



Management of Security Challenges in Nigerian Universities: The Role of School Administrator

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Abstract

The study examined ways of management of security challenges in federal universities in North East Nigeria. The design of the study is descriptive survey research design. Two research questions and two null hypotheses guided the study. Data were collected from 35 respondents. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire of 24 items. The instrument was subjected to face validation by three experts, two from department of educational administration and planning and one from department of measurement and evaluation all from university of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha to get the reliability coefficient of 0.81. Using mean and standard deviation, the research questions were answered, while the hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics at .05 level of significance. The findings revealed various forms of security challenges in federal universities in North East Nigeria to include: secret cult activities; students' unrest; kidnapping; boko haram crisis among others. The findings also identified strategies for managing the challenges. The study recommended that government, school administrators and individuals should provide adequate fund, open and free flow of information to be established among universities and their host communities for effective management of security challenges in the universities in Nigeria.

Key words: Management, Security, Insecurity, Security challenges, School Administrator.

Introduction

Security is defined as freedom from danger, intimidation, apprehension, the feeling or assurance of safety, peace of mind or absence of fear, and the certainty or assurance of the good life or welfare (Noam, 2018). This constitutes one of the fundamental

objectives and indeed the foremost responsibility of every government and school administrators. 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 Nigerians) shall be the primary purpose of

government” (Section 14 (2) (b) of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999). Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity in schools and the society at large. No wonder national security has become an issue for government. Security is a first order or necessary precondition for the development of human beings and production of manpower needs in schools for the development of the society.

The establishment of university is a response to the need to produce the needed high level manpower for enhanced development (Isaac, Ajayi & Haastrup 2014). The role of universities in providing the required stock of high level manpower for development was recognized by the Ashby commission’s reports of 1960. In consonance with this, Odekunle (2001) and Nwagboso (2012) posit that universities educate future leaders and develop the high - level technical capacities that underpin economic growth and development. Besides, Mgbekem (2004) reiterates that university education prepares people through teaching and learning for the acquisition of knowledge and skills for job performance in civil service, business organizations, private enterprises and corporations.

University education in Nigeria today has largely been a mixed fortune. It is no understatement to

say that the ability of universities to act as engines of growth and development is being threatened, more than ever before, by the problem of security. Kolawole (2011) laments that Nigeria has never experienced the type of security problem it is presently facing and does not seem to be in any position to address it. The author remarks that Nigerians are living in a state of utter apprehension characterized by insecurity of lives and property. Insecurity on universities means a situation whereby academic staff, non academic staff, students and all other stakeholders in the university system are unsafe and in a state of peril.

Nigerian university campuses have long been facing security challenges before the enthronement of the democratic government in 1999. However, the spate since the enthronement of the democratic dispensation is very alarming and took various forms (Isaac, Ajayi & Haastrup, 2014). They went further to explain that the peace on campuses is adversely affected whenever there is any form of security challenge which invariably affects the ways the universities are being administered. According to them, the forms of security challenges on campuses in Nigeria include: secret cult activities, militant student unionism, kidnapping and boko haram crisis. Addressing the issue of security challenges in Nigerian universities, Daniel (2018) asserts that

maintenance of on-campus security has been a major challenge which has received below par attention. He explained that urgent attention should be given to management of security challenges on campuses using different strategies by the government and school administrators. Such measures according to him, should include; training of security men towards cerebral disposition (intelligence gathering, decency and politeness in approach yet very firm) and procurement of patrol van. In support of the above assertion Ahamefula (2017), Nwamah (2018) and Noam (2018) suggested that school administrators should engage in different strategies for adequate management of security challenges on Nigerian campuses. Universities are established for the development of individual and the entire Nigerian society but this important task is becoming practically impossible in universities in North East Nigeria due to security challenges. It is in light of this background that the present study examined the strategies school administrator should adopt in managing security challenges in Nigerian universities.

Statement of the Problem

University education is the education received after secondary school education in Nigeria. It is highly valued as it is a place where future leaders and technical man power are developed for economic

growth and development of Nigerian society. University education prepares people through teaching and learning for acquisition of knowledge and skills for job performance in civil service, business organizations, private enterprises and corporations as well as individual enterprises. Unfortunately today university education in Nigeria has largely been of a mixed fortune. It is observable that the ability of universities to act as strong tools for growth and development is being threatened, more than ever before, by the problem of insecurity.

The persistent security challenges have affected academic works, destroyed entrepreneurial training centers, thereby killing dreams and ideas of successful ventures. It also disrupts job creation as people are discouraged from establishing business venture in some areas of the country thus rendering many graduates idle and forcing them to resort to crimes as means of generating income. It is against this background that the study sought to determine ways of managing security challenges in Nigerian universities

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine ways of managing security challenges in Nigerian universities in North East, Nigeria. The study is delimited to management of security challenges

in federal universities in North East Nigeria. Specifically the study sought to:

1. examine various forms of security challenges in federal universities in North East, Nigeria,
2. determine the strategies school administrators should adopt in managing security challenges in federal universities in North East, Nigeria.

Research Questions

Two research questions were formulated to guide the study.

1. What are the various forms of security challenges in Nigerian universities in North – East Nigeria?
2. What are the strategies school administrators should adopt in managing security challenges

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Nworgu (2015) described this design as one in which a group of people or items are studied by collecting and analyzing data from only a few people or items considered to be a representative of the entire group without any form of manipulation by the researcher. This design is considered suitable for this study because pre-existing phenomenon which the researcher cannot

in Nigerian universities in North East, Nigeria?

Hypotheses

Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at an alpha level of .05 to guide the study.

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the vice chancellors and heads of departments on the various forms of security challenges in Nigerian universities in North East, Nigeria
2. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the vice chancellors and heads of departments on the strategies university administrators should adopt in managing security challenges in Nigerian universities in North East Nigeria

control or manipulate in any way is studied. It was carried out in seven federal universities in North Eastern Nigeria which comprises seven states, namely: Gombe, Bauchi,, Taraba, Adamawa, Borno, Yobe and Sokoto States. Using purposive sampling technique the researchers selected five federal conventional universities out of the seven in the study area. Conventional universities are those universities that offer all the courses. They are not special

universities for special courses like Agriculture or poly techniques. The choice of this area was based on the fact that universities in the area are faced with numerous security challenges and therefore would value a study on management of security challenges in Nigerian universities. The population of the study comprised 35 respondents which include 5 university Vice chancellors and 30 heads of department in the faculty of education, veterinary medicine, library and information science, and Engineering in federal universities in North East, Nigeria.

The university Vice chancellors and heads of departments were chosen because they are engaged in school administration and can describe the prevailing situation in the school with regards to security challenges in the universities in North East, Nigeria. There was no sampling because of the manageable size of the population. A structured questionnaire on management of security challenges in federal universities in North – East Nigeria (MSCIFUINEN) was used. The questionnaire was made up of two parts A and B. Part A dealt with the demographic data of the respondents while part B dealt with the 24 item statements which the respondents were expected to respond to in line with the purpose

of the study and research questions posed for the study. Part B has two clusters with 12 items in each of the clusters. The response option for items are strongly agree (SA) 4 points Agree (A) 3 points Disagree (D) 2 points and strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point The questionnaire was subjected to face validation by three experts, two from in university of Nigeria, Nsukka. The reliability of the instrument was established using Cronbach Alpha to get the reliability coefficient of 0.81. Cronbach Alpha was used because the instruments were not dichotomously scored. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and t-test statistics.

The mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. Any item with a mean rating of 2.50 and above was regarded as agreed, while any item with a mean rating less than 2.50 was regarded as disagreed. The t-test statistic was used to test the two null hypotheses at .05 level of significance. Any hypothesis whose probability level was less than or equal to .05 level of significance, was rejected, while a hypothesis with probability level greater than .05 level was not rejected.

Results

Research Question 1: What are the various forms of security

challenges in federal universities in North – East Nigeria?

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant difference between the

mean ratings of the VCS & HODS on various forms of security challenges in federal universities in North – East Nigeria

Table 1: Mean, standard deviation and t-test of respondents’ opinions on the forms of security challenges in federal universities in North – East, Nigeria.

S/N	Items	X _A	X _H	X _G	SD	P-Value	Remarks	
							RQ	HO
1	Secret cult activities	3.65	3.68	3.67	0.38	0.54	Agreed	NS
2	Students unrest and militant students unionism	3.65	3.68	3.67	0.40	0.87	Agreed	NS
3	Kidnapping	3.66	3.68	3.67	0.38	0.53	Agreed	NS
4	Boko haram crisis	3.67	3.67	3.67	0.37	0.87	Agreed	NS
5	Religious crisis	3.75	3.78	3.78	0.36	0.85	Agreed	NS
6	Harassment of the females	3.62	3.63	3.62	0.42	0.92	Agreed	NS
7	Robbery	3.79	3.73	3.76	0.34	0.85	Agreed	NS
8	Inadequate hostels for Students	3.68	3.69	3.67	0.37	0.86	Agreed	NS
9	School administrators involvement in cultism	3.63	3.64	3.63	0.40	0.87	Agreed	NS
10	Violent deaths	3.65	3.65	3.58	0.33	0.56	Agree	NS
11	Nonfatal student/Teacher victimization	3.65	3.65	3.67	0.38	0.56	Agree	NS
12	Fights, weapons and illegal substances	3.62	3.63	3.62	0.42	0.56	Agree	NS

X_A =mean for VCS X_H =mean for HODS X_G =Grand mean for VCs &HODS

Data presented in Table 1 showed that the mean ratings of the respondents on the twelve (12) identified items relating to the various forms of security challenges in federal universities in North – East Nigeria had mean values ranging from 3.62 to 3.79 which are all greater than the cut-off mean of 2.50 on a 4-point scale. The data in the table indicated that the respondents agreed that all the twelve (12) items are the forms of security challenges in federal universities in North-East, Nigerian. The standard deviation values for the twelve (12) items ranged from 0.33 to 0.42 which showed that the respondents opinions were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean. The table also showed that the p-values of the items ranged from 0.53 to 0.92 which were greater than .05 level of significance at 33 degrees of

freedom. This showed that there was no significant difference ($P>0.05$) between the mean responses of the vice chancellors and heads of departments with regards to forms of security challenges in federal universities in North – East Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference (H_{O1}) was upheld.

Research Question 2: What are the strategies school administrators should engage upon in managing security challenges in federal universities in North East, Nigeria?

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of the VCS & HODS on the strategies school administrators should engage upon in managing security challenges in federal universities in North East, Nigeria

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and t-test of respondents opinions on the strategies for managing security challenges in federal universities in North East, Nigeria

S/N	Items	X _A	X _H	X _G	SD	P-Value	RQ	HO
1	School administrators should endeavor to eradicate cult activities in the school	3.80	3.83	3.82	0.38	0.63	Agree	NS
2	Involve students in the university governance	3.78	3.79	3.78	0.40	0.97	Agree	NS
3	Use of patrol vans in the school	3.79	3.73	3.76	0.42	0.81	Agree	NS
4	Expulsion of students who engage in anti - security activities	3.75	3.83	3.79	0.40	0.76	Agree	NS
5	Employment of secret agents to monitor students' activities in the campus.	3.82	3.82	3.82	0.37	0.97	Agree	NS
6	Dismissal of any staff that Engage in anti-security activities	3.80	3.81	3.81	0.39	0.94	Agree	NS
7	Locking all entries to the school premises at 8.00pm	3.75	3.83	3.79	0.40	0.76	Agree	NS
8	Use of metal dictators	3.83	3.75	3.79	0.40	0.86	Agree	NS
9	Use of security cameras	3.78	3.77	3.79	0.41	0.84	Agree	NS
10	Use of random dog sniffs to check for drugs	3.90	3.88	3.89	0.30	0.46	Agree	NS
11	Wearing of identity card by staff and students	3.85	3.86	3.87	0.35	0.83	Agree	NS
12	Control access to buildings during school hours	3.75	3.83	3.79	0.40	0.76	Agree	NS

X_A =mean for vice chancellors X_H =mean for HODs X_G =grand mean for VCs & HODs

Table 2: Data presented in Table 2 showed that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondents on the twelve (12) identified items relating to the strategies for managing security challenges in federal universities in North East Nigeria had mean values ranging from 3.38 to 3.90 which are all greater than the cut-off point of 2.50 on a 4-point rating scale. The data in the table indicated that the respondents agreed that all the twelve (12) items constitute the strategies for managing security challenges in federal universities in Nigeria. The standard deviation values for the twelve items ranged from 0.30 to 0.49 which showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean.

The table also showed that the p-values of the twelve (12) items ranged from 0.63 to 0.97 which were greater than .05 level of significance and 33 degrees of freedom. This showed that there was no significant difference ($P>0.05$) between the mean responses of the Vice chancellors and heads of departments in federal universities in North East Nigerian. This showed that there is no significant difference between the mean responses of the respondents on the identified items.

Discussion of the Findings

The findings of this study were discussed under the following sub headings;

Various forms of security challenges in federal universities in North East, Nigeria

The analysis of data in table 1 shows that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondents on the 12 identified items relating the various forms security challenges in federal universities in North-East, Nigeria had mean values which are all greater than the cut-off point of 2.50 on a 4-point rating scale. The data in the table indicated that the respondents agreed that all the 12 items are among the various forms of security challenges in federal universities in North-East Nigeria. The standard deviation values for the twelve items ranged from 0.33 to 0.42 which showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean. The table also showed that the p-values of the items were greater than .05 level of significance and 35 degrees of freedom. This showed that there was no significant difference ($P>0.05$) between the mean responses of the vice chancellors and heads of department with regards to the forms of security challenges in federal universities in North-East, Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant difference (H_0) was upheld. This finding is in line with that of Isaac,

Ajayi and Haastrup (2004) who posit that various forms of security challenges in Nigerian universities include: secret cult activities, students' unrest and militant student-unionism, kidnapping and boko haram crisis. These two researchers concluded that it is when the various security challenges are in check that effective teaching and learning as well as effective administration could be guaranteed in the universities.

Strategies for managing security challenges in federal universities in North East, Nigeria

A survey on the strategies for managing security challenges in federal universities in North-East, Nigeria, showed that the roles of school administrators are vital. It was found that the role of school administrators such as involvement of students in the university governance, eradication of cultism, use of patrol van in the school, expulsion of students who engage in anti-security activities, employment of security agents to monitor students' activities in the campus, dismissal of any staff who engage in anti-security activities, locking all entrances to the camps at 8.00pm, use of metal detectors, use of security cameras, use of random dog sniffs to check for drugs, wearing of badges by all staff and students and control access to buildings during school hours are among the school administrators roles in managing

security challenges. This finding agrees with the findings of Daniel (2018), Ahamefla (2018) and Nwama (2017) who suggested that school administrators should engage in different strategies for adequate management of security challenges on Nigerian campuses.

The analysis of the data in table 2 shows that the mean ratings of the responses of the respondents on the 12 identified items relating to the strategies school administrators would engage in for management of security in Nigerian campuses had mean values ranging from 3.38 to 3.89 which are all greater than the cut-off point of 3.50 on a 4-point rating scale. The data in the table indicated that the respondents agreed that all the 12 items are the strategies school administrators would engage in for adequate management of security challenges in Nigerian campuses. The standard deviation values for the 12 items ranged from 0.30 to 0.59 which showed that the respondents were not far from one another in their responses and that their responses were not far from the mean. The table also showed that the p-values of the 12 items ranged from 0.53 to 0.97 which were greater than .05 level of significance and 33 degrees of freedom. This showed that there was no significant difference ($P>0.05$) between the mean responses of the vice chancellors and heads of department with regards to the strategies for

adequate management of security

challenges in Nigerian universities.

Conclusion

From the results and discussion of the findings, the researchers concluded that insecurity pervades every facet of the country and this has taken its toll in the universities in North-East Nigeria. The resultant effect is that academic and non academic staff in the university campuses live in fear day by day. This general state of insecurity is sending a wrong signal to the international community about the state of the nation in Nigerian universities that all is not well.

It therefore, becomes imperative on the part of university administrators to form synergy with other stake holders in the university education system towards stamping out insecurity from the campuses. The researchers therefore conclude that fund should be made available for the university administrators to help them embark on different strategies towards total eradication of any form of insecurity in the campus.

Recommendations

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Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- a. The government should provide adequate fund for university administrators to enable them employ multiple strategies for management of security challenges in Nigerian universities
- b. Strict measures should be applied to encourage students' commitment to studies and development of values that are for healthy living. They should be engaged in both practical and theory learning to effectively utilize their excess energy for worthwhile knowledge.
- c. The school administrators need to form a synergy with their host communities. A harmonious relationship between the universities and the host communities should guarantee open and viable channels for information sharing between universities and their host communities.

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