secure environment. Umar (2012) stated that creating conducive learning environment by making students to have access to teachers, school facilities and threat free environment stimulates students to higher academic performance. This type of environment can only be realized where the various factors affecting learning are considered as much as possible. These factors affecting learner are the learner, the learning environment, the teacher and the learning process. Failure to satisfy these requirements adequately will result to ineffective teaching and learning problem.

Unconducive learning environment amounts to insecurity of the school environment. Ajake (2016) contributed that insecurity is a feeling of general unease or nervousness that may

be triggered by perceiving of one self to be vulnerable or inferior in some way or a sense of vulnerability or instability which threatens oneself ego. For effective teaching and learning, there is need for safe secure and conducive environment, free from fear, anxiety, exploitation, molestation and kidnapping. Peace and tranquility are indispensable for any meaningful development to be achieved. In Nigerian education system, an atmosphere of peaceful co-existence is an antidote for successful teaching and learning. Ozor (2016) sees school safety as protecting the students and staff from undesirable behavior such as crime, drug abuse, sexual and racial abuse, vandalism and aggressiveness. Emphasizing the significance of the school in promoting the future of learners', the United Nations' Agency stated that no country can hope to live in peace and prosperity unless it builds mutual trust between its citizens, starting from the classroom. (UNESCO, 2011, in Hilson&Randoll, (2012). This issue throws light to the need to enhance the quality of the school environment in order to encourage peace, harmony and improve living standard of learners' in our respective societies.

Education is vital to learners, parents and the society. It encourages smooth shift from home to school, because it help the learners to interact freely with other children outside his immediate environment. It also helps to improve his cognitive domain through learning. Education of a child goes a long way to teach him how to understand and manage his emotions. Ajake (2016) stated that high insecurity in school resulted in o poor attendance and poor involvement of students in co-curricular activities. Oladunjoye and Omemu (2013) noted that school security environment creates fear and anxiety in community at large, resulting to low attendance rate at school. While Lordaaah, Fiase and Kohol (2016) stated that school, as one of the social institutions plays an influential role in developing students' creativity through their availability of resources. When the school is not safe all efforts to develop students' creativity, intelligence and being able to engage in school activities become fruitless. Teaching and learning are expected to take effect in an environment that is free from any form of obstruction. Roseline and Dorathy (2016) supported that insecure school environment is not conducive for learning as both the student's life and learning facilities are at stake.

Environment is what surrounds us and where we live. It provides all life support system needed to survive; and full developmental aspirations by man (Isife 2012). It is also an external surrounding within which an individual lives, that affects his developmental behavior. Environment plays an important role in the performances of the child. Stone in Danbake (2017), emphasized that when environment is grossly deficient in stimulation, the development of the child is correspondingly retarded. This means that when a school environment is full of threat with fear, it will prevent parents from sending their wards to such a school, and even when they send their wards to school, teachers may not attend to learners due to fear. Safe environment makes students to participate in school programmes and become more creative in their day to day activities.

### **The Dimensions of School Environment**

The school is a social environment that is made up of component parts that are located in everyday school setting. The various arms of the school environment embrace the following; academic, psychological, social, physical, political, emotional, and other variables of the school that influence the behaviour of the child.

**Academic environment:** It shows an environment where academic work takes place. It is an environment that organizes learners for their professional life in future and also contributes towards their academic and social development. It needs not to be disturbed by any forms of insecurity

**Moral environment:** School environment is concerned with principles of right and wrong development. It is where the child learns some of the rules and regulations guiding the academic work.

**Emotional environment:** School environment is concerned with the state of the mind of students and their overall temperament.

**Psychological environment:** These are the factors that are suppose to associate with the school environment that help in intellectual functioning. They include facilities and activities that aid intellectual stimulation.

**Perceptual environment:** These are the school environment that is concerned with the processes by which individual perceives or understands things in the environment.

**Physical environment:** This refers to the overall design and layout of a given environment for learning; how it is designed by organizing its spaces, furnitures and materials to maximize the learning opportunities for the engagement of the child.

**Social environment:** School Social environment refers to the quality of relationships among the students and teachers and other staffs and school leadership. It concerned entire personal relationship.

**Economic environment:** School Economic environment refers to a factor that influences the budgeting and spending in the school that affect the performance of the school.

**Spiritual environment:** It is an open environment that is made available to students to have access, irrespective of their attitude to religion or their religious belief.

**Legal environment:** This is concerned in helping the school in planning and teaching the fundamental laws, rules and regulations guiding the school environment.

**Political environment:** This deals with the administration of the school, such as demonstration of good and healthy social interactions.

### **The challenges of Physical School Environment on Education in Nigeria**

There are many challenges that are hindering the successful running or achievement of the education of Nigerian child. These includes the following:-

- Shortage of school building
- Acute shortage of qualified teachers and furniture for effective teaching and learning.
- Inadequate equipment for science, agricultural science, home economics, art and craft are lacking in most schools. These hamper the academic performance of the students.
- Serious inadequate funding for the renovation of existing school building and construction of new ones.
- Inadequate classroom for teaching and learning. Some students stay under harsh physical environments such as during the cold, harsh, sunny and rainy seasons to learn.
- Limited storage facilities in schools.
- Inadequacy/ lack of toilet facilities in many schools.
- No portable water and no electricity supply.
- No Library and no Laboratory facilities.
- Most of the learners lack textbooks and writing materials.

Ubah (2002) and Aliyu (2014) emphasized that the physical condition of Nigerian schools were pathetic and capable of lowering the standard of education. This reveals that a lot of jobs need to be done by Education Authorities in order to rescue the physical school environment and quality of education of Nigerian child.

### **The Challenges of insecure Social School Environment**

The social environment of the school embraces other groups which include the following; parents, teachers, students, peer group and others.

**Parents:** Parents are the first agents of socialization. What the child becomes in future is determine by the quality of care and training imparted by the parents and other members of the family to the child. They are the key factors in the education of the child. Apart from this, there are other negative issues that affect the upbringing of the child. These include house-help issues, broken-home caused by death, divorce, frequent absence of one or both parents; large family issue, illiteracy, ignorance and poverty; increased economic depression among the people and others. This is why Odunukwe (2002) stated that some negative tendencies in the family level have adverse effect and influence on the child.

Families that are under this level can be seen as insecure environment which can lead to negative results which include absence from school by many pupils, production of many children with varieties of emotional and behavioral issues, problem of adjustment to classroom programs. Others engage in anti-social behavior such as prostitution, stealing in order to take care of themselves.

**Teacher:** A teacher is synonymous with the school as an agent of socialization. He is one of the key actors to the smooth running of the school and the upbringing of a child. The teacher supports or encourages an approachable attitudes towards the students. Roles are given to the teacher to be responsible for games, library and others, so that they become the subject teachers. Teachers assign some responsibilities to students also, more especially to bigger boys who are intelligent and also friendly. So the relationship between the teacher and staff and also that of students and parents are expected to be warm and cordial. The inability of the teacher to carry out his or her duties effectively will result to lack of development of the child and so increase the rate of insecurity in the school environment.

**Peer group:** This is another vital agent of socialization. Odunukwe (2002) and Aliyu (2014) noted that peer group serves as a source of inspiration to the adolescent on matters such as fashion, dressing, hair style, information related to sex, heterosexual friendship, leisure activities and others. Odunukwe also observe that most of the Nigerian families have failed to cater for the basic needs of their children, such needs are food, shelter, clothing, security, love and self-esteem due to the high level of poverty.

So, in most cases anti-social activities are learned, therefore a learner's involvement in the peer group is either, for the purpose of belonging or solving their economic and social needs. This joining in the social group explains the reason for the increase rate of delinquency, for example, theft, robbery, drug abuse, awkward dressing among the Nigerian youths. This undesirable behavior has affected the youth levels of dedication to academic work and other ventures. Based on the above situation, the researcher seeks to examine the impacts of school insecurity on the quality of education of Nigerian child.

### **The Impacts of Insecurity on School Environment on learning:**

There is no limit to the impacts of insecurity on human life. It affects every aspect on human life, both the state and the nation in general. The insecurity of school environment has a

tremendous effect on the development of education of Nigerian child. The specific effect of insecurity of school environment on education and development of the child are as follows:-

1. **Academic motivation:** When school environment is not safe, all efforts to motivate the development of students' creativity, intelligence and ability to engage in school activities become impossible. For effective teaching and learning to take place, there is need for a secure school environment. In a secure school environment, the child develops academic motivation through interaction with the academic environment (Adeniyi 2002). The insecurity of school environment does not produce stimulating and enriching outcome or experience. This does not allow the child the chance to develop academic motivation. Teaching and learning are expected to take place in an environment that is free from any form of obstruction. The aim of teaching and learning can be enhanced when the school environment is conducive, free from violence, threat or anything that will bring fear in the child. The insecure school environment brings about lack of motivation and unconducive learning condition. Thus, producing the problem of truancy and school dropout. (Roseline and Dorathy 2016).
2. **Help seeking behavior:** When the classrooms are observed to be encouraging and friendly, the learners feel more relaxed interacting with one another and also with the teachers in the classroom. Familiarity and friendliness are seen as essential factors as regards rendering help to the learner. The insecurity that is threatening the environment does not allow a free flow of atmosphere; therefore, there is little or no chance for those seeking for help.
3. **Positive attitude to school:** A positive attitude to school environment allows learners and teachers to feel emotionally and physically safe. Also parental aspiration, education and occupation are indicators of a secured school environment which influence the development of positive attitude in the learner towards schooling. It is supposed to be an environment in which students can express themselves freely but insecurity snatches this chance away from the students. In other words, those parents who are uneducated and neither cherish education nor gain high occupational level are not capable of promoting the development of positive attitude towards schooling. Those parents cannot produce the individuals with the needed academic materials and may not assist their children in going to school.
4. **Academic achievement:** This is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution have attained their short or long term educational goals. The quality of education that the child gain is largely determined by the availability of physical facilities and the entire atmosphere where teaching and learning takes place. Fear is one of the insecurity. It is one of the significance of insecurity in the academic environment. It interrupts the smooth running of learning and constitutes trouble to academic achievement.
5. **Emotional development:** It is the development of being able to form and sustain positive relationships. An individual friendly physical school environment will go a long way to assist emotional development in the learner. A conducive school environment will assist the learner with the opportunity of removing the unwanted resentments and worries among their class and their school mates. Unlike an insecure school environment that leads to the emergence of emotional abnormalities like fear, which impedes academic achievement as noted by Aliyu (2006).
6. **Cognitive development:** Cognitive development is how children think, explore and figure out things. It is the development of knowledge, skills, problem solving and disposition. It is a secure and conducive school environment that will allow co-operation and collaborative problem solving, that facilitates the development of higher order

thinking and specific intellectual skills. Insecure school environment hinders interaction. This means that, there will be limited room for advanced intellectual development.

7. **Social development:** The development of healthy interpersonal relations between the students and teachers are the product of secure and conducive school environment. On the other hand, unhealthy interpersonal relationship between students and teachers are characterized by insecure school environment which is attracted by inadequacies from the environment. All these interfere with cordial and cooperative relationship that exists between the student and the teachers.
8. **School retention:** Social acceptance or rejection are one of the factors that determine whether the child will remain in the school or leave the school environment. Children who are capable to adjust stand a great advantage to be accepted or retained by the peer group and the school. On the other hand, children who face rejection have the problem of academic profile and may also result to school dropout.
9. **Adjusted behavior:** It is stated that a safe and conducive school environment facilitates development of an adjusted behavior like punctuality, cooperation, friendliness, cleanliness, hard work and attentiveness. On the other hand, a maladjusted behavior of the students is the product of insecure school environment.
10. **Psychological development:** Educational and recreational needs of the learner are the product of favourable school environment. This kind of school atmosphere satisfies the psychological needs of the learner which leads to the development of a favourable and positive mental health and improved adjustment to school.
11. **Physical development:** Adequate recreational facilities encourage the healthy physical and emotional development of the growing individual. Aliyu (2014) stated that opportunity given to the learner to engage in sporting activities enable him or her to burn the excess energy and achieve bodily health and muscular development.
12. **Development of creativity:** When school is not safe, all efforts to develop students' creativity, intelligence and to be able to engage in school activities will not be possible. Creativity requires among other things a school environment that has befitting structure, rich in terms of learning, modern facilities, laboratories, information communication technology, workshop, theatre rooms and sporting facilities. Thus, an insecure school environment that is devoid of those basic infrastructural facilities denies it's students/pupils the opportunity to develop creativity (Alfuhaiqi 2015).

Through the examination of the above impacts, the school insecurity has adversely affected the academic environment, emotionally, psychologically, socially, economically and physically in the overall development of education of the Nigerian child.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the enlisted impacts of insecurity in school environment, the following measures should be adopted to reduce the incessant insecurity to its bearest minimum.

- The Federal Government should intensify adequate security to all the schools in order to reduce the incidence of insecurity.
- The school environment should be provided with basic infrastructure that will help to facilitate effective teaching and learning to improve critical thinking, creativity, skills and skills for developing problem solving.
- Creating recreational facilities and outdoor activities to promote healthy socio-emotional and physical development of the learners.
- The provision of well secured, conducive and child-friendly environment to improve enrolment, attendance and retention. This will go a long way to facilitate adjustment to school attitude and also encourage good mental health.

- Teachers are looked upon as models to their students or pupils in their respective schools exhibiting good relationship with their students and other teachers. This will enhance cooperative behavior and avoid aggressive attitudes and excessive use of corporal punishment.
- The education authorities should include vital topics such as moral instruction and emphasis that it must be done and taken it serious help them in their moral upbringing. This will help to reduce insecurity in the school environment and encourage peaceful co-existence.
- There should be adequate funding so as to enable the school authority to provide those amenities that are lacking in the environment.
- There should be a healthy cooperation between the school and the parents so that they will be informed when there is unhealthy attitudes from their wards.

### **Conclusion**

The impacts of school insecurity on education of Nigerian child have a lot of negative implications. These challenges range from development of fearful attitude, irregular school attendance, school dropout, unconducive atmosphere and other psychological and emotional development. The education authorities have a vital role to play in order to minimize the level of insecurity in our academic environment. The curriculum developers, counselors, teachers, students and parents also have a conducive environment for learning and not a taboo for education of Nigerian child.

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