



Insecurity and University Education in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper assessed the impact of insecurity on university education in Nigeria. The paper employed secondary data that were collected from both print and online publications. The paper established that insecurities have affected investment in universities and led to an unstable academic calendar and the deaths of academic staff, students, and researchers. The paper also discovered that insecurities have affected programs of universities, which include teaching, research, and community service programs. Based on these findings, the paper recommends that the government should immediately address all issues breeding insecurities in Nigeria. The government should increase investment in the security sector. The government should employ more security personnel and deploy artificial intelligence to universities for effective management of securities in the universities across Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

University education is an organised education system with a focus on teaching, research, and community service implementation. University education is an education for national development and manpower production. University education is the education after the secondary school education (Ogunode & Ahmed, 2022). According to the NPE (FRN, 2004), university education is expected to make an optimum contribution to national development through the intensification and diversification of its programs for the development of high-level human resources within the context of the needs of the nation; make professional course contents to reflect Nigeria's national requirements; make all students part of the general program of all-round improvement; and to offer general study courses such as history of ideas, philosophy of knowledge, and nationalism.

Universities are expected to encourage and disseminate their research results to both government and industry. Universities are expected to inculcate community spirit in their students through projects and action research. They are expected to ensure that faculty in their professional fields have relevant industrial and specialised experience. However, the NPE states that a huge percentage of funding for university education shall be devoted to science and technology (FRN, 2004; Ololube, 2016).

Universities education in Nigeria appear to be threatened by insecurity problems that are facing Nigeria as a country. Ojukwu, Nwanma (2015); Olusola (2021); Mustapha (2019) noted that school insecurity is becoming an alarming challenge sweeping across the country. Parents and guardians are concerned about their children's and wards' protection in the face of terrorists' attacks in Nigeria, particularly in the northern part. Terrorist groups known as Boko Haram and Bandits are on the rampage, attacking, kidnapping, and bombing public places, including schools. They kidnap adults, women, rich and average citizens, girls, schoolchildren, and teachers (Yohana, Joel, Ahmad & Saudia, 2023). All forms of school insecurity abound. Some of them include kidnappings, violent attacks, and cultism. Kidnapping is now the order of the day in Nigeria (Uzochukwu, 2015). It is important to examine the impact of insecurity on university education in Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Insecurity

The conception of insecurity connotes the state or a situation where lives and properties are vulnerable and are left at the mercy of terrorists, criminals, or rebels. It is the opposite of security, which means that an individual(s) is monetarily, emotionally, mentally, and substantially secured (Ayeni & Beji, 2018). Insecurity, a household word in many parts of Nigeria, has escalated to a worrisome dimension in the last decade. Insecurity could be summarised as a breach of peace and security, whether historical, religious, ethno-regional, civil, social, economic, or political, that contributes to frequent conflicts leading to nation-wide destruction of lives and properties (Eduok, Bassey, & Danson, 2023). Therefore, the struggle over resources or status is a conflict that leads to insecurity (Ezirim, Ayeni, Sani, & Uzoigwe, 2020). The danger of insecurity has

a detrimental impact on the operations of educators and students (Ogunode et al., 2021). It is based on the prevalence of insecurity that scholars have argued that insecurity is a social challenge that demands the involvement of stakeholders like security institutions, political institutions, and tertiary institutions (Ogunode, Ayeni, & Olorundare, 2024).

The state of being vulnerable to risk, harm, nervousness, and a sense of unease is known as insecurity (Paul 2015). Insecurity is a state of not being secured. Absence of peace leads to insecurity, and without security of human beings, sustainable development of society is not possible (Abamara et al. 2015). Negative emotions such as worry, fear, nervousness, and scepticism are examples of insecurity (Hassan, 2014).

The existence of environmental force that denies one peace of mind, preventing one's effective functioning in society or school, and danger or threat to life refers to insecurity. Insecurity in Nigeria has been very often attributed to corruption, bad leadership, poverty, gross discrimination/marginalisation, lack of good will, porous borders, ethnic/boundary disputes, massive unemployment, and religious wars against other faiths (Omoyibo & Akpomera 2013). Insecurity is caused by corruption, poor leadership, inequality, and illiteracy (Muhammed & Ayeni, 2018). Security of lives and properties remains the government's responsibility as stipulated in the Nigerian Constitution 1999 (Out, 2019). Weak safety measures, corruption, unemployment, weak borders, hunger, radicalism in religion, and other issues are examples of what makes a society insecure (Osaat & Peter, 2021).

Insecurity has affected both public and private institutions. Education institutions appear mostly affected. Calistar (2015) observed that insecurity is seen as a chronic threat to human life, territories, states, religious beliefs, properties, and institutions, amongst others. Ndubuisi and Theresa (2019) opined that insecurity is a critical issue that has hampered industrialisation and sustainable development in Nigeria in particular and the world at large. Nigeria, which is perceived as the giant of Africa, has witnessed unprecedented incidences of insecurity ranging from the activities of Fulani herdsmen, Boko Haram insurgencies, armed robbery attacks, kidnapping, political and religious crises, murder, destruction of oil facilities by Niger Delta militants, child abduction, and trafficking, amongst others.

Impact of Insecurity on University Education

There are many investigations on the impact of insecurities on university education in Nigeria. Insecurities have affected the academic calendar at the various universities. The universities in Nigeria often disclose down due to the insecurities problems across the country. The Tribune (2021) revealed that almost 4,000 free elementary schools and over 4,000 public secondary schools in North-West Nigeria had been closed by the government, and some tertiary institutions were among the closed-down schools. According to him, over 300,000 to 400,000 students and pupils are at home after the incidence of Chibok school students' kidnapping without considering the effects on the internal administration of the school, especially the learners. Universities closure in

Nigeria has implications for students and lecturers. Chinelo (2022); Shedrack (2019) noted that the implication of school closure on students is that it will affect the quality of education. The scheme of works and syllables meant to be covered are not covered due to the insecurity and school closure. Some schools are shut down as a result of security challenges, and this affects the academic calendar, students' research work, and graduation. On the staff of universities, insecurities have affected their job performance and hampered community services development, according to Otu (2019).

Insecurity in Nigeria has also affected the manpower strength in the universities in Nigeria and, by extension, led to low access to education. This low level of entrance to education has brought about inadequate involvement in the decision-making of the government (Ayeni, 2017). Akor, Musa, and Ogonode (2021) reported that many academic staff and researchers in the universities across the country have been kidnapped, while many have been killed. Also, Nejo (2021) noted that the Academic Staff Union of Secondary Schools has called for a lasting solution to the insecurity across the country, particularly the incessant attacks on schools leading to the killing and kidnapping of teachers and students for ransom, as well as the spate of assaults on teachers.

The insecurity in Nigeria has also affected the students in the universities. Omoyibo and Akpomera (2013) reported that many students have been killed, displaced, and others kidnapped. Recently, Lawal (2024) reported that no fewer than 11 university students were killed and 22 others kidnapped in the last three months in Nigeria. He disclosed that the affected students were victims of different violent incidents, including robbery attacks, which occurred across Nigerian universities over the past three months. Aljazeera.com (2021) and Thecable (2023) Ogunode, Jegede, Adah, Audu, and Ajape (2020); Ogunode, and Ade (2023) indicated that insecurity has displaced many students and children and this has affected their learning. Iyabo (2018) noted that Nigerian insecurity has demonstrated that instability not only hinders learning but also leads to deterioration of educational infrastructure as well as low student enrolment. In Nigeria, 10.5 million children between the ages of 5 and 14 do not attend school, according to UNICEF. Furthermore, Northern Nigeria has the lowest net enrolment rate of any region in Nigeria (around 60%).

Insecurity in Nigeria has affected the university programs. Kareem (2021); Ogunode and Kolo (2021); Ogunode and Ukozor (2022) indicated that the university's programs include teaching, research, and community service. Obilo, Oparah, and Ajeka (2022) disclosed that insecurities have hampered implementation of curriculum in the universities. Insecurities also militated against the implementation of research programs and Ohiare-Udebu and Sarafadeen (2021); Ogunode (2023); Ogunode, Peter, and Ayoko (2023) asserted that insecurities prevented effective delivery of community services. Generally, Omoyibo and Akpomera (2013); Ishaq et al. (2019); Ogunode (2021); and Isactamson (2022) findings are in line with this finding for asserting that insecurity challenges hindered effective and efficient schooling, thereby

affecting the curriculum delivery of education; it therefore calls for urgent attention for its remedy.

Insecurity has affected budgetary allocation and investment in university education in Nigeria. For instance, Ogunode, Umeora, and Olatunde-Aiyedun (2022); Ogunode, and Chijindu (2022) revealed that insecurities challenges have affected investment in tertiary education, which includes university education. They observed insecurities in Nigeria are consuming a lot of government budget. Every year there is an increment in the budgetary allocation to security agencies, and this may affect budgets for other sectors of the economy like education, energy, and health. For example, the International Centre for Investigative Reporting (2024) disclosed that from 2019 and 2023, N7.71 trillion was released to these seven unit security institutions, and such funds keep increasing. The table below showed the allocation.

Between 2019 and 2023, N7.71 trillion was released to these seven units (Financialnigeria.com 2020).

MDA	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
NIGERIAN ARMY	N228.42 billion	N463.41 billion	N510.64 billion	N580.59 billion	N665.12 billion
NSCDC	N89.17 billion	N91.48 billion	N91.36 billion	N110.01 billion	N117.72 billion
MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (MOD HQTRS)	N27.37 billion	N22.16 billion	N21.52 billion	N21.01 billion	N62.69 billion
NIGERIAN NAVY	N101.39 billion	N130.81 billion	N136.06 billion	N173.03 billion	N189.79 billion
NIGERIAN AIRFORCE	N114.84 billion	N136.42 billion	N140.13 billion	N184.78 billion	N200.42 billion
DEFENCE HEADQUARTERS	N5.21 billion	N44.42 billion	N35.36 billion	N80.94 billion	N86.11 billion
POLICE FORMATION & COMMAND HQTRS	366,133,777,795	-	-	-	-
MINISTRY OF POLICE AFFAIRS	-	N409.39 billion	N455.13 billion	N783.86 billion	N838.06 billion

Total	N932.53 billion	N1.30 trillion	N1.39 trillion	N1.93 trillion	N2.16 trillion
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(Note: The police command became a ministry in 2020, Financialnigeria.com 2020).

Analysis also indicated that over the past five years, the allocation of the Army increased by 191.19 percent, NSCDS rose by 32 percent, and the Air Force budget jumped by 74.53 percent. Also, the budget for the Navy increased by 87.19 percent, the Defence headquarters budget rose by 1550.5 percent, and the Ministry of Defence budget jumped by 129.1 percent. Meanwhile, the Police Command had a budget of N366.13 billion in 2019, after which it became a ministry in 2020. Between 2020 and 2023, the ministry's budget increased by 104.7 percent. In 2024, the government increased the allocation to 11 security agencies and ministries by seven percent. Insecurity is preventing investment in education (James, 2024). The allocation to the security institutions may affect spending on education, especially the universities education in Nigeria (Ogunode, Attah, & Ebute 2023). To address the insecurity that is affecting the education sector, scholars have called on government at both the federal and state levels to ensure adequate funding, enhance effective monitoring, and involve critical stakeholders in the establishment of community and city policing for the Safe School Initiative Programme (Ogunode, Ayeni, & Daniel, 2024, p. 118). Failure by the government to do the above might result in negative consequences (Ayeni & Nwaorgu, 2018; Joseph, Cinjel, & Ayeni, 2017).

FINDINGS

The paper discovered that insecurity in Nigeria has affected university development. Specifically, insecurity has affected investment in university education, led to an unstable academic calendar, and led to the deaths of academic staff, researchers, and students. The insecurities have also affected the implementation of university programs like teaching, research, and community service.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper examined the impact of insecurity on university education in Nigeria. The paper revealed that insecurities have affected investment in universities, led to an unstable academic calendar, and caused the deaths of academic staff, students, and researchers. The paper also discovered that insecurities affected the programs of universities, which include teaching, research, and community service.

Based on these findings, the paper recommends that the government should immediately address all issues breeding insecurities in Nigeria. The government should increase investment in the security sector. The government should employ more security personnel and deploy artificial intelligence to universities for effective management of securities in the universities across Nigeria.

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