

Insecurity and Deprivation Impeding Citizens Education and Sustainable Development in Nigeria: The Psychosocial Factors Imperative

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Abstract. Education is recognized the world over as a veritable tool for human capacity development. Nigeria shares in this idea hence a reasonable amount of money is budgeted annually for education sector, citizens also enroll in schools for acquisition of knowledge and skills for effective functioning in society. Unfortunately, Nigeria in recent years have been experiencing cases of insecurity and deprivation which impede citizens' education. The paper discusses insecurity and deprivation as impediments to citizens' education and sustainable development; and the psychosocial factors imperative. It was recommended among other things that psychosocial factors such as motivation, social interaction skills and environmental support should be emphasized; National Orientation Agency should foster the right types of attitude and values on students through enlightenment campaigns the government should rise up to the challenge of protecting lives and property; social security such as monthly allowances, bursaries, scholarships etc should be provided; professional guidance counsellors should be employed to counsel students.

Keywords: Inequality, deprivation, citizens, students, education

1. Introduction

Education is highly prized not only in Nigeria but globally. It is on this premise that the Federal Republic of Nigeria (2004:4) states that “education in Nigeria is an instrument ‘par excellence’ for effecting national development”. Education is seen as a vehicle for development because it illuminates the minds of those who have acquired it. Education eliminates ignorance and keeps people informed. It is also a means of eliminating or reducing poverty because the

educated persons acquire skills with which to function effectively in the society. No wonder in 1990, Education for All (EFA) by the year 2000 was declared in a World Conference on Education for All at Jomtien, Thailand (Obanya, 2002:5). Consistent with the forgoing, the launching is an eloquent global recognition of education as a pivot on which the citizens and human societies develop.

It is therefore not surprising that each country invest huge amount of their resources on education. It is also not surprising that in some countries, education takes lion share of their annual budget. The budgetary allocations to the education sector are demonstrations of the acknowledgement of the importance of education. Consequently, citizens enroll in schools and other educational programmes. Citizens enroll in schools in order to acquire knowledge and skills which of cause is a means to an end.

Unfortunately, the much cherished citizens education is impeded by insecurity and deprivation. Insecurity is prevalent as exemplified by insurgency, cult related activities and herdsman-farmers clash. Due to insurgencies and farmers-herdsman clash, some parents die leaving the children as orphans. These children are supposed to be sponsored in schools by their dead parents. Also some communities are razed resulting in the occupation of school premises as emergency refugee camps. These Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) who occupy school premises for weeks, months or years hamper academic programmes in such areas. Apart from that, citizens are traumatized as a result of the activities of the insurgents, cultists and herdsman-farmers clash because a lot are killed, maimed and houses as well as properties are destroyed before their eyes. More so, deprivation which is exemplified in poverty is

also impeding citizens' education. This situation is worrisome and needs solution. This is why this paper not only defined some concepts such as education, deprivation, sustainable development and psychosocial factors but also insecurity and deprivation as impediments to citizen's education as well as the psychosocial factor imperative.

2. Meaning of Deprivation

Deprivation is derived from the word or verb deprive which means to prevent something or somebody from either gaining access to something, somewhere or prevent somebody from doing something important. Deprivation is a noun form of deprive. According to Hornby (2000:313) deprivation is "the fact of not having something that you need, like enough food, money or a home; the process that causes this".

On another perspective, Aberrombie, Hill and Turner (2000:92) posit that "sociological analysis defines deprivation broadly as inequality of access to social goods. It includes poverty and wider forms of disadvantage". In the same vein, Townsend (1979) posits that relative deprivation should be thought of in terms of the resources available to individuals and households and the styles of living that govern how these resources are used". For Townsend, poverty can be defined objectively and applied consistently only in terms of the concept of relative deprivation.

3. Education as a Concept

The concept of education has been viewed by various people or scholars in different ways. It is important to remark that each of the definitions of education is quite important and meaningful. For instance, education has been viewed from three dimensions of process, product and discipline. As a process, education deals with the transmission, preservation, development, and advancement of the people's culture; As a product, education refers to the outcome from the process of education; And as a discipline, education is seen as a body of knowledge such as what are those things to be taught and learn Why is it worthy to be taught? What ways should it be taught? What group or category of people should it be taught? (Ukeje, 1979). Also Yolaye cited in Akpomedaye (2010:122) defined education as a tool for elimination of ignorance, poverty and disease". Meanwhile Fafunwa (1974) defined education as the totality of the process through which an individual acquire abilities, skills including other products that are useful to him and society.

Furthermore, Onwuka cited in Gomor and Danjuma (2014:131) looks at education as "a corner stone of building understanding among peoples, cultures and civilizations and helping to achieve peace and development in the global level".

4. Sustainable Development as a Concept

The term sustainable refers to continuity. It refers to an idea or anything that can continue or be continued for a long time.

Sustainable development therefore may be viewed as development in its entirety that can continue or be continued for a long time to keep humanity improved and happy. According to the United Nations cited in (Ojie, 2005:212) sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs". Expatiating on the above, Ajie (2005:212 – 213) posits that "sustainable development is a development process that adequately articulates and meets the present needs of the people and also projects to the future to ensure that the needs of posterity are unhindered". In the same vein, Oghiagbephan (2017:45) views sustainable development as "the provision of better qualities of life through good governance now and for the generations to come".

5. Meaning of Psychosocial Factors

The term psychosocial connotes two concepts – 'psychological' and 'social'. Psychological refers to the individual person while social refers to the environment. Social factors comprise general factors at the level of human society concerned with social structure and social processes that impinge on the individual. Psychological factors include individual-level processes and meanings that influence mental states. Psychological factors have such examples as social control, loneliness, motivation, self-regulation, social status, social disruption, stress, school environment etc (Oladipo, 2016).

Meanwhile in current education, psychosocial factors (PSFs) such as motivation, social interaction skills and environmental support have been accepted as being salient for academic success (Clouder, Dicskra, Berrocal, Heys, Lantieri & Paschen, 2008). According to Oladipo (2016:18) psychosocial factors can be simply defined as "social conditions influencing individual psychological factors and vice versa. It is interaction between social (environment) and psychological (individual) factors".

6. Insecurity and Deprivation as Impediment to Citizens' Education and Sustainable Development in Nigeria

Every action has certain consequences. Whenever acts of insecurity occur, such as Boko Haram attack, farmers – herdsman clash or cult related activities, there is bound to be grave consequences. Such consequences could be on education of the citizens as well as sustainable development. In support of the above assertion, Nanmwa (2013) reported that “*a week after the deadly attack on gunmen suspected to be Fulani herdsman in three villages of Bolgan, Karkashi and Magama in Langtang South Local Government Area of Plateau State, the death toll has risen to 74 ...Nigerian pilot checks revealed that over 7,000 people have been confirmed displaced and are taking refuge in several public schools especially at IGEA pilot Central Primary School*”. (Mabudi: 1-2).

The excerpt above clearly stated or revealed that several public schools were turned refugee camps which means or implies that academic activities were hampered during those weeks or months. Buttressing further on how insurgency had affected citizens' education and other activities, Bornu Elders Forum led by Shettima Ali Monguno have appealed to the Jama' atu Ahlus Sunnah Lid da' wanti Wal Jihad to ponder on the happenings in the state as residents have been subjected to harrowing and dehumanizing conditions. The Bornu Elders Forum according to Ola (2012) stated that:

The people cannot perform the five obligatory prayers in congregation in Mosques near their houses or perform Friday prayers in several mosques in the city. We no longer practice our religion as desired. Our markets and other places of businesses are no more. Many people can no longer access schools. All the things we held dear as a people – our tradition, culture and pride are gone (p.11)

The above excerpt clearly revealed that insecurity brought about by the activities of insurgents is an impediment to citizens' education. The appeal of the Bornu Elders Forum to the jihadists is an indication that important sectors of the society are affected. When schools can no longer be accessed by many pupils and students as stated by the Elders Forum, then the country is losing something very great. It is important to note that learning also takes place in both mosques and churches. Religion teaches a lot and when insecurity does not give citizens the freedom to attend mosques and churches to learn about their creator and how to relate with fellow humans then development is hindered. In churches and mosques, morality is taught. Apart from the

teaching, fellow Muslims and Christians ensure that members of their religion observe the doctrines taught. This had helped in the times past to mould characters. In fact, the mosques and churches are agents of social control in the society. Unfortunately, insecurity had made it difficult for people to worship their God the way they desire hence the education received in worship centres are no longer accessible in some areas especially the North East of Nigeria.

Insurgents have started to attack government institutions and establishments irrespective of how important and formidable such institutions are. Reporting Boko Haram attack of military formations, police posts and the International Airport in Bornu State on 2nd December, 2013, a police source according to Olanrewaju (2013) informed that:

The insurgents were dressed in Air Force camouflage, adding that they were armed with sophisticated weapons including Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs). They operated till about 8am and it was the military fighter jet deployed from Yola, Adamawa State that dislodged them right in front of the Air Force base ... schools, markets and other commercial institutions that had earlier in the day opened were compelled to shut down as the government imposed a 24 hours curfew on the metropolis (p.5).

The excerpt again reveals that there was a heavy bombardment by the insurgents which is capable of causing emotional instability. People become traumatized and their education is affected as a result. Besides, when schools and other commercial institutions that had earlier in the day opened were compelled to shut down as government imposed a 24 hour curfew, the academic calendar is affected at the detriment of the citizenry (pupils and students). This is because before normalcy returns, it sometimes takes some weeks or months. The joy and peace of mind necessary for improved academic performance is now lacking. People live in terror all through the year. No wonder Monguno reported in Ola (2012:11) stated that “*thousands of lives have been lost, many maimed or traumatized while several others have been displaced due to the sect's insurgence and the soldiers counter-attacks in the state. The people totally became desolate as refugees in their own land*”. The condition people are subjected to is not education friendly and it is generally pathetic.

In support of the above, a year two senior student of the Government Girls Science Technical College, Dapchi, Rakiya Adamu, has said she will not return to the school, even after Boko Haram returned 105 abducted students. On 19th February, 2018, Boko

Haram insurgents struck the school and kidnapped dozens of the students but Rakiya luckily escaped. She later shared her horrific experience. Succinctly, she said “I will not go back to Dapchi again” (Adamu, 2018:12). Worse still, according to Olanrewaju, Abare, Itua, Orji and Paulinus (2018:8), “two of the girls abducted by Boko Haram at the Government Girls Science Technical College (GGSTC) Dapchi, Yobe State, On Monday have been reported dead in a failed rescue operation. Their bodies were recovered on Wednesday by the Nigerian military”.

Still on insecurity, gunmen suspected to be members of a notorious cult group on 12th July, 2017 shot dead the vice principal of Community Secondary School Nkek in Ukanafun Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State. The vice principal, Mr. Sunday Brownson Essien was shot at the school premises which caused pandemonium in the school as students and staff scampered for safety (Effiong 2017:4). Such occurrence or action in the school no doubt must have an impact on the school especially among the students. After such experience, some students might withdraw from attending such school and stop going any other school. This is because people react to actions in various ways.

Closely related to the above is a 2010 research which shows that Bauchi State accounts for 578, 746 out-of-school children. Meanwhile experts argue that this figure may have increased due to insurgency. It is said that in most communities where education is under severe threat there is no existing model for schools to borrow from on how to stay safe and secured. Most communities are incapable of withstanding challenges confronting the education of their children as well as the community at large (Orude, 2016:21 & 27).

The spate of insecurity had led the Nigerian President, Muhammadu Buhari to approve \$1bn for arms purchase. Emmanuel (2018) reports that: *President Muhammadu Buhari yesterday approved the release of \$1billion (₦360 billion) for the procurement of military equipment to fight the Boko Haram insurgency and other security crisis in the country. The approval was given at a meeting between the President and security chiefs at the Aso Rock Villa, Abuja yesterday (p.6).*

Ordinarily, this huge amount of money could have been used for educational development such as provision of infrastructures and improvement in the condition of service for staff in the education sector. It could also be used for the education of the orphans

and other less privileged in the society. Unfortunately such money is approved for arms procurement rather than meaningful development. Insecurity obviously is an impediment to citizens education and sustainable development in Nigeria. This assertion is factual as acts of terrorism has remained unabated. Huge amount of national resources is spent on security yet the impact is not felt. For instance on the 5th of December, 2016, gunmen stormed Osun State College of Technology Esa-Oke. They shot sporadically causing panic in the school as both students and staff ran for safety. Eventually, a staff was killed and 5 other staff of the college were kidnapped. (Killete, Omolehin, & Adeyi 2018:4).

Having discussed insecurity as a factor impeding education and sustainable development, it is also pertinent to discuss deprivation as another factor impeding education of citizens and sustainable development in Nigeria. When deprivation is viewed as inequality of access to social goods, it means that if some persons are not privileged to get or attain certain heights, they are deprived. Deprivation in this wise is highly related to poverty. The fact that sometimes one who intends to study up to Doctorial (Ph.D) degree stops at Bachelors’ degree not because he is not coping academically but because he is not able to meet up the financial requirement is the issue. Giving credence to the above, Ojukwu (2017) asserts that:

With the nexus between poverty and early education, according to research, it is evident that impoverished persons often lack access to quality education and its multiple benefits. Other issues that impact negatively on school enrolment include lack of safe schools, malnutrition, terrorism, poor learning facilities and insufficient trained teachers (p.17).

The above excerpt pinpoints poverty as a major cause of lack of access to quality education. It further specified malnutrition and poor learning facilities which put together boils down to deprivation. This further means that low enrolment or increasing rate of out-of-school children are direct consequences of deprivations.

In this regard, Townscend cited in Haralambos, Holborn, Chapman and Moore (2013:235) argues that “poverty prevents participation in social activities that are considered normal, such as visiting friends or relatives, having birthday parties for children and going on holiday... individuals suffer deprivation if they cannot afford even the cheapest form of such activities”. It therefore stands to reason that poverty can deprive one from enrolling in school. It can also deprive one from providing certain school

requirements such as payment for class excursion trip, fees for practical aspect of courses etc. It is worth remarking that whatever that negatively affects acquisition of education (knowledge and skills) invariably affects sustainable development.

7. Psychosocial Factors Imperative to Ensure Nigerian Citizens Education

It is quite understandable that insecurity and deprivation implies citizens education. It is also factual that factors that there are factors that enhance education inspite of the situation of insecurity and deprivation. In line with the forgoing, Oladipo (2016:18) posits “that in contemporary education, psychosocial factors (PSFs) such as motivation, social interaction skills, and environmental support have been widely acknowledged as important for academic success”. Discussion would be made on each of these psychosocial factors to unravel how it can help citizens become or complete their education in the face of impeding factors like insecurity and deprivation.

Motivation as one of the psychosocial factors refers to what propels someone into doing certain things. According to Davidoff (1981:211) motivation is “the arousal of an individual towards a certain stimulus and such arousal directs and maintains the behaviour of the individual towards achieving the goals”. In the same vein, Wittig and Williams (1984:357) posit that motivation “is a set of one or more conditions which activate, turn on behaviour, direct the behaviour toward some goals, and maintain behaviour until the goal is reached”. The two definitions above show that motivation is a very powerful factor. However, it relies much on the extent to which one understands the value of the goal he or she intends to achieve. If an individual understands the value of education, he goes all out to acquire it. He sees that education is precious and one who has acquired it has achieved something that is worth-while. The argument here is that in spite of insecurity and deprivation as factors impeding education of citizens, the students who are knowledgeable of the value of education would persevere. They would be so enthusiastic that they become unstoppable.

The explanations above are in line with two schools of thought that explicate the concept of motivation. The mechanistic school views that motivation is innate and it has to be expressed towards events or situations automatically. Whereas the cognitive or rationalistic school holds that individuals are motivated not because motivation is innate, but because individuals can use their cognitive processes

or rationality to direct themselves in whatever activities they wish. This means that individuals get aroused when they want depending on the value intrinsic or extrinsic held for the particular situation or event (Nwankwo, 1996). Motivation is a psychological asset common to mankind and its application or expression in acquisition of education follows either the mechanistic school of thought or the rationalistic school of thought. To this end, motivation as a psychosocial factor can enhance acquisition of education irrespective of conditions of deprivation.

Next is the social interaction skills. According to Macionis (1994:76) social interaction is “the process by which people act and react in relation to other. We interact, moreover, according to particular social guidelines”. This means that society has put in place social structure which guides peoples lifestyle. The value one places on education ordinarily ought to reflect the societal value on education. If that is done, then the individual member of the society would leave no stone unturned to acquire education which is more or less socialization. No wonder Macionis (1994:76) posits that “our humanity only flowers in social interaction, producing distinct personalities as people blend their unique qualities with the values and norms of the larger culture”. Knowledge of social interaction skills encompasses knowing social structure, status and role. If one is conversant with the social structure guiding everyday life, it means that the individual is aware of his being part of a system in spite of the fact that we still emphasize individuality. In addition to the above, status is another component of social interaction. Status is a recognized social position that an individual occupies. Every status involves various rights, duties and expectation (Macionis, 1994:76). The rights of citizens include right to education, life etc. Education is one of the media or means of acquiring a status especially the achieved status. There is emphasis on achieved status in contrast to ascribed status because the latter is received at birth or involuntarily by very few persons while the former is received through hard work. Therefore one who is conscious of acquiring a status would persevere in things of education irrespective of the odds. Another important component of social interaction is role. Role refers to normative patterns of behaviour for those holding a particular status. Role is relational as it organizes our behaviour toward some other person. For instance, the student role involves responsibilities to his teachers as well as his fellow students. Moreover, the role of the student is to devote much time to reading and studying so as to perform well academically. The interest to perform well in academics would spur

curiosity for education irrespective of the prevailing situation.

Lastly among the psychosocial factors that have been widely acknowledged as being important for academic success is environmental support. Environmental support refers to conduciveness of both the home and school environment for learning. The availability of good reading table at home, lighting, computer, books etc can enhance academic consciousness and performance. In the same vein, the availability of libraries, qualified teachers, good classrooms etc in the school also help the child to be education conscious. Moreover, if provisions are made such as bursaries, scholarships and other incentives, citizens would be certain of their education. In support of the above assertion that psychosocial factors also impact on school completion, Rumberger and Lim (as cited in Oladipo, 2016), succinctly remarked that “*reviewed studies of dropouts conducted over the past 25years and found that PSFs such as attitude and characteristics of family and school personnel, along with prior academic achievement and learning behaviours, can differentiate between students who graduate and those who drop out of high school*” (p. 19).

8. Conclusion

Insecurity is the situation in some parts of Nigeria as exemplified by the activities of insurgency, farmers-herdsmen clash etc with its attendant consequences. Pupils and students are traumatized and some are made to become orphans. Often school premises are occupied by those whose houses were razed and this affects education of the citizens. Besides, deprivation is also impeding citizens education as many can neither afford the school requirements nor feed adequately. All these have implications on education and sustainable development. Psychosocial factors can serve as antidote to the effects of insecurity and deprivation on citizens’ education.

9. Recommendations

In order to ensure that citizens’ education and sustainable development is not impeded by insecurity and deprivation, the following recommendations were made:

- Motivation as a psychological asset should be generated by students themselves by using their rationality to persevere in educational pursuit even in the face of deprivation.

- The National Orientation Agency should embark on public enlightenment programmes to foster on the right type of attitudes and values which would help students to remain focused on their academic career.
- The school child should be innately and rationally motivated
- The government should ensure that the lives of human beings as well as property are protected.
- The government should ensure the provision of social securities such as bursaries, scholarships, orphanages, free education schemes etc.
- Professional guidance counselors should be employed to counsel students.

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