

Investigating Into Factors Responsible For Upsurge In Out-Of-School Syndrome In North-Eastern Geopolitical Zone Of Nigeria

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Abstract: Education remains the only instrument that can be used to foster national development. This forms one of the reasons why every country of the world is trying to develop their educational system. Despite the importance of education to the development of the society, quite a large number of children of school age are still out of school today in Africa continent, Nigeria in particular. It is against this background that this study investigates the factors responsible for continuous upsurge in out-of-school age children in Nigeria, most especially, the North-Eastern geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The study adopted survey research design. Self-developed questionnaire and interview were used as instrument for data collection after being validated by the experts in the field of education. The reliability index of the questionnaire yielded 0.73 using Crobach Alpha. Simple cluster sampling technique was adopted in selecting the sample for the study. Each state in the zone forms a cluster, and in each cluster, four local government areas - two rural and two urban schools - were randomly selected for the study. Data obtained from the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive statistics and qualitative technique was used for interviews. The results revealed that early marriage forms a significant hindrance to education of both boys and girls of school age, poverty on the part of parents can be an obstacle to school-age children to be out-of-schools, cultural belief system of people hinders continuation of education of school age children and incessant insurgency attacks catalysis upsurge in number of out-of-school and drop-outs of school age children.

Keywords: Dropout, School Children, Out-of-School, Early Marriage, Poverty, Insurgency and Boko Haram

I. INTRODUCTION

The importance of education to any nation cannot be overemphasized. It remains the only instrument that can be used to foster national development. This forms one of the reasons why every country of the world is trying to develop their educational system. Despite the importance of education to the development of the society, quite a large number of children of school age are still out of school today. It has been currently established in a survey conducted by UNICEF and reported in *Obiezu (2018)* that 13.2 million children are out of

school in Nigeria; everyone out of five children in Nigeria as reported by UNICEF to be out of school. The figure quoted by the UNICEF might have increased widely now due to both conflicts of various types and insurgent attacks of various degrees in the North Eastern axis, kidnapping and armed banditry in the north-central, western and eastern Nigeria at the moment. For instance, Bauchi state, which is one of the states in the north east was estimated to have the population of the total primary school age of 913, 920 in which 531, 691 were out of school according to the research conducted in 2012. This situation would have even been made worse now

by the displacement enabled by the conflicts and insurgent activists around the state, most especially, Jos riot, kidnapping, cattle rustling, etc which have been lingering for a while.

To this extent therefore, this research focuses on these, and other factors that have been serving as cogs on the wheel of some school aged children from being enrol in the school and the reasons why others dropped out of school.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Education remains the bedrock of development for any ambitious nation. To this regard, youths of school age needed to be adequately trained educationally to provide much needed tomorrow human capital for the nation. If this is the case, generally, Nigeria and north east states in particular, still need to do more in term of training and equipping their school age children with quality education in order to meet tomorrow's needs.

However, to do this effectively, thousands of the school age children who are roaming the street, hundreds of the school age children who are dropping-out of the school and other ones who are challenged physically needed to get solution to their educational problem so as to have access to good and quality education. Importantly, if this has to be done, government and other education stakeholders need to know the reasons or the factors that made these school age children to be out of school. These factors will go a long way to help in proffering solutions to this out- of- school syndrome. It is against this background that this research is designed to investigate the reasons why the large number of school age children is out of school or drop-out of school in north east States.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions are set to guide the study:

- ✓ Can early marriage serve as a hindrance to the attainment of education of both boys and girls of school age?
- ✓ Can poverty be a hindrance to enrolment of school age children in the schools?
- ✓ Can belief system of people serve as a hindrance to education of school age children?
- ✓ Can incessant attacks of the insurgents have influence on the increment in out- of –school and the drop outs of school age children?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this research is to identify the factors that made so many school age children to be out of school in the north east states. This will allow the government and other stakeholders to prepare them on how to make provisions for those factors that made these children to be out of the school. Secondly, the recommendations that will be arrived at will help the schools, parents, NGOs and government to plan so as to know the steps to take in order to get these youths that are out of the school back to the school; so as to engage them positively in the society.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This research work will allow the Nigerian government to adequately know the actual number of the school age children who supposed to be in the school but are not enrol in the school or drop-out of school. It will also help the states concern to plan for the education of concern children that are out of the school.

The work will also expose the reasons why some children did not care to enrol in the school and why some even drop-out of the school.

The outcome of the work will guide both the government and other stake holders on how to manage the education requirements/demands of the children. Moreover, the study will also be beneficial to the government on how to manage the out of school, as this will help the government on how identify and control low enrolment in schools, poverty, unemployment and violence in these States and Nigeria in general.

It will also be beneficial to the future researcher, as it will serve as reference point while conducting similar research in future

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

THE CONCEPT OF OUT OF SCHOOL: NIGERIA SITUATION

It is a known fact that so many school-age children, for one reason or the other, are out of school today in Nigeria. This forms one of the cogent reasons why the attainment of Education for All (EFA) has been unrealised dream in Nigeria; as it was agreed upon by 189 countries, including Nigeria, to provide access to education to all children of the school age by the year 2015, or reduce the illiteracy level among the youths and adult of school age by half (Pai, 2002), could not be achieved. Worse still, the report of the United Nation Educational, Scientific and cultural Organizations (UNESCO) as cited in *Obiezu (2018)* showed that every one out of every five children are out of school in Nigeria. Better still, out of approximately 13.2 million out-of-schools globally; Nigeria and other 12 countries dominated the out-of-school chart with Nigeria having a fairly larger percentage of 47% of the global out-of-school population. Other countries are Pakistan with 5.1 million out-of-schools, followed by Ethiopia with 2.4 million people. Niger has the population of one million people, Yemen 0.9 million, Mali 0.8 million and South Africa 0.7 million out-of-school population (Global Partnership Education, 2012).

More so, in the North East of Nigeria alone, as at 2012, Bauchi state has huge-some population of 531,691 out-of-school out of the total population of 913,920 of school age. Certainly, the population would have doubled by now as a result of so many reasons. Her neighbouring states such as Yobe have a population of 283,482 out of 449,849 total number of primary school age children, Gombe is having 463, 799 expected school age children but 179,232 out of this population are out of school. Benue State has 804,470 as the population of the total population of primary school age

children and 152,464 out-of-school children, to mention but just few. In Zamfara State, alone about 68,000 girls are out of school etc. (Global Partnership Education, 2012 and Shehu, 2015). The most unfortunate thing is the fact that instead for this out-of-school rate to reduce; it is increasing year in year out due to violent and crisis of various degree in Nigeria. This has prompted UNICEF (2017) to declare that in north-eastern Nigeria alone, 2.8 million children are in need of education-in-emergencies support in three conflict-affected States (Borno, Yobe, Adamawa). In these States, at least 802 schools remain closed and 497 classrooms are listed as destroyed, with another 1,392 damaged but repairable.

If this is the situation in the North Eastern Nigeria and some other parts of the northern Nigeria, this implies that a lot of young Nigerians who are being looked forward to as future leaders who are expected to develop Nigeria are been denied the right to education. Under the Nigeria child's Right Act, right to education is lucidly explained, in section 15 of this Act that every child has the right to free, compulsory and Universal basic education at least up to Junior Secondary School (Taiwo, 2007).

ATTEMPTS TO EDUCATE CHILDREN

Nigeria, having for long, understood the importance of education and the repercussions of neglecting the children of school age to their fate, has taking some steps in the past to create enabling environment for the children of the school age to enrol in the school in the time past. As a matter of fact, there had been a conscious effort from the Nigerian government to get all Nigerian children educated since the pre-independence era but in most cases the effort to introduce education for all is usually met with resistance and hiccups. Most especially in the northern part of Nigeria, the resistance was higher than other parts of the country due to early introduction of Islamic education in the north. Dahuwa (2012) asserts that, "there was apparent late appearance Christian missions in the north, this late appearance resulted in the late introduction of western education in the northern Nigeria". Musa (2010) corroborating this says: Around 1900 when the first missionary team led by Bishop Herbert Tugwell visited Kano in company of other missionaries, with the intention of introducing western education and Christianity, they were misunderstood; they were seen as spies, to this extent, the then Emir of Kano, Aliyu, gave them seventy-two hours within which to pack and leave Kano. When the team sent to the Emir told him of their mission, he replied thus:

Start a school? No. We have our own and our children are taught the Quran. ...Medical work? No. Our medicine is the Holy Quran and the name of Allah. We do not want you; you can go. I give you three days to prepare a hundred donkeys to carry your loads back to Zaria, and we never wish to see you gain. (Musa, 2010).

To further stimulate access to school later, in some parts of Nigeria then, free education schemes was introduced in the mid-1950s (Pai, 2002). This was done with the intention of getting all the school age children enrolled in the school so as to have access to formal education. In the same vein, to boost education for all, Federal Government of Nigeria followed the same pattern in 1970s by introducing Universal Primary

Education. Also in 1999, the democratic regime of Olusegun Obasanjo and Atiku Abubakar flagged off Universal Basic Education for all Nigeria children (Pai, 2002), the purpose of this programme was to have all the Nigerian children gain equal access to Western Education so as to face-off the syndrome of out-of-school from the Nigeria nation. The U B E that was introduced achieved some measures of success because, Gidado cited by Ibraheem (2013) attests to the fact that the scheme was not only succeeded in raising the enrolment level of the pupils, but it also raise the awareness of the populace for education. Taiwo cited by Ibraheem shares the same view that the scheme, "led to an increment in enrolment from six million in 1976 to twelve million in 1980". But unfortunately, the scheme cannot be sustained for long by the Federal Government of Nigeria. In the same vein, Jonathan regime, in a bid to make every school age Nigerian have access to western education, took the initiative of revolutionizing education sector by incorporating Alimajirin system of education into western type of education. This system created opportunity for the alimajirins to have full-fledge chances of having both western and Islamic education simultaneously under the same roof. But none of these programmes has been able to provide a lasting solution to out-of-school problem in Nigeria.

IMPORTANT OF EDUCATION TO NIGERIA NATION

In this contemporary society of ours, the role of education cannot be over emphasized. To perform efficiently and greatly in every human endeavour today, there is the need for one to be educated. Singh (2007) explicitly made it clear that acquisition of basic things in life such as individual character, personality, culture, thinking, common sense, skills, habit and other aspects of life strongly depend upon education, such as farming, plumbing, tailoring, roadside mechanic etc., require good education before one can embark on it successfully in our contemporary society.

In the same vein, education remains one of the strongest supportive tools to bring about a positive dynamism and speedy development in the society. As a matter of fact, it remains a strong yardstick through which societal development is measured; as the standard and the level of education of any given society directly determines the levels of development of such country because a particular society does not have capacity to develop above the level and standard of her education. This implies that if the large unnumber of the out-of-school children in our society have access to education; it will definitely raise the level of productivity of Nigerian society thereby leading to increase in the gross national domestic product of the country. This fact is further corroborated by Ocho (2005) thus: "Bird never improves on the type of nest used by their fore bearers, Cows have not learnt to make anything, and eagles have nothing to learn of change. It is education that makes human beings what they are."

This suggests that to bring about a lasting and meaningful development in the society the role of education is quite key. This informs the position of Gabriel (2008) that: "If you are thinking about a year ahead, sow a seed, if you are thinking of

ten years ahead plant a tree, if you are thinking about one hundred years ahead, educate the people.”

Again, the common coin use globally today to interact and engage in business and carry out other activities is through technological gadgets. The only way one can comfortably partake is through education because if one is not educated, there is no way one can be relevant. This is because in the process of interacting with these technological gadgets, there may be need for reading, writing and even engaging in some calculation (Ocho, 2005) certainly, this is only achievable through education.

Naturally, all men are created as social beings; to this extent, men are interdependent in their day-to-day activities in their social environment. As a matter of fact, man does not possess all social qualities from birth; it is systematically brought about through education. Better still, to live harmoniously in the society so as to make a meaningful human society, the role of education is paramount, because education attempts to mould and shape the behavior of the individual in such a way that he/she can play his proper role in the society without causing problem to the mutual existence of others (Jafar, 2004).

Through education, no doubt, one is equipped with necessary tool to start life on one’s own without necessarily having to depend on the parent or the government for survival in life. It is in consonance with this that, Ocho (2005) describes education as, “a process through which human beings become useful to themselves and the society.” it does not limit there, an educated person is not only useful to himself and the society alone, he/she will not also constitute nuisance and economic liability to his/her family and the society at large. An educated person cannot be gullible to the point of being recruited as a tout or thug to cause unrest and violence in the society. This makes Ocho (2005) to assert that: “education holds the key to peace and progress”.

Furthermore, in a pluralistic society like Nigeria, that has many different religious, idea, and ethnic groups with different cultural and language backgrounds, the role of education cannot be overemphasized as an agent of improving both physical and emotional unity. As a matter of fact, education can be a major tool to solidify these differences that exist in Nigeria as a result of culture, religion, language and ethnic differences; as it can play a major role in making people to imbibe the culture of togetherness despite all odds. The clamouring by some ethnic groups to braking away from Nigeria can be better handled positively through education. To this extent, if there is any time that Nigerian society needs to take care of out- of-school syndrome’s problem so as to foster unity, it is now.

III. METHODOLOGY

For this study, a survey research design will be adopted. Majorly, schools and households were visited for data collection in carrying out this research. The selected schools were visited to reveals the factors that normally lead the students to drop out of schools and to know the rate at which students drop out of school every term. Also, the people chosen in the selected households in the local government

areas were interviewed to know why some children refused to be registered in the school. The study was conducted in North-East geo-political zone of Nigeria. The zone consists of following states; Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba and Yobe states. The population of this study comprised the entire school age children within states in the zone. The study examined the children that were not undergoing formal education at the time of carrying out this research. These categories of children were counted as being out of school. However, the teachers and parents of the students in these schools were interviewed on the major causes of the children that are out-of-school. Simple cluster sampling technique was adopted. Each state in the zone forms a cluster, and in each cluster, four local government areas - two rural and two urban schools - were randomly selected for the study. In addition to this, ten (10) houses were randomly selected at each local governments selected for the study, thus, the total number of two hundred (200) houses were selected. At the time when this research was carried out insurgent crisis was still in the air at Borno state, therefore, it was not covered. Hence, the total local government areas (LGAs) that were used for this study was 20. Table 1 below depicts and summarizes the various LGAs sampled and used for the study.

State	LGA		Number of Schools		Number of Households	
	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Adamawa	Yola	Song	2	2	10	10
	Mubi	Numan	2	2	10	10
Bauchi	Azare	Giade	2	2	10	10
	Bauchi	Warji	2	2	10	10
Borno	-	-	-	-	-	-
Gombe	Gombe	Balanga	2	2	10	10
	Akko	Funakaye	2	2	10	10
Taraba	Jalingo	Karin-	2	2	10	10
	Zing	Lamido Gashaka	2	2	10	10
Yobe	Damaturu	Jakusko	2	2	10	10
	Fika	Yunusari	2	2	10	10
Total			20	20	100	100

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 1: Sampled LGAs Used for the study

State	Selected Schools in Urban area			No. of Teachers	Selected Schools in Rural area			No. of Teachers
Adamawa	Yola	A	21	Song	A	12		
		B	18		B	16		
	Mubi	C	23	Numan	C	13		
		D	20		D	14		
		Total	82		Total	55		
Bauchi	Azare	A	20	Giade	A	17		
		B	25		B	16		
	Bauchi	C	21	Warji	C	13		
		D	23		D	14		
		Total	89		Total	60		
Borno	-	-	-	-	-			
Gombe	Gombe	A	24	Balanga	A	13		
		B	18		B	15		
	Akko	C	22	Funakaye	C	12		
		D	20		D	11		
		Total	84		Total	51		
Taraba	Jalingo	A	20	Karin-Lamido	A	14		
		B	23		B	13		
	Zing	C	19	Gashaka	C	12		
		D	25		D	10		
		Total	87		Total	49		
Yobe	Damaturu	A	22	Jakusko	A	12		
		B	18		B	14		
	Fika	C	17	Yunusari	C	10		
		D	21		D	11		
		Total	78		Total	47		
Total			420			262		

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 2: Selected schools with number of teachers and head of schools from each sampled LGAs

Data in Table 2 depicts number of teachers sampled for the study from the schools in rural and urban areas. Four hundred and twenty (420) teachers from schools in urban area and 262 teachers from schools in rural areas, which are total up to six hundred and eighty-two (682) of the teachers whose

opinions, were sampled for the study. Besides, it was earlier said that 100 households from urban and rural areas, making a total of 200 households were randomly selected for the study.

The instrument for data collection for this study was researcher's self-developed questionnaire made up of items which are built to reflect the demographic information of the respondents, on the factors that made formal education unattractive to the children of the school age; factors that make the children of school age who supposed to have been enrolled in school to be at home, also the factors that hinder the physically challenged children to be out-of-school. Questions were framed in a way that made it simple to sort out solutions from the sampled population. To this extent, the degrees of the responses followed the pattern of: "Strongly Agree", "Agree", "Strongly Disagree", "Disagree" and "Undecided", which are numerically assigned as 4, 3, 2, 1 and 0 respectively. The criteria used to agree to a statement item are based on computed mean as follows:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{4 + 3 + 2 + 1 + 0}{5} = 2.5$$

That implies that a statement item is agreed upon if computed mean is equal or greater than 2.5, if otherwise, the statement is disagreed upon.

In addition to this, structured oral interview was conducted to gather information from the head of household whose children were supposed to be in school but were not and as well as school age children who were not enrolled in school but can be found on the street. In establishing the reliability of the instrument, the instrument was trial tested in Kiyawa local government area of Jigawa state which was not part of the study area. The data collected from the pilot study was analysed so as to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire using Cronbach Alpha and the result yielded 0.73, which was considered reliable.

The self-developed questionnaires were administered in the selected LGAs. The researcher employed the services of five research assistants who helped to administer the questionnaire and conducted interviews to various schools and head of household in the study areas. However, these research assistants were trained on what to be done in the field where data were to be collected. Each research assistant covered each state in the zone. All the research questions that guided this study were answered one after the other using descriptive statistics such as simple percentage, mean, standard deviations, bar charts and pie charts with the aid of statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) version 17.0.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

All research questions were answered one after the other using descriptive statistics while the three formulated hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics.

RETRIEVAL OF QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaires administered to teachers and parents were collected after two days by the research assistants assigned for the task. The percentages of the returned questionnaires are shown below:

Category of Respondents	No. of copies of questionnaire distributed	No. of copies of questionnaire returned	Percentage administered	Percentage returned
Teachers	682	660	100%	95%
Parents	200	196	100%	98%

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 3: Percentage of retrieved questionnaires from the respondents

RESEARCH QUESTION ONE: Can early marriage serve as a hindrance to education of both boys and girls of school age

S/N	Statement	N = 858	Mean	SD	Remark
1	My wards stopped going to school since he/she has got married.		2.81	0.96	Agreed
2	Combining marriage and schooling is too challenging, so some of the male children in the family quit schooling for farming so as to get food to feed the family.		3.30	0.77	Agreed
3	I prefer to marry my female children off so as to continue their education in their matrimonial home, if their husbands so wish,		2.80	0.91	Agreed
4	Engaging in early marriage cannot stop my wards from pursuing their western education.		3.04	0.84	Agreed
Overall			2.99	0.87	Agreed

KEY: N = Sample Size, SD = Standard Deviation

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 4: Mean and SD ratings of Teachers and Parents on early marriage as a hindrance to education of both boys and girls of school age

Data on Table 4 presents mean and standard deviation ratings of teachers and parents on the early marriage as an obstacle to education of both boys and girls of school age. It was observed that all four item statements were agreed upon by the respondents. This is so because computed means for all the four statements sought to find out whether early marriage serves an obstacle to education of children of school age were greater than the cut-off point (2.50). Therefore, it can be concluded that early marriage is a hindrance to education of both boys and girls of school age. This is also indicated in the computed overall mean (2.99) which is greater than the cut-off point (2.50). Observation on computed standard deviations (SD) showed that there was closeness in the respondents' rating as SD is lower than the cut-off point.

RESEARCH QUESTION TWO: Can poverty be a hindrance to enrolment of school age children in the schools?

S/N	Statement	N = 858	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Since government owned schools were destroyed, I cannot afford to send my wards to private school.		2.81	0.91	Agreed
2	My inability to meet the financial needs of my children in the school, made them not to enrol in the school.		2.83	0.95	Agreed
3	Some of my children do embark on street selling so as to get means of livelihood for the whole family members.		2.14	0.95	Disagreed
4	There may not be job opportunity for my child after graduating from school, so I refused to enrol him/her.		3.34	0.69	Agreed
Overall			2.78	0.89	Agreed

KEY: N = Sample Size, SD = Standard Deviation

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 5: Mean and SD ratings of Teachers and Parents on poverty as a hindrance to education of school age children

Table 5 presents mean and standard deviation ratings of teachers and parents on poverty as a hindrance to education of school age children. It is clearly shown here that out of four item statements presented to elicit respondents' opinions on this factor, three were agreed upon, while item statement 3 which states that "children do go on errands to sell items and out of which we get their daily livelihood" was not unanimously agreed upon. This is true because computed means for items 1, 2 and 4 were greater than the cuff point (2.50), while item 3 had computed mean (2,14) which is less than the cut-off point. In addition to this, computed overall mean is 2.78 which are greater than 2.50; this therefore, indicated that poverty can be a hindrance to enrolment of school age children in the school.

RESEARCH QUESTION THREE: Can cultural belief system of people serves as a hindrance to education of school age children?

S/N	Statement	N = 858	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Some of my children are out of school so as to get someone to rear my animals for me		2.92	0.82	Agreed
2	Combining marriage and schooling is too challenging, so my male children have abandon western education to focusing on family care.		2.80	1.05	Agreed
3	I did not send my children to school so that they can be assisting me in my farming activities.		2.81	0.10	Agreed
4	I prefer my male children to engage in farming activities than to be enrolled in the school because the reward from the farm is better than the reward from the school.		2.74	0.91	Agreed
Overall			2.82	0.72	Agreed

KEY: N = Sample Size, SD = Standard Deviation

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 6: Mean and SD ratings of Teachers and Parents on cultural belief system as a hindrance to education of school age children

Data on Table 6 presents mean and standard deviation ratings of teachers and parents on cultural belief system as an obstacle to education of school age children. It was observed that all four item statements presented to elicit information from the respondents on this factor were agreed upon. The computed mean for each of the four item statements also attested to this, as it was greater than the cut-off point (2.50). Therefore, it can be concluded that cultural belief system of people hinders education of school age children. Besides, Table 6 also revealed that the computed overall mean (2.82) for four item statements, which is greater than the cut-off point (2.50), attested to the assertion. A critical look at the computed standard deviations (SD) showed that there was closeness in the respondents' rating as SD (0.72) is lower than the cut-off point (2.50).

RESEARCH QUESTION FOUR: Does incessant attacks of the insurgents on the school have negative influence on the out-of-school rate?

S/N	Statement	N = 858	Mean	SD	Remark
1	Incessant attacks of the insurgents made many of my school age children to drop out of school in recent time.		3.59	0.69	Agreed
2	I withdrew my children from the school because there is no adequate security arrangement in the school.		3.16	0.41	Agreed

3	I am afraid to enrol my wards in any of the schools in the north east of Nigeria due to the frequent insurgent attacks.	2.60	0.85	Agreed
4	I prefer my female children to stay at home than to go to school due to incessant attacks on schools.	2.51	1.13	Agreed
Overall		2.97	0.77	Agreed

KEY: N = Sample Size, SD = Standard Deviation

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 7: Mean and SD ratings of Teachers and Parents on the effects of incessant attacks on schools and the school age children by the insurgents on the upsurge of out-of-schools rate

Data on Table 7 shows that the mean and standard deviation ratings of teachers and parents on the effects of incessant attacks on drop-out and out-of-school rate in the North East of Nigeria. This is evident from the information gathered from the respondents, as the computed mean for each of the four item statements were greater than the cut-off point (2.50). Therefore, it can be inferred from the computed mean values that incessant attacks on the schools has influence on the increment in the out-of-school and drop-out rate of school age children. Also, the table 7 showed that computed overall mean (2.97) for the four item statements is greater than the cut-off point (2.50), which also attested to this fact. A critical look at the computed standard deviations (SD) showed that there was closeness in the respondents' rating as SD (0.77) is less than the cut-off point (2.50).

RESULT OF CONDUCTED INTERVIEW

section produces report of interview conducted among out-of-school children found on the streets of the selected local government areas for the study. 10 children (picked on the street) were randomly selected from each local government area as sample. In all, 200 children, who were picked on the street, were interviewed on the main reasons why they were not in the school. When these children were asked to state the reasons why they did not go to school, table 12 showed different answers they stated.

S/N	Reason Provided	Frequency			Percentage (%)		
		Yes	No	Total	Yes	No	Total
1	Insurgency attack	156	44	200	78	22	100
2	Parents do not have money to charter for my needs in school.	132	68	200	66	34	100
3	School is too far from house.	79	121	200	39	61	100
4	School environment is not good enough for study	83	117	200	41	59	100
5	Going to farm to rear animal and help my father for farming activities prevented me from attending school	124	76	200	62	38	100
6	I cannot continue my education because my parent has married me out.	27	173	200	13	87	100

Source: Fieldwork 2018

Table 8: Frequency and Percentage (%) of responses of children on the street selected LGAs for the study

Data in a Table 8 depicts frequency and percentage (%) of responses of children randomly selected on the street in the selected LGAs for the study of the main reasons why they were out-of-school at period of the interview. Insurgency attack on the schools has high frequency of 156 equivalents to 78%. The next reason why children were out-of-school was inability of the parents to cater for their wards' needs in school. This attracted the frequency of 132(66%). Another reason provided by the children on street was that they help their fathers on the farm by rearing animals and engage in farm activities with number of respondents equal to 124 equivalents to 62%. These factors did not constitute one of the factors why the children are out-of-school; rather, it only contributed to the rate of absenteeism. From the responses obtained from these children, proximity of school has nothing to do with their non-attendance of school, school environment is not enough for study and I cannot continue my education again because my parents had married me out has the percentage of 61%, 59% and 87% responses respectively. The data in table 11 is presented in bar chart below for better interpretation.

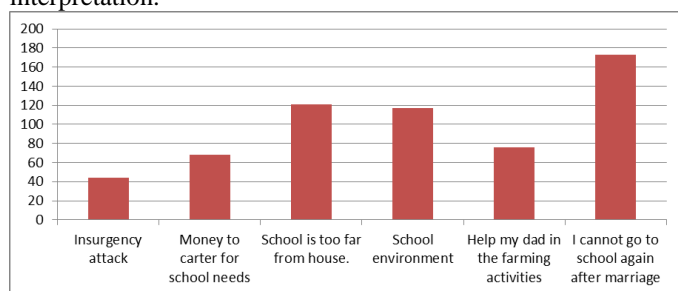


Figure 1: Bar chart showing reasons provided by out-of-school children

Also, children on the street were asked if they will like to continue their education if the obstacles are removed, majority of them responded in affirmative. One of the children said “My major problem why I am out of school apart from the problem of insurgency attack on my school is that my parents are poor and if they get money today, they will take me back to school. Another child responded that “we trek to school from Monday to Friday; it is insurgency that put fear in our mind, that is why I didn't go to the school”.

One child said that “if I am not enrolled in the school before I get married, I will convince my husband to enrol in school after marriage. My father is an elite; he will not allow me to miss western education. I know he would have instructed my husband before marrying me out”. In fact, many children responded almost the same way using different words.

In addition, some girls responded that: “since will witnessed insurgency attack on our schools, we have not been going to the school again. Instead we go to farm to assist our fathers on the farm”. We will continue our schooling when peace is restored in our various communities”.

Many children also responded that: “if government provide security in our various schools, we are ready to continue our education; the only problem is that our parents lack financial strength to cater for our education”.

Another one said: “I am a Fulani boy; I will help my father to rear his cattle. Let me tell you, if I face the rearing of

these animals very well, I will make more money than any of my friends who goes to school”.

V. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings from this research are as follows:

- ✓ Early marriage forms a significant hindrance to education of both boys and girls of school age.
- ✓ Poverty on the part of parents can be an obstacle to school-age children to be out-of-schools.
- ✓ Cultural belief system of people hinders continuation of education of school age children.
- ✓ Incessant insurgency attacks catalysis upsurge in number of out-of-school and drop-outs of school age children.

VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The research revealed that there are several factors that serve as hindrance to education achievement of both male and female children in the north eastern Nigeria. These factors also serve as boost to increment in the school dropout and out-of-school rate in the same region. These factors range from incessant insurgency attacks on the schools, poverty, and early marriage, influence of religion, large family size and the environmental factors. Insurgency attacks account for the major reason why the north east in particular and Nigeria in general records increment in out-of-school rate. In most cases when an attack is carried out by the insurgents, soft targets like schools teachers and pupils are always their targets; the schools are destroyed, leaving so many school age children out of school and large numbers of them adopted. Asides from so many underneath silent popular cases of adoption, popular case in point are the cases of Chibok and Dapchi attacks and adoption which saw so many school age children adopted; at the period of compilation of this research, cases of unreported attacks and adoption are still on the high side.

This research also revealed that early marriage is a huge hindrance to education of both boys and girls of school age in the north east; this however contributes, to a large extent, to the rate of school drop-out and out-of-school in the north eastern Nigeria. This, therefore, point to the fact that in any society where early marriage is cherished, out-of-school rate is bound to be high. This opinion is consistent with the finding of Sekine & Hodgkin (2014) in Nepal, where early marriage had dropped-out so many school age female children. However, the pattern of drop-out noticed in the north east Nigeria is pyramidal in nature. The risk of school dropout due to marriage heightens after girls complete the sixth years of secondary school education. But to some extent, this rate is low after the junior secondary school education, and quite low and minimal after the primary school education. Because this early marriage curtails the child's education, this definitely had adverse effects on the general health condition of these young mothers, and puts the affected in a disadvantaged position health wise. While this affects both male and female child, girls are much more affected as they are the one who take care for both home and the children.

From our survey, economic factor is one of the major factors which are working against some of the family from enrolling their children in the school. Not only this, it is one of the primary factors that dropped so many school age children out of school. Aside from the fact that the majority of the sampled family are very poor; their income is not enough to support the size of their family. To this extent, in most cases, most sampled families are faced with the difficult choice of not sending their children to, some time, hawk on the street so as to augment the meagre income of their parents. Added to this problem is poor financing on the part of government, this has become the biggest obstacle to improving education quality and even ensure education for all in Nigeria. as a result of this, from the survey carried out, most of these children, instead of going to the school, engage in street begging and others are hawking so has to get the means of livelihood for the family. In some cases, while doing this, most of them are subject to abuse.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study has established that there are quite number of out-of-school children in the Nigerian society. This large number of out-of-school children has potential to further increase due to many reasons, such as, kidnapping of school children, insurgency, communal conflicts, early marriage, cultural and religious factors which have proved inimical to enrolment and smooth running of school in the contemporary Nigerian society. Since education is very important to the development of every society (Nigeria inclusive), Nigerian government should take a bold step to addressing every hinderance to the smooth enrolment of every school children in all parts of Nigeria so as to get them back to school.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings in this study, the following recommendations are proffered as follows:

- ✓ Nigerian government should provide adequate protection for every school, this protection should include uniform force-men, adequate fencing and installation of close circuit television (CCTV) cameras in all Nigerian schools.
- ✓ Government should legislate against early marriage so that many underage children will not drop out of school for marriage.
- ✓ Adequate sensitization should be given to the parents by the National Orientation Agency (NOA) through mass media to get parents out of ignorant they glued to so that their wards can get educated before marriage.
- ✓ School feeding programme of government should be sustained and revitalized to encourage children to go to school,
- ✓ Federal and state government should provide qualitative free education to the children of the poor at all levels.

- ✓ Essentials learning materials such as uniform, textbooks, notebooks, biros, pencils, etc should be provided to the school by government and distributed to primary school age children.
- ✓ Nigerian government and other stakeholders in education should create a conducive learning environment for the school children by providing good classrooms and toilets.

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