

Boko Haram Activities: A Threat To Business Education In Northern Nigeria

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Abstract

Nigeria has witnessed insurgency from this terrorist group called Boko Haram from 2009. They unleash terror and fear in the minds of every Nigerian. There is mass destruction of government properties, bombing of churches, Mosques and other public places, assassination of prominent individuals, burning of schools occasioned by sporadic shooting of innocent citizens. The Federal Government of Nigeria saw these demands as treasonable, unreasonable and unacceptable and in an attempt to purge the group of its excesses, Mohammed Yusuf the leader was killed in 2009 which brought about violence and bombardment of northern Nigeria. This paper therefore looked at some of the challenges posed by this group to business education programme in Northern Nigeria and also proffered recommendations.

Introduction

“Boko Haram” is a multi-language phrase. The phrase was derived from Hausa and Arabic Languages respectively, “Boko” in Hausa Language means “Western education”, and “Haram” in Arabic Language means “forbidden”. So “Boko Haram” Literally means “western education is forbidden”. The real name of “Boko Haram” is “**Jama’atul Ahlus Sunnah Lidda’awati Wal-Jihad**”, which translates to “People who committed to the propagation of prophet’s teachings and Jihad”.

Boko Haram has been in existence since 2001, but did not become popular until 2009 when they participated actively in the sectarian violence in Northern Nigeria, specifically in Borno, Bauchi and Yobe (Musa, 2011). The group unleash terror and fear in minds of every Nigerian. They participated in destructions of police stations, government properties, bombing of mosques and churches, assassination of prominent personalities, burning of schools and many other unethical practices condemned by Islam.

Northern Nigeria has suffered low enrolment rate in education sector. Ruquyyatu (2013) blamed this on the effect of long standing effect of Islamic education as most parents are yet to embrace western education. To such parents, western education is tied to the bible and it is an indirect way of changing their religion. Secondly, the security situation in the Northern Nigeria also comes to play. The constant threat posed by Boko Haram which started in 2009 and other extremists religious sect like the Jama’atu Anbarul Muslimna FinBadilas Sudan, undermines efforts at improving education in the region. These groups have carried out several attacks and issued threats to schools in the North in some of these attacks, teachers were killed or injured and structure razed

The leader of Boko Haram, Muhammed Yusuf was killed in 2011 when late President of Nigeria, Umaru Musa Yar’adua directed the policemen to wipe the group away completely. To them, all these atrocities are reprisal of what policemen did to their group upon the commandment of late president.

Before 2009, Northern Nigeria witnessed several forms of terrorism like “Maitatsine” in Kano (1980) Bulunkutu in Borno (1982). There is also a deliberate and systematic use of violence to destroy, kill, maim and intimidate or wipe away completely some tribes from some parts of Northern Nigeria these includes Zangon-Kataf and Jos (Halidu, 2012).

These forms of terrorism or destructions are politically motivated, even though; some may have other ancillary motives (Obioma, 2012). What is worthy of noting is the incapability of the government to deal with the perpetrators of these problems. Many investigation panels were set-up but government remains mute on their recommendations. Abiye (2011) noted that domestic terrorism arose in Nigeria because emergent militant groups took advantage of government's inefficient actions and inactions in dealing with the fundamental elements of nationhood.

Business Education is education meant to prepare students for useful living. The main purpose of it is to prepare students for higher education and for a useful living. Education of any type could not be imparted by teacher nor received by the students when there is chaos and anarchy.

Boko Haram activities and Business Education in Northern Nigeria.

Business education in Northern Nigeria, specifically in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States faces challenges, amongst which are:

1. Community: The Community are where the students, parents and schools are set-up. A peaceful community produces a more brilliant student, intelligent teachers, good atmosphere for investment and a place where everyone could feel the spirit of belongingness. Business Education can flourish successfully when the community is at peace. However, where a community is disturbed due to shooting, bombing, maiming, kidnapping and many forms of unethical practice, business education faces challenges. Ajayi (2011) enumerated the following activities of Boko Haram which directly affected community and posed a great challenge to business education:

In January 2010, Boko Haram Struck in Borno at Dala Atemden ward killing four people. In September 7, 2010, 700 inmates were freed from Bauchi prison by Boko Haram. In December 2010, a market was bombed in Maiduguri and many people were killed. In April, 2011, Independent National Electoral Commission Maiduguri was bombed. 22nd April, 2011, 14 inmates were freed by Boko Haram in Yola. 29th April 2011, multiple bombings occurred, November 2011, witnessed coordinated bombing and shooting on police facilities in Potiskum and Damaturu Yobe state, where 180 people died, January 5th and 6th 2012, multiple bombings in Kano.

Sani (2012), enumerated that, Boko Haram insurgents attacked Baga Community on 16/4/2013 and Bama Community in 17/4/2013, killing many innocent citizens and setting ablaze all their farm products and houses.

In a catastrophic situation like this, business education could not be imparted to any student. The parents and the students are always in constant fear of what will happen to them today or the next day. The challenge of Business education in Northern Nigeria due to community problems of Boko Haram insurgency has taken a new dimension. In the month of April, 2014, more than 10 villages were destroyed in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa and all the communities were homeless. In June 2014, Attagara village, Gwoza Local Government, Borno State, 400 villages were killed. Business education programme being a skilled oriented could not operate under this kind of situation.

2. Students: students are the beneficiaries of teaching. They could be primary school pupils, secondary school student or higher institutions of learning students. Learning takes place when there is a

conducive atmosphere, adequate motivation and above all facilities and infrastructures. In Northern Nigeria, especially Borno, Yobe and Adamawa States, students in general and Business education in particular faces a lot of challenges for effective learning. Many primary schools, secondary schools and some tertiary institutions were vandalized, destroyed and burnt. The students' lives are at stake and therefore many of them forcefully withdraw from the schools to save their lives. According to the Guardian (2013), in Yobe state, a school was attacked and more than 40 children lost their lives. This was in addition to 3,600 victims since 2009 in the wake of attacks and massacres led by Boko Haram as well as reprisal from the regular army.

According to the Nation (2011), the areas with the lowest number of children in school are Northern region of Nigeria and more specifically areas hit by Boko Haram insurgents. Yobe state has 78 percent, Borno state 71 percent and Adamawa state 47 percent. Therefore Boko Haram has dealt a fatal blow on the enrolment of pupils and students to schools. Parents and pupils live in perpetual fear of attacks and this poses a great challenge to Business Education. School attendance is essential for any academic activity, where there is security problem, definitely the rate of attendance will decline, Hakilu (2010) says that irrespective of age, sex and nationality, once there is an attack by Boko Haram, the survivors often dread staying in such places and may hesitate sending their children to school.

At the last quarter of 2013, Federal Government College Bunu Yadi, Yobe State, a comprehensive secondary school was burnt and dozens of students killed and some were abducted. In April, 2014 over 200 final year girls were abducted at Government Girls secondary school Chibok and the whole school set ablaze. All these atrocities poses a great challenge to business education.

3. Teachers: The disseminators of knowledge and role model are teachers. Teachers in general are not spared by Boko Haram insurgents and therefore could not be able to properly disseminate the knowledge to the students. In the midst of bombing and maiming, many teachers lost almost all their belongings and are presently living in hunger and poverty. In most attacks, the teachers are directly or indirectly affected. In a situation where students are killed, schools burnt, students abducted, the teachers psychological state of affairs could not be at ease to impart the knowledge.

Above all, where there are no students, no classes, no laboratories, no place to live and no food, how could a teacher perform his primary assignment? In this year's teachers' day, it was reported that 130 teachers were killed in Borno, Yobe and Adamawa state since the commencement of the insurgency. This scenario greatly affected their morale and also poses a challenge to business education.

4. Philanthropists: In every community, there are important personalities who help in one way or the other. In Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states, the philanthropists assist in building schools, giving scholarship to students. They often possesses industries where many people get job and therefore, reduces unemployment. Amongst the aims of business education is to prepare students to be self-reliant. This was the reason for Students Industrial Work Experience Scheme (SIWES) in the curriculum.

The students, in most cases get their SIWES experience from the companies owned by the philanthropists. In Borno, Yobe, and Adamawa states, Business education faces challenges due to assassination of some important philanthropists. In the first quarter of 2013, Bukar Mandara, a respected elderly person, proprietor and philanthropists was killed. This metamorphose to closure of many of his privately owned companies that employs many graduates (Business Education Inclusive) and stoppage of many of his scholarship programmes. Also, on 30th May, 2014, Emir of Goza, was killed by Boko Haram insurgent. Killing of this emir greatly affected every aspect of education in Goza community which is located in Southern Borno and which produces almost half of the students of Borno state.

Conclusion

Northern Nigeria's image is negatively affected by the activities of Boko Haram insurgents. Their unwanted activities have crippled the socio-economic and educational life of the entire geo-political zone. Maiming, Kidnapping, suicide bombing attack, destroying schools, killings of students and teachers greatly poses challenges to business education programme in the zone. This has helped in no small measure to make the zone less developed educationally and a lot of unemployed people due to lack of business education programme being effectively undertaken.

Recommendations

It is therefore recommended that:

- (a) The state of emergency imposed to the three states should be taken up seriously by the government.
- (b) There should be enough security to protect all the schools in the three states.
- (c) The civilian joint task force (JTF) should be converted to Nigerian army or policemen.
- (d) The communities should be given arms to protect themselves, their children and their schools.

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