



School Closure and Academic Attainment of Pupils in Primary School in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna State (from May, 2021 to July 2021)

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Abstract

This paper examines school closure and academic attainment of public primary school pupils in Giwa local government area of Kaduna state. However, the study adopted descriptive survey research method for analysis of the major issues in the study. Simple random sampling was used to select the schools and the respondents were teachers and parents in the selected primary schools. Questionnaire on School Closure and Academic Attainment of public primary School Pupils (QSCAAPPSP) was used to collect data from the respondents. In this case, the paper revealed that school closure in Giwa Local Government interrupted learning activities of the pupils, this is because it deprived the pupils the opportunity to have direct contact with their teachers to learn. It was also found out that school closure increases level of poverty for the families with low level of income in Giwa Local Government and it made it difficult for them to finance the education of their children. However, the paper recommends that the security of the schools in the area under study should not be politicized because without security, teaching and learning cannot take place. In order to have safe school environment in Kaduna state, community policing should be established to check high rate of attacks of public primary schools in Giwa Local Government area of Kaduna state.

Keywords: School closure, Insecurity, Kidnapping and Academic Attainment

Introduction

Acquiring western education by pupils in most public primary schools in Nigeria becomes a subject of risk of lives as a result of high rate of insecurity (Owonikoko, 2021). This is because going to school is tantamount to changing of western education with bullets. This has narrowed the chances of free and to better education of pupils in Nigeria (Owonikoko, 2021). It is on this note that Bwala (2021) states that the Nigerian primary schools are not secured, because the lives of children and teachers are threatened while in school, therefore, freedom of education becomes a fearful situation for a Nigerian child, as a result of consistent trauma on parents who wanted formal education for their children. However, one of the growing security threats in the Nigerian is kidnapping whereby many primary school pupils are severally attacked in most Nigerian states, especially in the northern parts of Nigeria. In this regard, Owonikoko, (2021) stresses that the above situation in northern states is a serious one in the aspect of pupil's education and insecurity.

This is because frequent adoption of the pupils in schools in many northern states damaged educational system, for instance in 2014, Boko Haram abducted over 270 schoolgirls in a town called Chibok and 100 of these girls missed in the process of rescuing them. Not only that, in December 2014, an armed group abducted 344 schoolboys from their school in the north-western Katsina state. In the same vein, gunmen took over 40 people, mostly children, in an attack on a school in Government Science College in the town of Kagara in Niger state. As well as, 300 boys kidnapped in Kankara, Katsina in December 2020. Not only that, 110 schoolgirls kidnapped in Dapchi, Yobe state in Feb 2018, as well as 210 students abducted with 30 more non-accounted for at the Federal College of Forestry Mechanization in Mando Kaduna in February 2020, just to mention but a few.

In this regards, Abdullahi & Terhema (2014) assert that the level of insecurity in the Northern States of Nigeria has damaged the standard of education in the northern part of Nigeria. These activities of terrorists have forced many children to abandon schooling in an ill-educated and disadvantaged region. In this regard, Eric (2012) reacts that the activities of kidnapers in the aforementioned States have not only affected the pupils or students at the targeted schools but teachers and parents in their various communities. As a result of high level of insecurity in the country. School enrolment in the Northern region has gone down by 28 percent more than other regions in the country which are not deeply affected because many affected pupils and parents do not have interest in western education (Bwala, 2012). This supports Nigerian Education Data Survey (NEDS, 2010) as cited in Saleh (2011) that, constant attacks make western education harder for pupils to acquire and parents and other stakeholders persuade their children stay at school.

In the same vein, kidnapping in public primary schools, especially in the northern Nigeria has compelled school children to drop out of the school. This supports the position of Saleh (2011) that dropout is one of the most serious problems that have continued to bedevil the Nigerian educational system from the colonial administration up to independence in 1960 and even beyond and it is usually occurred as a result of insecurity. In this case, Patrick (2012) corroborates the above point that in the west coast of Africa, a considerable proportion of student dropout of schools each year. This has resulted insecurity and degenerated to low school enrollment and attendance in most primary schools in northern states and low school attendance and enrollment cannot be overemphasized in system of education. If pupils are absent from the school, there is a wonder on how these pupils will be able to attain the educational objectives as stated in the National policy on education (2013).

It is on this reason, that many states in the northern part of Nigeria considered school closure as one of the strategies to curb kidnapping and other forms of insecurity in the state. It is against this background that this work sought to examine school closure and academic attainment of public primary school pupils in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna state.

Statement of the Problem

For pupils to attain academic objectives, the environment must be saved. If there are insecurities in a State the educational attainment of the pupils would be affected and thereby affect the future of the children by not being able to be useful for themselves and the Nation in general.

It has been generally accepted that going to school in many northern states is tantamount to changing western education with bullets, as a result of high rate of insecurity whereby many public primary school's pupils, risk their lives to the acquisition of western education in many Northern states in Nigeria, as a result of this, government of Kaduna state considered school closure as one of the strategies to curb kidnapping and high rate of insecurity in the state. It is on this note that this work sought to examine school closure and academic attainment of public primary school pupils in Giwa local government area of Kaduna State from May, 2021 to July 2021.

Literature Review

The paper reviewed scholars' views in the concept of school closure and educational attainment of pupils.

Concept of School Closure

School closure is a process of shutdown all the school activities in order to reduce social contact among children, who are especially likely to catch and a victim of the security challenges in a particular society or state. It is also considered as one of the ways to reduce total cases and greatly reduce peak attack rates in a conflict area. School closure also means the discontinuation of operations by schools in the existing activities. policy is to protect the health and safety of campus residents and staff, sustain business continuity, and accommodate the previously-scheduled academic activities of faculty and students, including classes, rehearsals, practices, study sessions, and access to library materials (Matthew, 2017).

Priorities During School Closure

1. Protecting the health and safety of pupils and those staff who are required to report to work during closures to support the residents and to ameliorate physical conditions at the institution. Principal considerations include food and water (available in Fields Dining Room), shelter, access for emergency vehicles to enter campus, good communication throughout the school closure among school Safety, Facilities

Services, school Living, and Bon Appetit (www.institutionalpolices.com. 12/01/2022)

2. Sustaining business continuity and proper function of facilities, with the goal of minimizing health risks, damage to equipment, or loss of data that may result from lack of attention during a closure.
3. Accommodating the previously-scheduled academic activities of schools and pupils, including classes, rehearsals, practices, study sessions, and access to library materials. This is because when the institution is closed due to hazardous weather conditions, academic activities are necessarily suspended and academic facilities will remain locked. When major winter storms are predicted, members of the campus community (learners and staff) are encouraged to anticipate the possibility of closure by taking home with them materials that they might require for their work. In the event of a closure, academic facilities will be suspended. When normal academic activities are disrupted due to weather closures, school management are asked to adjust timelines as appropriate (www.institutionalpolices.com. 12/01/2022).

Influence of School Closure on Education of the Pupils

School closures carry high social and economic costs for people across communities. Their impact however is particularly severe for the most vulnerable and marginalized boys and girls and their families. The resulting disruptions exacerbate already existing disparities within the education system but also in other aspects of their lives. These include:

1. Interrupted learning: Schooling provides essential learning and when schools close, children and youth are deprived opportunities for growth and development. The disadvantages are disproportionate for under-privileged learners who tend to have fewer educational opportunities beyond school (Akintunde, 2015).
2. Poor nutrition: Many children and youth rely on free or discounted meals provided at schools for food and healthy nutrition. When schools closed, nutrition is compromised (Bwala, 2012).
3. Confusion and stress for teachers: When schools close, especially unexpectedly and for unknown durations, teachers are often unsure of their obligations and how to maintain connections with students to support learning. Transitions to distance learning platforms tend to be messy and frustrating, even in the best circumstances. In many contexts, school closures lead to furloughs or separations for teachers.
4. Parents unprepared for distance and home schooling: When schools close, parents are often asked to facilitate the learning of children at home and can struggle to perform this task. This is true of parents with limited education and resources.
5. Challenges creating, maintaining, and improving distance learning: Demand for distance learning skyrockets when schools close and often overwhelms existing portals to remote education. Moving learning from classrooms to homes at scale and in a hurry presents enormous challenges, both human and technical.

6. Gaps in childcare: In the absence of alternative options, working parents often leave children alone when schools close and this can lead to risky behaviors, including increased influence of peer pressure and substance abuse (Eric (2012).
7. High economic costs: Working parents are more likely to miss work when schools close in order to take care of their children. This results in wage loss and tend to negatively impact productivity.
8. Unintended strain on health-care systems: Health-care workers with children cannot easily attend work because of childcare obligations that result from school closures. This means that many medical professionals are not at the facilities where they are most needed during a health crisis (Patrick, 2012).
9. Increased pressure on schools and school systems that remain open: Localized school closures place burdens on schools as governments and parents alike redirect children to schools that remain open.
10. Rise in dropout rates: It is a challenge to ensure children and youth return and stay in school when schools reopen after closures. This is especially true of protracted closures and when economic shocks place pressure on children to work and generate income for financially distressed families (Patrick, 2012).
11. Increased exposure to violence and exploitation: When schools shut down, early marriages increase, more children are recruited into militias, sexual exploitation of girls and young women rises, teenage pregnancies become more common, and child labour grows (Bwala, 2012).
12. Social isolation: Schools are hubs of social activity and human interaction. When schools close, many children and youth miss out of on social contact that is essential to learning and development (Eric, 2012).
13. Challenges measuring and validating learning: Calendared assessments, notably high-stakes examinations that determine admission or advancement to new education levels and institutions, are thrown into disarray when schools close. Strategies to postpone, skip or administer examinations at a distance raise serious concerns about fairness, especially when access to learning becomes variable. Disruptions to assessments results in stress for students and their families and can trigger disengagement (Eric, 2012).

School Closure and the Parents.

When analyzing the consequences of school closing, it is generally accepted that it divergent conclusions in regard to potential harms or benefits for the students, parents and the educational community (De Witt & Moccia, 2011). De Witte and Van Klaveren (2014) explained that occasionally school closure may discomfort at-risk students and consequentially affect their academic performance. However, in some cases, school transition may benefit students if a sustainable and effective support system is put in place. They also observed that it often has school closure financial risk from the side of parents (Jack & Sludden, 2013). This is because when school close as a result of security or pandemic in the state is executed on a large scale, which may be considerable created gaps

between the initial goals and the likely outcomes of the parents (Jack & Sludden, 2013). In some cases, school closure is seen as a discriminatory act that increases educational inequalities among minority students, especially when considering that in many occasions' minority students are the most affected populations (Daily Kos, 2013). In other words, school closure produces meaningful academic and social benefits for future students while not harming, at least academically, the students directly affected by the closure (CDHR,2000).

However, Daily Kos, (2013) states that when school closing is executed on a large scale, it may have considerable gaps between the initial goals and the likely outcomes. For instance, school closure is seen as a discriminatory act that increases educational inequalities among minority students, especially when considering that in many occasions' minority students are the most affected populations. Finally, De La Torre et al. (2015) explained that school closure may have potential positive financial and academic consequences, but it may also produce negative effects on educational communities when the necessary support is not provided and parents are forced to make uninformed decisions about their children's lives (Lipman & Haines, 2007). Finally, De La Torre et al. (2015) explained that school closure may have potential positive financial and academic consequences, but it may also produce negative effects on educational communities when the necessary support is not provided and parents are forced to make uninformed decisions about their children's lives (Lipman & Haines, 2007).

In other words, Patrick (2012) and Bwala, 2012) observe that a total shutdown of schools in the affected states has a ripple effect on the quality of knowledge, learning, development and standard of living. However, the impact of this shutdown may not be immediately felt but there are obviously more gruesome long-term implications, which includes: It increases level of poverty for the families because of low level of income. The shutdown of schools would in itself offer incentives for students to be recruited for nefarious activities thereby increasing the crime rate. This is because the grapevine in these societies is such that kidnapping, robberies, and other social vices look to be lucrative and the easier way out of poverty (Patrick, 2012).

Objectives of Study

The following are the objectives for this study:

- i. To find out the factors responsible for school closure in Giwa Local Government area of Kaduna state.
- ii. To examine the influence of school closure on academic attainment of pupils in public primary schools in Giwa local government area of Kaduna state.
- iii. To examine financial implication of parents on their children educational attainment in Giwa local government area of Kaduna State

Research Questions

- i. What are the factors responsible for school closure in Giwa local government area of Kaduna state?

- ii. What is the influence of school closure on academic attainment of pupils in public primary schools in Giwa local government area of Kaduna state?
- iii. What is the financial implication of parents on their children educational attainment in Giwa local government area of Kaduna state.?

Methodology

The paper used self-designed questionnaire named “Questionnaire on School Closure and Academic Attainment of Public Primary School Pupils” (QSCAAPPSP) to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire comprises of two sections. Section A is based on the bio-data of the respondents, and section B is based on the questions pertaining to school closure and academic attainment of public primary school pupils. The population of the study is 124 respondents using simple random technique, which includes 62 primary School teachers and 62 parents who have children in the selected schools. The instrument used for collecting data in this study was 4- point rating scale questionnaires. The instrument was given to the colleagues and experts in the field of education to ensure face and content validity. The researcher administered 20 copies of the instrument to calculate the reliability co-efficient of the instrument. The reliability co-efficient is 0.74. The data were analyzed with mean and standard deviation.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Results

The analysis and presentation of data collected from the respondents of this study is presented below. It also discusses the findings generated from the data collected.

Presentation of Tables

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of factors responsible for closure of Primary schools in Giwa Local Government.

S/N	ITEMS	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	Remark
1	kidnapping of pupils and staffs	21 (84)	23 (69)	53 (106)	27 (27)	2.31	1.52	Disagreed
2	Social Injustice	32 (128)	17 (51)	49 (98)	26 (26)	2.44	1.56	Disagreed
3	Several attacks in public primary schools	58 (232)	31 (93)	19 (38)	16 (16)	3.06	1.75	Agreed
4	Poverty	49 (196)	37 (111)	29 (58)	09 (9)	3.02	1.74	Agreed
5	Indiscipline and moral decadence	43 (172)	51 (153)	19 (38)	11 (11)	3.02	1.74	Agreed
Cumulative						2.75	1.66	Agreed

Decision Rule: $Mean \geq 2.50 = Agreed$; $Mean < 2.50 = Disagreed$

Table 1: shows the respondents’ opinions on factors responsible for closure of primary schools in Giwa Local Government. The table shows that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that several attacks in primary schools was a major factor responsible for school closure of primary schools in Giwa Local government area of Kaduna State with the mean response of 3.06 and standard deviation of 1.75. in the same vein, the details of this statement explain that 89(71.8%) of the respondents agreed while 25(28.2%) disagreed. This implies that the several attacks in primary schools was a major factor responsible for school closure in Giwa local government area of Kaduna state because the figure is quite high. However, the table also shows the least number of respondents with the lowest mean response of 2.31 and standard deviation of 1.52 who were of the opinion that kidnapping of pupils and staff are parts of the factors responsible for school closure in Giwa Local government area of Kaduna state. The details show that 44(35.5%) respondents agreed with the statement while 80(64.5%) respondents disagreed. The result implies that kidnapping of pupils and staff are parts of the factors responsible for school closure in Giwa Local government area of Kaduna state. The overall results of the responses in the table 1 shows that the cumulative mean was 2.75 with standard deviation of 1.66, which is greater than the decision mean of 2.50 implying that the respondents’ responses on the on the factors responsible for closure of primary schools in Giwa Local Government is several attacks on primary schools and the attacks were responsible for school closure of primary schools in Giwa Local government area of Kaduna State.

Table 2: Means and Standard Deviation on School Closure on Academic Attainment of Public Primary Schools in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna State

S/N	ITEMS	SA (5)	A (4)	D (2)	SD (1)	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	Remark
1.	School closure Interrupted learning activities of the pupils	46 (184)	40 (126)	21 (42)	17 (17)	2.93	1.71	Agreed
2.	it creates confusion and stress for pupils in learning	51 (204)	37 (111)	27 (54)	09 (09)	3.05	1.75	Agreed
3.	it causes challenges of coping with distance learning system by primary school pupils	39 (156)	57 (171)	17 (34)	11 (11)	3.00	1.73	Agreed
4.	It causes high rate of school dropout	91 (364)	27 (81)	03 (06)	03 (03)	3.67	1.92	Agreed
5.	It creates gaps in childcare	53 (212)	65 (195)	05 (10)	01 (01)	3.37	1.84	Agreed
Cumulative						3.17	1.78	Agreed

Decision Rule: Mean ≥ 2.50 = Agreed; Mean ≤ 2.50 = Disagreed

Table 2: shows the respondents’ opinions on the effects of school closure on academic attainment of primary schools in Giwa Local government area of Kaduna state. It was revealed that majority of the respondents agreed on the items under study. Therefore, these

results show that the majority of the respondents were of the opinion that school closure causes high rate of school dropout because the item attracted the highest mean response of 3.67 and standard deviation of 1.92. The details explain that 96(77.4%) agreed while 28(22.6%) disagreed to this view, this implies that school closure causes high rate of school dropout. In other word, the table explains opinions of the respondents on the statement that school closure interrupted learning activities of the pupils and the item recorded the least number of respondents. The mean response was 2.89 with standard deviation of 1.70 and the details show that 82(66.1%) of the respondents agreed to the statement while 42 (33.9%) disagreed with the statement. The respondents agreed with the statement that school closure interrupted learning activities of the pupils is lower than the number of respondents that disagreed with the statements. Going by the responses of the respondents on the effect of school closure on academic attainment of public primary schools in Giwa Local Government Area of Kaduna State, the table reveals the cumulative mean of 3.17 and standard deviation of 1.78, which was greater than decision mean of 2.50. This implies that school closure affected academic attainment of public primary schools in Giwa Local Government and it causes high rate of school dropout in the area under study.

Table 3: Opinion of respondents on effect of school closure on financial implication of parents on the educational attainment of their children in Giwa Local

S/N	ITEMS	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	\bar{X}	Std. Dev	Remark
1.	It increases level of poverty for the families with low level of income	41 (164)	57 (171)	15 (30)	11 (11)	3.03	1.74	Agreed
2.	It offers incentives for pupils to be recruited for nefarious activities thereby increasing the crime rate	32 (128)	51 (153)	25 (50)	16 (16)	2.80	1.67	Agreed
3.	It changes initial financial plan of parents on their parents and affected academic outcome of their children	25 (100)	60 (180)	17 (34)	12 (12)	2.63	1.62	Agreed
4.	School closure reduces the expenses of parents on their children in families with high level of income	37 (148)	49 (147)	21 (42)	17 (17)	2.86	1.69	Agreed
5.	School closure cribbed businesses of many parents and affected the academic outcome of their children in the Area under study Kaduna State.	42 (168)	61 (163)	18 (36)	03 (03)	3.16	1.78	Agreed
Cumulative						2.91	1.70	Agreed

Decision Rule: $Mean \geq 2.50 = Agreed$; $Mean < 2.50 = Disagreed$

Table 3: shows the respondents' opinions on the on effect of school closure on financial implication of parents on the educational attainment of their children in Giwa Local. Majority of the respondents agreed that school closure cribbed businesses of many parents and affected the academic outcome of their children in Giwa local area of Kaduna

State. This is because the item has highest mean of 3.16 and standard deviation of 1.78. the details show that 103(83.1%) respondents agreed with the statement while 21(16.9%) of the respondents disagreed. In other word, the least responses in this table was on the statement that school closure changes initial financial plan of parents on their parents and affected academic outcome of their children. This is because the mean is score of 2.63 and standard deviation is 1.62 with details of 85(68.5%) agreed while 39(31.5%) of the respondents disagreed. The overall responses of the respondents on effect of school closure on financial implication of parents on the educational attainment of their children in Giwa Local go with the cumulative mean which was 2.91 and standard deviation was 1.70, this is greater than the decision mean of 2.50. In this case, these responses of the respondents in this table indicate that school closure cribbed businesses of many parents and affected the academic outcome of their children in Giwa local government of Kaduna State.

Discussion of the Findings

The study revealed that the major factor responsible for school closure in Giwa Local government was several attacks on primary schools. This posed negative impact on the education of the pupils in Giwa Local government area of Kaduna State This supports the position of Apeh (2021) that the Nigerian primary schools are not secured, because the lives of children and teachers are threatened while in school, therefore, freedom of education becomes a fearful situation for Nigerian child, as a result of consistent trauma on parents who wanted formal education for their children. However, Saleh (2011) stated that constant attacks makes it even harder for pupils, teachers, and other stakeholders to persuade parents to allow their children stay on at school.

The study also found out that school closure affected academic attainment of public primary schools in Giwa Local Government because it caused high rate of school dropout in Giwa local government area in Kaduna state. This supports the position De La Torre et al. (2015) that school closure has potential negative financial and academic consequences, but it also produces negative effects on educational communities when the necessary support is not provided and parents are forced to make uninformed decisions about their children's lives

Finally, the study also revealed that school closure cribbed businesses of many parents and affected the academic outcome of their children in Giwa local government of Kaduna State. This is because business is their major source of income which gives them financial capacity to copy with financial implication of their children education. This supports Lipman and Haines (2007), that school closure has potential positive financial and academic consequences because it produces negative effects on educational attainment of the children in community and when the necessary support is not provided and parents are forced to make uninformed decisions about their children's education.

Conclusion

Going by the analysis of this work, it concludes that without peace and security, teaching and learning cannot take place. Therefore, there cannot be Education for All in a conflict local, state and federal government Areas. However, this paper discovered policy of school closure implemented by the Kaduna state government in Giwa local government was to make sure that there is safety environment in primary schools. Therefore, this paper discovered that school closure affected academic attainment of public primary schools' pupils in Giwa Local Government because it caused high rate of school dropout in primary school. It also cribbed businesses of many parents because business is their major source of income but when it was affected, they were unable to cope with financial implication of their children educational attainment in Giwa local government of Kaduna State.

Recommendations

1. Kaduna State Government should not politicize the security of life and education of pupils in Giwa Local government area of Kaduna State.
2. Community policing should be established to check high rate of attacks of public primary schools in Giwa Local Government area of Kaduna state and to ensure safe school environment for teaching and learning at primary school levels in Kaduna state.
3. Parents, teachers, community leaders, and the residents should take security as their business in other to have safety environment for their businesses for the purpose of their children educational attainment.

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- www.institutionalpolices.com 12/01/2022: the Concept of School Closure Policy