Security: A Driving Force Towards Academic Performance of Students in the Health Training Institutions for Sustainable Development in Zamfara State

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Abstract

Security is the freedom from danger, care intimidation, apprehension, feeling or assurance of safety learning academic environment, peace of mind which constitutes foremost responsibility of every government. Literature related to the topic were sourced from online documents i.e. Scopus. Zamfara State security issue is not an exemption as a result of incessant attacks from bandits on students and educational facilities due to youth unemployment, inadequate security personnel and weak security architecture leading to loss of innocent lives and properties. This leads to increase student's dropout during training ie low enrollment and graduation as the school is vulnerable to threats in form of abduction, kidnapping, rape, assaults etc. Health care educational training institution are the engine room for the supply of healthcare workforce in our various facilities at various health care service delivery levels aimed at achieving the sustainable development on Education and Universal Health Coverage. In the advent of security threats to our health training institutions, Parents and Guardians get discouraged to enroll their wards to study health disciplines thereby reducing the demanding needs of health workers in the state thereby exposing the populace to the emerging, rampaging and dynamic infectious diseases. For the state health training institutions to attain safety for sustainable academic performance, Government and Developing partners need to collaborate and direct resources for full potentials of the state to be achieved for sustainable educational and Health development goals as elaborated in this paper.

Keywords: *Security, Sustainable Development Goals, Academic Performance, Health Training Institution*
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Introduction

The inaccessibility of schools as a result of the inherent dangers therefore remains a serious challenge to the knowledge givers, the learners and also other critical stakeholders. In most schools attacked, the traumatic experience alone cannot easily be erased as such experience instills fear on the teachers, students and community alike and make it very difficult for them to return back to school. More so, the "planning, organizing, coordinating, financing and evaluating of all education activities on students, teachers and school heads" in the schools attacked are often jeopardized while teaching and learning processes hindered because the school environment are unsafe and learning can't be properly conducted and coordinated in an unsafe school environment. (Kene 2022)

Insecurity among students makes them feel unsafe and hence skip classes which eventually affect them in examinations. Besides they loss interest in academic activities which eventually leads to truancy and boys leaving school to take to trading while the girls drop out and giving out for marriage. (Ochigbo, Bala, & CharlesZalakoro, 2021)

Sources of insecurity in Nigeria were two fold, namely–remote/root causes and immediate/proximate factors. Remote/root causes included lack of institutional capacity, pervasive material inequities and unfairness, ethno-religious conflicts, weak security system and loss of communal values. The

immediate causes are porous borders, rural-urban drift, social irresponsibility of companies/corporate organizations, unemployment and terrorism. Insecurity was identified as a major obstacle to sustainable national and educational development in Nigeria particularly in the Niger Delta, North east/west and western regions. For the full potentials of the country to be directed towards achieving sustainable development, adequate measures should be put in place to check insecurity **.(Chankseliani and McCowan, 2021)**

In Nigeria, the constitution unequivocally spelt out as a fundamental objective and directive principle of state policy that "the security and welfare of the people of Nigeria shall be the primary purpose of government" (Section 14 (2) (b) Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999).

Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity from the Northeast to the Northwest etc. No mind saying, national security has become an issue for government, prompting huge allocation of the national budget to security at the peril of other developmental sector seeking for marathon attention like education which is the bedrock for national development. (Kene 2022)

Health training institutions are accredited educational set up aimed at impacting learning domain to students for the purpose of providing comprehensive health intervention to the populace after graduation. Zamfara state has five health training institution (two Government owned while three are private owned) namely Zamfara State, College of Nursing Sciences Gusau , College of Health Science and Technology, Tsafe and Lala College of Health Science and Technology Gusau located in the Central Senatorial Zone and also Umar bin Khattab College of Nursing Sciences, Kaura Namoda and Kaura College of Health Science and Technology, Kaura Namoda located in the Northern Senatorial Zone of the state.

As insecurity continues to threaten Nigeria as a nation, Zamfara State in northwest Nigeria has been the most affected as it appears the state which takes great pride in its farming activities where banditry recorded its very beginnings in Nigeria when the newly discovered gold deposits in the state were said to be behind the unrest. People have been killed in their homes, their farms, mosques, markets, schools and other places that people were found as part of their daily activities. (Kenen 2022)

A welcome development to investigate the effect of insecurity on the academic performance of students in health training institutions as little research has been done with the view of proffering solutions for better academic achievement.(Ojukwu 2016)

Historical Background of Insecurity in Zamfara State

Security lapses and challenges certainly do manifest on a daily basis in schools in Nigeria. Such challenges ranges from "youth restiveness, terrorism and insurgent attacks, kidnappings and hostage-takings for monetary ransoms, political assassinations, arsons, murders, cult-related activities, mass protests and so forth. (Kenen 2022)

From 2019 to date, it was reported that three government secondary schools were attacked by the bandits in three local government areas of the state which include Talata Mafara local government, Bakura and Maradun local government areas, respectively. This trend has, no doubt, caused a lot of setback in education sector in the state, a development that led many parents to withdraw their children from boarding schools because of the unsafe environment challenges across the length and breadth of Zamfara. .(Mohammad ,2022)

For instance, on February 14 2019, a group of suspected bandits stormed the Government Girls Secondary School Jangebe and kidnapped over 300 female students while in August 2021, the bandits equally stormed the College of Agriculture and Animals Health

located in Bakura at the headquarters of Bakura local government area of the state at midnight and kidnapped 15 students, four staff of the college and killed three persons including a police inspector and two watchmen of the school. .(Mohammad ,2022)

Meanwhile, in September 2021, no fewer than 75 students were also kidnapped in a fresh attack by bandits on Government Day Secondary School Kaya in Maradun local government area. In view of that, the state government imposed a dusk-to-dawn curfew on 13 local government areas in the state and as well ordered the closure of all schools across the state in response to the abduction of the 75 students of the college. .(Mohammad ,2022)

Considering the importance of girls education in the country, but largely hindered by the activities of bandits especially in the North-west part of the country, that development has attracted some development partners into intervening to help respective state governments attain the goal of educating their citizens particularly Zamfara state government.(Mohammad ,2022)

The activities of these bandits led to what is largely known as unsafe school environment in the state, thereby prompting international donor agency like United Nations Children Education Fund (UNICEF) to intervene towards the rebuilding and development of education in the state. .(Mohammad ,2022)

It is the duty of the government and school management to provide adequate security to the student while in the school environment. Security is the bedrock for any sustainable development which enhances peace and infrastructural advancement.

Narad and Abdullah, (2016) as cited in Anthony (2018) defined Academic performance is the knowledge attained by marks assessed by the teacher or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved over a period of time. Academic performance is greatly affected if the safety of environment for teaching and learning is

unduly compromised leading to low recruitment/enrolment rate, voluntary and involuntary withdrawals due to fear/apprehension and poor academic grade respectively.

Likewise the Zamfara state security issue is not an exemption as a result of incessant attacks and reprisal attacks from farmers/herdsmen clashes, loss of communal values, porous boundary migration necessitating illegal arms proliferation as a result of weak security system leading to loss of innocent lives and properties. This has repercautionary effect on the student's education ie during admission, retention and graduation as the school is vulnerable to threats in form of abduction, kidnapping, rape, assaults etc.

Critical, Logical and Hypothetical Identifiable Problem

Security and development are related as the need to sustain security competes with other public needs such as education, health, infrastructure and partnership with stakeholders as evidenced in SDGs 3, 4 and 17 respectively. Insecurity issues at health training institutions demand urgent attention, failure of which could jeopardize teaching and learning leading to failure in academic performance. Insecurity result to fear and anxiety on the part of the students residing in and around the school as they are vulnerable to vices like rape, abduction, kidnapping, assaults, psychological trauma and diminished academic performance. There could as well be diminished courage from the parents sending their female child to school demeaning the educational attainment for the girl child agenda. Capacity building for health will be compromised especially in area of maternal and child health at the community where health workers are mostly needed thereby endangering SDGs 3 and 4 and 17 agenda.(Chankseliani and McCowan, 2021) and (Robert and Nnokam, 2016))

Implications of Insecurity for Sustainable Development

According to Igbuzor, (2011) the principle behind sustainability is to make life worth living for all and sundry. Insecurity has however been identified as one of the critical bottlenecks to sustainable development. Without security, educational growth which drives economic growth and development cannot be actualized as insecurity destroys economic, human and social capital. It is only when there is peace, justice and security that people and government can properly direct their efforts and resources towards improving human life and capital development.

Expenditures on security are essential component of developmental process. For instance, the use of resources to strengthen an institutional security system could have been useful in other relevant areas. Insecurity is therefore a drain on local and national resources at the expense of development and peoples" well-being and thereby has adverse consequences on economic growth and development (Nwagboso, 2012).

So, in the absence of any real threats to security, expenditures on security can be reduced significantly, to allow national and local governments to channel more resources to other demanding areas to improve quality of life of the people. In addition, insecurity destroys existing infrastructure and does not provide environment for further infrastructural development, and a safe environment for economic activities by individuals to give them economic empowerment that will enable households not only to cater for present generations but for the future generations.

Security Implication to students' academic performance
Students need to study individually and collectively in group at nights or very early in the day at their classrooms and even in the hostels where there is secured security personnel and facilities for prompt surveillance. But in the absence of none, students are bound to prepare less for class work and examination especially where there is recorded evidence of insecurity. This creates fear, apprehension and anxiety to the students which could culminates into examination failure due to diminished academic performance which could increase student dropout rate.

Health care educational training institution are the engine room for the supply of healthcare workforce capacity in our various healthcare facilities at various health care service delivery levels aimed at achieving the government universal health care coverage approach. In the advent of security challenges to our cooperate existence, health training institutions shall record low output of health workers while those in service shall be pressed with no other alternative than to migrate to safe havens or climes exposing the country to brain drain of which the consequences is better imagined than felt in this era of emergining, rampaging and dynamic infectious diseases.

"No child will be able to succeed academically if they don't first feel safe in school. No teacher will be able to teach at their best if they aren't confident there's a plan in place to ensure their school is well prepared for an emergency." – Governor Deval Patrick, Jan. 16, 2014

Factors that possess security threats to health training institution
Schools attacked are not also excluded from the effect of the crippling security challenges that threaten the security and unity of the Nigerian state in general. Some of these challenges are also directly or indirectly connected to the critical security challenges that certainly have made schools vulnerable to attacks in Nigeria. They are:

- ✧ Lack of possession of identification card by both Student and staff should at all times and design a channel of reportage to the security department in the event of misplacement.
- ✧ Erection of security fences without burglars around the school is absent

- Inadequate Recruitment of certified and qualified security outfits to man the school premises and environs
- Lack of Training and retraining of security officers on emerging security issues ie intelligence gathering and prompt action taken
- Lack of Installation of computer based closed circuit television cameras (CCTV) in and around the institution to monitor and clampdown unwanted visitors
- Lack of Installation of security lights to view and monitor movement of people
- Lack of adequate information gadgets to communicate in emergency situation
- Lack of security coded identification card to check impersonators and imposters.
- Lack of Social security insurance provided to the security officers to enhance job satisfaction and productivity
- Poor funding of security agencies and low motivation of security personnel.
- Lack of secrecy and porous security network among personnel
- Reluctance by citizens to volunteer security information to law enforcement agencies

Strategies for emergency Management Cycle model: Prevent, Prepare, Respond, and Recover (PPRR) Brock (2022)

The Emergency Management Cycle is a framework to plan for all aspects of emergency management. It is the framework mandated by the federal government and used most often by emergency responders.

Prevent phase aims to avoid the occurrence of incidents or lessen the harm done by unavoidable incidents. Often this phase is called prevention and mitigation. Prevention refers to actions aimed at stopping incidents from occurring, while mitigation refers to actions aimed at reducing the harm done by unavoidable incidents. For example, a monitored main entrance with all other external doors locked is a prevention strategy to keep intruders out. Reinforced concrete is a mitigation strategy to reduce harm from earthquakes.

Prepare phase is the process of preparing for incidents. Effective preparedness requires planning for worst-case scenarios. It involves a continuous cycle of planning, practicing, and evaluating actions aimed at effective response to an incident. Its goal is to minimize psychological and physical harm as incidents occur. Training and drills are a critical part of preparedness. Note that the preparation and prevention phases occur at the same time and are on-going.

Respond phase includes the steps taken to minimize harm to people and property during a particular incident. Its focus is on the short-term, direct effects of an incident and requires tight coordination and rapid action among all participants. This includes executing the emergency plans developed and practiced in the Prepare phase.

Recover phase is concerned with restoring the learning and teaching environment after an incident. It is the process of mending the physical and psychological health of school community members, as well as restoring its physical facilities to re-establish a positive learning environment. Its aim is to develop and implement plans to ensure school services and facilities are restored. In addition, recovery includes evaluating the incident and the response to it in order to revise and improve Safety Plans.

Policy Formulation and Way Forward

The bottleneck facing Nigeria as a country today is insecurity, which has degenerated into kidnapping of students.. Students have become soft targets for kidnappers in recent times. Govt. should come up with strategies to end kidnapping, insecurity in schools.

The following are ways in which the Federal and State government can come up with proactive security strategies that would put an end to the problem.

Policy should be formulated on short, medium and long term plan for responsive and responsible outcome.

Short term or immediate action

✧ Student and staff should at all times be in possession of their computer coded identification card. In the event of misplacement should be reported to the security department.
✧ Erection of security fences with burglars around the school
✧ Recruitment of certified and qualified security outfits
✧ Tinted vehicles with or without plate number should not be allowed access to the school premises
✧ School management should partner neighboring residences to form vigilante groups to monitor movement of persons at all times

✧ Parents should give good direction, monitoring and counseling to their children/wards on their well-being, academic/career pursuit, choice of peers and association.
✧ Parents should show good examples to their children and provide their needs.
✧ Communities should strive to live peacefully with one another and should be vigilant of strangers in their localities to check the excesses of unwanted intruders and criminals.
✧ Civil societies should play the roles of critic, catalyst and advocate for peace, raising public awareness/consciousness on the disastrous effects of insecurity.
✧ Security tips on safety and defence tactics be included in the students curriculum in order to mitigate foreseeable occurrences in line with best global security challenges

Medium term action plan

✧ Training and retraining of security officers on emerging security issues

✧ Installation of security lights to view and monitor movement of people in and around institution premises
✧ Students to be educated on safe security tips to protect them against intruders.
✧ Collaborate with NGOs, Civil societies so as play the roles of critic, catalyst and advocate for peace, raising public awareness/consciousness on the disastrous effects of insecurity.

Long term action plan

✧ Installation of computer based closed circuit television cameras (CCTV) in and around the institution to monitor and clampdown unwanted visitors
✧ Provision of information gadgets to communicate in emergency situation
✧ Social security insurance provided to the security officers to enhance job satisfaction and productivity
✧ Exit/escape route should be included in architectural plan of Infrastructures in order to mitigate the effect of attack or damage.
✧ Management of the institution should collaborate with all security agencies in other to design an architectural framework for security surveillance of aerial and land environs around schools.

Conclusion

So far, the treats to security situation in Zamfara state deductively have its implications for sustainable educational development in institutions of higher learning. Sources of security lapse are inadequate security network in terms of personnel and facilities.

Security threats hinders academic performance of students in all trajectory of their learning experience as it lowers the admission rate of applicants, it also affect students retention rate as most students are likely to voluntarily withdraw from training due to threat to life and also reduce rate of graduants with the cumulative effects on shortage manpower towards attaining universal health care delivery system.

For the full potentials of the state to be directed towards achieving sustainable educational development goals, in Healthcare, adequate measures be put in place by Government and stakeholders to curtail insecurity in our health training institutions.

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