



Influence of Boko Haram Insurgency on Teachers' Job Performance in Mubi Educational Zone, Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined the influence of the activities of Boko Haram insurgency on teachers' job performance in the North – East Geo – political zone, Adamawa State. The activities of these Islamic Insurgents led to wanton destruction of public and residential buildings, primary and secondary schools, churches and mosques. Many professionally trained teachers including school children were either killed, maimed or forced to flee to relatively safer environments. Efforts by Adamawa State Government led to the recruitment of unqualified teachers, many of whom are not ready to accept posting to these crisis communities. The author of this paper believes that building teacher capacity is not only critical to successful teaching and learning, it should be the beginning of positive action aimed at equipping teachers in emergency with adequate knowledge and skills, pedagogical skills and psychological resources to cope with the challenges of teaching in emergencies and crisis environments. The paper identifies relevant intervention strategies for building teacher capacity.

Keywords: Teacher building capacity; Teachers' job performance; Boko Haram Insurgency; Psycho-Social Support; Teachers in emergency

Introduction

The Northeast Geopolitical zone of Nigeria has since 2009, been ravaged by the activities of Islamic insurgents, Boko Haram. According to Ossai (2014), the Islamic sect's philosophy is to overthrow the Federal Government of Nigeria and establish a theocratic state based on Islamic beliefs and Sharia law. Opposition from Government and other Islamic sects in Nigeria led to negative reaction by the Insurgents, thus leading to massive destruction of private and public property, killings and maiming of both Muslims and non-Muslims. School buildings and learning infrastructure were torched. The whole region witnessed an unprecedented mass exodus of people including teachers and school children to relatively safer locations. The whole North – east sub-region made up of Borno, Yobe and some parts of Adamawa and Bauchi were captured and controlled by the Insurgents. In 2015, these captured territories were re-captured by the Multi-national Joint Military force. This paper therefore discussed the Influence of Boko Haram on teachers' job performance under the following sub-sections:

- i. The Psycho-social conditions of teachers in emergency
- ii. State Government response to revamp education
- iii. Role of Education and Teachers in Emergency
- iv. The need for teacher Capacity Building in emergency

The Psycho-Social Conditions of Teachers in Emergency

All primary and secondary schools located in Boko Haram infested towns and villages were completely demolished. School children together with their teachers were either killed or maimed. The survivors of this religious extremism fled to other safer environments as internally displaced persons. When these victims, assisted by government and NGO's returned to their traditional settlements, they found their communities virtually empty of social and educational infrastructure. Most of the schools that were adequately staffed by professionally trained teachers were either killed or maimed. A good number of them refused to return to their devastated places of primary assignment. The few that returned were not in sound psychological state to manage the

many streams of classes and above all, due to traumatic experience arising from the loss of property and lives of loved ones, found it difficult to perform their statutory functions with satisfaction. According to Mohammed (2016), absence of secure environment, school infrastructure and poor climate directly affect teachers' job performance.

Role of State Government in Emergency

The activities of Boko Haram in the area of study led to the death of hundreds of thousands of people including women and children. Private and public buildings such as residential buildings, schools, mosque and churches were completely destroyed by the Islamic Insurgents. Efforts made by the state government and NGOs to rehabilitate the devastated region has not been easy particularly in the education and health sectors where a substantial number of the professionally skilled primary and secondary school teachers have either been killed or refused to go back to their places of primary assignments.

The Adamawa state government, in response to the poor state of educational provision in these areas declared a state of emergency. Unplanned recruitment to replace the dead and the fleeing teachers led to mass recruitment of unqualified teachers in all areas of subject specialization. These teachers lack the intellectual and pedagogical skills to implement the contents of the curriculum. The result of this is poor output and students' frustration in their attempt to secure admission into citadels of higher learning with their poor results obtained at external examinations. Egbo (2011) noted that no nation can rise above the quality of its teachers. The Nigerian classroom teacher is the fulcrum on which economic, social and educational goals that will leapfrog the country to greater heights rest. Given the scenarios in the North east sub – region, no meaningful achievement will be recorded without the contributions of education manned by high quality teachers.

Role of Education and Teachers in Emergency

Education and Teachers have been known to play critical role in restoring normalcy and provision of safe environment for school children to cope with the challenges of life in conflict and crises areas. According to Summit (2018), professionally trained

teachers help in the provision of child friendly environments that will lead to speedy healing of the past traumatic experience. Teachers listen to children's problems and help them to make good choices. They are good role models especially during difficult times. Provision of Psycho-social supports for children in emergency can lead to the improvement of the Psychological well-being of school children because they are capable of using wide range of class room activities that can assist children to cope with the challenges of life.

The Need for Teacher Capacity Building in Emergency

A significant number of teachers teaching in primary and secondary schools located in emergency areas are not equipped to deliver quality education to learners due to low morale and traumatic experience they have had. Many of them are victims of depression, loss of self-esteem, despair and schizophrenia who find it difficult to assist students to handle post emergency problems. According to Malyan & Jindal (2014) and Egbo (2011) capacity building is likely to positively impact on teaching and learning which will lead to educational success of students in the north east of Nigeria. Egbo (2011) further maintained that, no nation can build a strong and effective educational system without the availability of qualified teachers at the class room level. Other sectors of the economy such as health, legal, agricultural, manufacturing and technological growth cannot leapfrog development without a robust education system and effective teaching and learning.

Malyan (2014), noted that the quality of education at the primary, secondary and even tertiary levels has been weakened by poor inputs at the primary level and poor outputs as well. The number of graduates from junior and secondary schools particularly in Northern Nigeria has been growing but the graduates are not equipped with basic knowledge and skills for effective functioning in the society. Primary and Secondary school teachers in emergency needs in-service training programmes, workshops, and provision of laboratories, libraries and sport equipments in order to improve teaching and learning. Teachers' welfare in terms of monetary and non- monetary benefits must be accorded the importance it deserves. To equip teachers in

emergency, Egbo (2014) emphasizes the provision of infrastructure, training and formulation of good policy and teacher welfare and empowerment.

SUMMIT (2018) recommends the use of Psychosocial training programmes for teachers so that they can be effective in providing psychosocial support for traumatized school children. Psychosocial activities such as bouncing back, Time chair, widow in the wind, quiet reflection time, Balloon game, Elephant Ball, Cooperative Square to mention but a few have healing effects for both teachers and pupils in an emergency.

Subject workshops, teacher effectiveness enhancement programme, understanding and designing Assessments and skill based curriculum workshops are important programmes that are capable of equipping teachers in emergencies so that they can discharge their professional duties and responsibilities with meaningful results.

Conclusion

The activities of Boko Haram in northern parts of Adamawa State have led to the destruction of public residential buildings, schools and colleges and killing of teachers and school children. Those recruited to replace the death were unqualified and were not

ready to take up jobs in the Boko Haram infested communities due fear of incessant attack. The paper emphasizes the need for teacher capacity building and provision of psychosocial support for teachers who have been traumatized by conflicts.

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