

ASSESSMENT OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PREPAREDNESS TOWARDS SECURITY CHALLENGES IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE

Akporehe, D. A.

Department of Educational Foundations and Administration,
College of Education, Warri.

Abstract

Security challenges in Nigeria have assumed an alarming proportion that it is worrisome to education stakeholder. There is always apprehension that schools could be target of attacks. The study therefore looked at the preparedness of pre service teacher towards security challenges in primary education with a view of sensitizing awareness on security issues that the teachers are likely to face on the job. Pre service Teacher Preparedness Towards Security Challenges Questionnaire (PTPTSCQ) was used to solicit information from pre service teachers. Three hundred respondents were utilized for the study. The findings from the ratings showed that pre service teachers were not prepared for security challenges in schools with 32% of the respondents who said they cannot judge if their curriculum is preparing them to handle security challenges; 18% said not prepared, 20% said they were moderately prepared, 23% rated prepared while only 7% said they are well prepared for security challenges they may face in their place of job. The t-test showed no gender difference on their views of their preparedness towards security challenges in schools. It was recommended among others that the curriculum of pre-service NCE teachers should be reviewed to accommodate security challenges in Delta state.

Keywords: security challenges, pre-service, curriculum, planning

Introduction

The educational system is deemed to be the magic wand that will cure the ills of the society and that is why nations' philosophy of education is predicated on what education can contribute to national development. The utmost importance attached to education in Nigeria was clearly underscored in the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) where the Federal Republic of Nigeria, in this policy document adopted education as an instrument "par excellence" for effecting national development. Amongst the aims of formal education by FRN (2004) is the inculcation of the right values and attitudes for the survival of the individual and Nigerian society.

However, these lofty goals of the NPE seem far from being achieved because of security challenges and other unintended consequences of the product of the educational system. The fact remains that ethical issues arising from the philosophy of education in Nigeria are not articulated in the curriculum thereby rendering

the NPE a mere document. The tenets of peace building, hard work, love, unity, moral rectitude and others could more or less say to be eroded among citizenry.

These unintended outcomes of the educational system are pointers to the fact that the educational system is not performing up to expectation as the curriculum has not translated to meeting the well being of Nigerians. There is therefore, urgent need for developing new curriculum to meet current needs of Nigeria especially security challenges. The education system through her curriculum content can be well planned toward solving security challenges. This is why pre-service teacher curriculum should be the focal point if positive ideas are to be imbued in the citizenry early in life. The curriculum should have areas like counseling, entrepreneurial education, civic and citizenship woven into their courses for resolving security challenges in our nation. As found by Ekechukwu and Amaeze (2016) a significant positive high relationship between counseling services and

security education in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The study is based on the open system theory with Bertalanffy as the protagonist in 1956. Although the study was in biology field, it could be applicable across all disciplines. Open system is a system which continuously interacts with its environment or surrounding. Thus the products of education system interact with the society by way of teaching. The curriculum must be useful in the society by way of incorporating tenets of national security which should be taught to pre-service teachers.

Akporehe and Obielumanin (2013) opined that national security is a multidimensional concept that cuts across every fabric of our national life and corporate existence. Dasuki (2013) maintained that security implies a stable, relatively predictable environment in which an individual or group may pursue its end or objectives without disruption, harm, danger and without fear of disturbance or injury. It cut across both military parlance and also other aspects of national life. There is no doubt that a safe environment can promote learning. As noted by Oluyomi, and Musa (2016), safety of the Nigerian child in school is not a luxury but a necessity that demands urgent attention of stakeholders in the education sector. Igbuzo (2011) noted that peace and security education can help to create the enabling environment, the people, the organization and action needed to bring about sustainable peace and development. Provision of education therefore demands adequate planning in order to attain national security. The attacks on schools resulted in the killing of students, teachers and destruction of school buildings and closing down of schools for a very long period in the North East of Nigeria and already these places are marked as educationally backward, Alimba (2018).

Education is a weapon for self realization and liberation from ignorance as well as a tool for enlightenment and development. Alima (2018) citing Adejoh (2015) maintained that security education is used to connote the form of education that employs various educational

approaches to inculcate in recipients a level of security alertness and/or expertise that would make them active participants in the promotion of the safety and security of self and country.

Alima (2018) maintained that security education is significant because it helps to; (i) expose individuals to the existing security rules and regulations in a place, (ii) encourage individuals to understand the dynamic nature of threat and its emerging source(s) in their environments, (iii) Motivate individuals to be able to identify and categorise threats, whether it is an internal or external one, and (iv) inspire individuals to know the first line of action to employ to react to threat in order to enhance self security and the security of people in a place

As noted by Obunadike (2013), and Nwadiani (1998), for education to serve as an instrument for national transformation in Nigeria, it must target specific issues and areas in the nation and its economy. Although Igbokwe (2015) showed various curriculum change in basic education programme, the teachers who are to inculcate these basic ideas, skill and knowledge must be equipped to face those challenges whenever the need arises.

Statement of the Problem

The researcher is concerned that Delta State schools could face security challenges and wants to know the preparedness of pre-service teachers towards handling security challenges that could crop up in their school. This necessary as it is alleged that pre service teachers do not possess security awareness knowledge in their course contents, The questions that arise are as follow: Does the curriculum of pre-service teachers contain content that can prepare for security challenges; Are our pre service teachers trained or fortified with basic skills for detecting security threats as they prepare to face the society in their work place?

The objectives of the research work is to determine the preparedness of pre-service teachers for mitigating security challenges; and help to determine the adequacy or order

wise of the curriculum content to address security challenges in the schools. The study will be significant for re-examining curriculum content of teacher education as well sensitizing pre service teacher towards security challenges in Delta State primary schools as developing proactive ways of preventing security challenges.

Research Question: What are the ratings of the pre-service teachers on their preparedness towards security challenges in primary schools in Delta state?

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between male and female pre-service teachers in their rating of preparedness towards security challenges in primary schools in Delta state?

Methodology

The study is a survey design, while the population of the study is the students of the three colleges of education in Delta State. The sample size was selected from the schools in the institutions. A total of 300 students were selected from the institutions. One hundred students were selected from each institution. The subjects were purposefully selected from the various departments as all of them are pre service teachers that would be prospective

teachers. The instrument utilized for the study was Pre-service Teacher Preparedness Towards Security Challenges Questionnaire (PTPTSCQ) that was rated in this order. a) Cannot judge, b) Not prepared, c) moderately prepared, d) prepared, and e) well prepared. This corresponds with 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 ratings respectively. The instrument was used to solicit the views of pre-service teachers, on how they rate themselves as being prepared for handling security challenges that they are likely to encounter in their place of primary assignment. The instrument was scrutinized by experts in test construction and it was found valid. Pearson r was utilized to test the reliability of the instrument and it was found to be .75 depicting that the instrument is reliable. Data were analyzed using percentages and t-test with Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) at .05 significant level.

Results

Research Question: What are the ratings of the pre-service teachers on their preparedness towards security challenges in primary schools in Delta State?

Table 1: Pre-service Teachers Ratings on (PTPTSCQ) rated in order of; 1) Cannot judge, 2) Not prepared, 3) moderately prepared 4) Prepared, 5) Well prepared.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Percentage Ratings				
		1	2	3	4	5
1	I am prepared for security challenges having learnt prevention curriculum, instruction, or training for students (e.g., social skills training).	50	16.7	16.7	16.6	0
2	Counseling, social work, psychological, or therapeutic activity for students	33.3	16.7	0	50	0
3	Programs to promote sense of community/social integration among students.	50	16.7	33.3	0	0
4	Individual attention/mentoring/tutoring/coaching of students by adults approaches	16.7	16.7	33.3	33.3	0
5	Training teachers and staff in school safety or crime prevention	16.7	16.7	16.7	33.2	16.7
6	Performance of one or more random sweeps for contraband (e.g., drugs or weapons, but not including dog sniffs)	50	33.3		16.7	
7	Detection of peer relationship in schools.	16.7	16.7		66.6	
8	Detecting visitors with evil motive	50	16.7		33.3	
9	Training to enforced discipline in learner.	33.3	33.3	16.7		16.7
10	Ways of accessing police cell phone number in case of any external attack	33.3	33.3	16.7		16.7
11	Community relations techniques where schools are cited	50	33.3		16.7	

12	Security alertness techniques	50			33.3	16.7
13	Programs to promote sense of community/social integration among students	33.3	16.7	33.3	16.7	
14	Ways of resolving student conduct problems (e.g., conflict resolution or peer mediation, student court)	16.7	16.7	33.3	33.3	
15	Orientation programme for new in takes	16.7	33.3	16.7		33.3
16	Training on technical assistance to parents in dealing with students' problem behavior	16.7	33.3	16.6	16.7	16.7
17	How to seek history of students	33.3	16.7	16.7	16.6	16.7
18	Religious organizations interface	33.3	16.7	16.7	33.3	
19	Social service agencies interface	66.6		16.7	16.7	
20	How to detect drug abuse tendencies in learners	33.3	16.7	33.3		16.7
21	Civic education	16.7		33.3	33.3	16.7
22	Ways of Collaborating with security agents for curbing crimes in schools	16.7	16.7	50	16.6	
23	From seminars on training of pre-service teachers in school safety or crime prevention	33.2	16.7	16.7	16.7	16.7
24	Training in school-wide discipline policies and practices related to violence	16.7	33.3	33.3	16.7	
25	Training in recognizing early warning signs of students likely to exhibit violent behavior	16.7	33.3		50	
26	Training in your course of study how to handle deviant behaviour	16.7		50	33.3	
27	Detecting early signs of child abuse in learner	16.7		33.3	16.7	33.3
28	Curbing ethnocentric tendencies in learner	33.3		50	16.7	
29	Use of internet sources to monitor student interactions	66.6		16.7	16.7	
30	Identifying learners learning potentials.	16.7	33.3		50	
	TOTAL	950.9	533.5	600	699.7	216.9
	Percentages	32	18	20	23	7

From Table 1, it can be observed that the curriculum did not adequately equip the pre service teachers with knowledge for handling security challenges in the teaching profession. For example, the percentage ratings on item one "Prevention curriculum, instruction, or training for students (e.g., social skills training)" were 50 "Cannot judge", 17 "not prepared", 17 "prepared", 17 "moderately prepared" and 0 rating on "well prepared". The curriculum should be an outgrowth of the needs of the society. Security challenge being an emergent problem in the society must be woven into courses taught in pre service teacher education programme. Item 2 showed that pre service teachers have counseling knowledge that will prepare for security challenges in schools with these % ratings: 33.3, "cannot judge", 16.7 "not prepared"; no rating on "moderately prepared"; 50 percent rating showed "prepared", while no rating on "well prepared". This is gladdened as young people need counseling to avert tendencies that promote insecurity in schools.

The rating also showed that the pre-service teachers do not possess knowledge of detecting abnormal tendencies in children in the pre-service teachers academic work. Example, in question 6 that says "perform one or more random sweeps for contraband (e.g. drugs or weapons, but not including dog sniffs)" the pre service teacher ratings showed that their education work do not provide them with knowledge to detect such threats. Their ratings percentages were 50 "Cannot judge", 33.3 "not prepared", no rating for "moderately prepared", 16.7 "prepared" and no response on "well prepared".

In questionnaire item 11 that says "prepare for community relations where schools are cited", the percentage ratings are 50 "cannot judge", 33.3 "not prepared", no response rating for "moderately prepared", 16.7 rated "prepared" while there was no rating on "well prepared". The school and the community must synergize to curb insecurity. Where there is no mutual

relationship between the two bodies, insecurity can crop up. On question 29 "use of internet sources to monitor student interactions" the ratings were 66.6 "cannot judge", there was no rating for "not prepared", 16.7 rated for "moderately prepared", 16.7 "prepared" while there was no rating for "well prepared". There is no doubt that in these days of information communication technology, use of internet will help in tracking interactions of students so as to form a basis for counseling in schools. Pre-service teacher ought to be acquainted with the use of internet facilities as teaching resources abound there if well exploited. This

lack of knowledge can be owing to lack of the facilities in the institutions. On the whole, the ratings showed that the pre-service teachers are not prepared for security challenges that they may encounter in teaching.

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between male and female pre-service teachers in their rating of preparedness towards security challenges in primary schools in Delta state? Tables II and III present the results of test of the hypothesis.

Table 2: Group Statistics for t-test

	SEX	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Preparedness	male	150	78.5733	28.03314	2.28890
	female	150	78.4267	27.97514	2.28416

Table 3: Independent Samples T-test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
preparedness	Equal variances assumed	.004	.950	.045	298	.964	.14667	3.23364	6.21700	6.51033
	Equal variances not assumed			.045	297.999	.964	.14667	3.23364	6.21700	6.51033

The t-test showed that there is no significant difference between the responses of male and female pre service teachers on their views of their preparedness towards security challenges in their work place. This is because the calculated value of .964 is more than .05. One would have expected that male pre service teachers will respond positively because of their natural bravado. In fact there is the impression that when male teachers are in school, a sense of protection, safety, discipline is being felt. But the findings showed otherwise that gender is not a determinant factor of security preparedness of pre service teachers.

Discussion of Findings

As shown from table I, the overall percentage ratings of the questionnaire items showed 32% "cannot judge if their curriculum is preparing them to handle security challenges"; 18% showed not prepared, 20% prepared, 23% moderately prepared and only 7% rated they were well prepared to handle security challenges in schools. It is worrisome that some pre service teachers may not be capable in handling security problem that they are likely to confront in schools.. That the curriculum content is not adequate to meet security challenges that pre-service teachers

will face in the teaching profession as revealed by the study is highly worrisome.

Only well planned curriculum can promote a secured nation. Igbuzo (2011) had said that peace and security education can help to create the enabling environment, the people, the organization and the action needed to bring about sustainable peace and development. However, the pre-service teachers are not prepared for security challenges as seen in the instrument. The rating showed that the pre service teachers do not possess the requisite skills for proffering any help, either preventive or giving immediate solution to security challenges in school. This may be arising from poor course content in their curriculum. If teachers who are to act in loco parentis do not have anything to offer in terms of unpredicted security challenges, it means schooling in Delta State primary education system is in serious danger. Our learners would be vulnerable to insecurity eventualities. Proactive measures have to be taken to ensure that children/learners are protected while in school. This calls for re-examination and developing curriculum for our educational system. Obunadike (2013) and Nwadiani (1998) had opined that for education to serve as an instrument for national transformation in Nigeria, it must target specific issues and areas in the nation and its economy.

The finding that there is no significant difference between male and female pre-service teachers on preparedness for security challenges in schools is indeed a matter of concern. Male gender is usually associated with strength and bravery in handling issues. This will definitely have impact on the confidence schools and parents would have on the ability of the school to protect their wards. However it is cheering that the pre-service teachers are prepare for security challenges they are likely to meet as teachers in primary schools. The role of counseling in any level of education cannot be overlooked as it can mitigate bad tendencies in children and even adults.

Conclusion and Recommendations

It was concluded that pre-service teachers in Delta state colleges of education are not prepared for handling security challenges in the teaching profession. It was also concluded that the curriculum of the pre-service teachers is not developing measures proactive to security challenges that could confront teachers. It was concluded that pre service teacher are not being trained in aspect of community relations, so they may not have the capacity to handle issues emanating from community .Since a good relationship could foster peace in community and schools are part of the community good relationship is encouraged .

It is therefore recommended that educational planners should go back to the drawing board to fashion the curriculum that will take security challenges into consideration. Periodic orientation should be organized for pre service teachers for them to be abreast with security challenges that they are likely to meet in school and equally provide security tips to them. Security agents should be deployed to guide schools to avert the occurrences of security breach as well as avoidance of similar incidences of Chibok girls' abduction.

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