EDUCATIONAL STATISTICS AS A TOOL FOR RESOLVING SECURITY PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This paper examines how educational statistics is useful in resolving security challenges in Nigeria. The paper explains the meaning and importance of educational statistics. The paper shows how educational statistics can be used in resolving security challenges in Nigerian schools and colleges. An example of how it was used in the USA to tackle security challenges in their schools is highlighted. Recommendations on how insecurity problems could be overcome in Nigerian schools and colleges are listed, such as reports and records of bad behaviour committed by students should be used as vital information for controlling insecurity in our institutions.

Introduction

Nigeria is bedevilled with a lot of insecurity problems that poses serious menace in its economic and social institutions, which in turn affects socio-economic and social institutions, which in turn affects socio-economic development. Security challenges have hampered a lot of activities that will foster development in schools. Students and teachers are always alert and keen in seeing that no such threat is experienced in their various schools. Students and teachers have no rest of mind because of the threat posed by security challenges in schools. Academic activities will be seriously affected if measures to control such menace are not put in place. This paper looks at educational statistics and its usefulness in resolving security problems in Nigerian schools. But first of all there is need to understand the meaning of educational statistics.

The Concept of Educational Statistics

Statistics can be seen as a numerical data of facts. It can also be seen as the branch of knowledge which assists in scientific, collection, presentation, analysis and interpretation of numerical facts. The knowledge of statistics enable us to have a firm foundation which will assist in carrying out statistical problems that are needed in education, psychology, sociology and other disciplines. The numerical facts in this regard could be birth, death, school attendance, employment,
marketing crime and so on. Statistics can also be seen as a method of dealing with numerical facts. Educational statistics therefore, could be regarded as the scientific method of collection, analyzing, interpreting and presenting data in order to solve educational problems, (Adam, 2013).

In Nigeria, especially in recent years, we have been experiencing crimes in our educational institutions. Some of these crimes perpetrated include:

- Bombings
- Killing of teachers and students;
- Abduction;
- Killing of innocent citizens in our institutions
- Assault (Kevin, 2011).

The problem at hand is how does educational statistics as a discipline assist in providing solutions to these problems of insecurity in our institutions and the country? In order to appreciate this there is need to highlight the importance of educational statistics.

**Importance of Educational Statistics**

The importance of educational statistics in crime control in our schools could be seen in the following ways:

- It assists in collecting data quantitatively and qualitatively. Data especially on crimes that are happening in our institutions should be collected. For instance, how does it occur, when mostly does it, so that measures can be taken to control crime.

- It assists in generalizing conclusions. When data is collected, analyzed and presented it could be used to generalize conclusions during decision taking.

- It also assists in research work in many dimensions. For instance a research can be conducted on the behaviour that impedes learning like cultism, truancy, theft, thwarting, bullying and so on. All these are some of the crimes committed by our students. If research is conducted on these bad behaviours, the research can point out who are the perpetrators, so that decisions can be taken to control such acts.

**The Place of Educational Statistics in Resolving Insecurity Problems in Nigerian Schools**

The intrinsic human value of education, its ability to add meaning and value to everyone’s life without discrimination is the core of its status as Human Rights. Education planning should be based on a precise and exact diagnosis if it is to be effective and that educational statistics is very crucial in gathering data for an effective educational planning.
The diagnosis makes the plan possible to take into account the state of education which can identify the problems through detected and critical analysis in order to propose solutions. If educational information for motivating development activities is not timely and accurate, there will be retardation in the development of such educational institutions. Quality, timely and transparent data as well as sound statistical analysis are important for decision making in formulating policies.

Statistic gives vital information to education, for without it, planning on how to guard against insecurity problems in schools cannot be effectively solved. Planning is the order of the day and planning without statistics is inconceivable. Lessons of such happening could be drawn from what is happening in the USA as it faces crimes in schools and other parts of the country.

In 1999, there were shootings and killing of 12 classmates and one teacher in Columbine High School and these increased efforts to prevent such senseless acts of violence. After two years of the 9/11 attack, there was further heightened concern in USA on security. These and other incidents brought much needed attention to the importance of keeping the nation’s schools safe so as to enhance teaching and the learning process.

According to the National Center for Statistics Education (NCES), there were thirty eight schools associated with violence and deaths in one year period ending June, 30, 2009 which is about one for every 1.5million students. The NCES in USA also reported that there were roughly 1.2million victims of non-fatal school crimes among students aged 12 through 18, divided almost equal between thefts and violence (from simple assault to serious violent crimes). In 2007-2008 school year programmes in USA, 75% of public schools recorded one or more incidents of violent crime, 17% recorded one or more serious incidents, and 47% recorded one or more thefts. These schools had an estimated total of 2 million crimes for a rate of 43 crimes per 1000 students enrolled.

The measures taken to control these incidences of violent crimes in schools in USA include:

- Visitors most sign before gaining entrance.
- Proper monitoring of school buildings especially during school hours.
- Controlling access: this is limiting and controlling access through a single check point.
- Invest in latest technology of surveillance.
- Layout, lighting and landscaping can make a safer place in an institution. E.g. well designed parking space and drop-off areas; this enables efficient sequencing of students’ and visitors’, traffic during school hours.
- National surveillance: security can be strengthened by increasing opportunities and removing obstacles for natural surveillance. It refers to give people the physical ability to see what is going on and around school.
- Attentive people who have concern; one thing we should put in mind, no matter the kind of measures we take, no school is invincible. Defending against security breaches, as well as other crimes and mischievous acts, cannot be overcome with
technology, it also includes all stakeholders involved; like parents, governments, students, staff and community members who respect each other and the school grounds and facilities.

When we look at the Nigerian situation, similar crimes have been reported that are known to hamper the teaching and learning processes. In Nigeria, killing of teachers and students have been verified in some states. Theft, abduction, assault violence, shootings and so many other crimes are now perpetrated in some of our learning institutions. These ugly activities have crippled academic activities in such institutions. No country can achieve any meaningful development without peaceful and uninterrupted academic activities. In Nigeria, students’ poor performance in tests as a result of insecurity in turn affects the validity of the test in a negative manner.

Conclusion

Educational statistics is an important tool for resolving insecurity problems in Nigeria. Efficient gathering of statistics of violence, theft, robbery, cultism, bombings, and killings occurring in our institutions will enable the authorities to state measures that will control and even eliminate insecurity problems in schools.

Recommendations

- There should be a center for educational statistics so that all forms of crimes committed within and even outside the academic environment are taken into account for effective decision making to control such incidents.
- Nigeria should study and adopt the steps taken in the USA in controlling insecurity problems in our schools.
- All stakeholders in education should be brought together to discuss on how to strengthen the present security challenges in schools. Since education is the responsibility of all, so also is security the responsibility of all.
- Reports and records of bad behaviour by students could be used as vital information in controlling insecurity problems in our institutions.
- Parents and the community should always be alert, take note and also report mischievous acts to security agents.
- Nigeria needs to have an efficient center for statistics education so that all the perpetrators are tracked down for peaceful and development activities in our institutions of learning for without social institutions no meaningful development can be achieved.
References


