

MANAGING INSECURITY IN NIGERIA THROUGH QUALITY EDUCATION IN THE POST-COVID-19 ERA

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ABSTRACT

In Nigeria, the persistent challenges of insecurity have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable solutions. This paper explores the critical role of quality education in mitigating insecurity in the post-COVID-19 era. Quality education is essential for driving socio-economic progress, nurturing critical thinking, fostering social cohesion, and empowering individuals and communities. The study draws on an analysis of existing literature, including the educational theory established by the EdQual Research Programme Consortium, supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID). The findings underscore that quality education is pivotal for socio-economic development and addressing insecurity in Nigeria. Significant investment in educational infrastructure and strengthening teacher training programs is essential for improving learning outcomes. Comprehensive curriculum reforms are necessary to prioritize civic education, conflict resolution skills, and vocational training. Prioritizing quality education enables policymakers to tackle the root causes of insecurity and foster a resilient society. Key recommendations include increasing investment in educational infrastructure, implementing teacher training programs, and adopting innovative teaching methods to enhance learning outcomes. Additionally, there is a pressing need for curriculum reforms that emphasize civic education, conflict resolution skills, and vocational training to equip students with the tools necessary for peaceful coexistence and economic self-reliance. By prioritizing quality education, policymakers can address the root causes of insecurity in Nigeria, fostering a more resilient society capable of meeting emerging challenges in the post-COVID era. This paper contributes to the discourse on sustainable development and peace-building efforts in Nigeria, underscoring the transformative potential of education in shaping a safer and more prosperous future for all citizens.

Key words: Education, Quality Education, Insecurity

JEL Codes: F52, I28, I21

1. INTRODUCTION

Nigeria, known for its rich cultural heritage and vast natural resources, has long faced numerous security challenges. These issues range from insurgency in the Northeast to ethno-religious conflicts in the Middle Belt and communal violence in various regions, posing significant threats to stability, development, and human well-being (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014). The COVID-19 pandemic, which began in 2020, further aggravated these problems, highlighting existing vulnerabilities and exposing systemic weaknesses in Nigeria's socio-political framework. The Nigerian government, like others worldwide, struggled to manage public health crises while mitigating the socio-economic impacts of strict containment measures. These disruptions to livelihoods, educational systems, and social services have heightened tensions and grievances, exacerbating insecurity across the nation (NBS, 2021).

In this context, quality education is a crucial avenue for addressing insecurity and fostering resilience in the post-COVID era. Education is not only a fundamental human right but also plays a pivotal role in shaping individuals' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors toward conflict and violence. Numerous studies have highlighted the transformative potential of education in promoting peace, social cohesion, and sustainable development (Adeyemi & Adeniyi, 2020; Oluwatobi & Ige, 2021). However, Nigeria's education system faces numerous challenges that undermine its potential as a vehicle for peacebuilding and conflict resolution. These challenges include chronic underfunding, inadequate infrastructure, curriculum deficiencies, and a shortage of qualified educators (Olaniyi & Bolarinwa, 2022). Additionally, the unequal distribution of educational opportunities along socio-economic, geographic, and gender lines exacerbates social disparities and perpetuates cycles of poverty and marginalization (Aminu & Gidado, 2023).

Insecurity in Nigeria has become a significant obstacle to development. Farmers avoid their fields due to fear of bandits and herders, while travelers face constant threats of kidnappings and banditry. Safety is no longer assured in villages, schools, churches, workplaces, or homes (Mailuno & Mimi, 2019). Despite governmental efforts and commitments to combat these issues, the trend persists and intensifies, leading to high unemployment rates, food insecurity, soaring living costs, rampant inflation, and widespread loss of life (CBN, 2022; FAO, 2022). Establishing a functional and comprehensive education system is essential to foster attitudes that steer individuals away from negativity. Quality education equips citizens with the knowledge, understanding, and freedom to recognize their capabilities and innate potentials. It empowers individuals to think creatively about ideas and issues across various disciplines. A well-rounded education, provided through quality and functional educational systems, fosters a foundational academic approach and promotes wisdom, understanding, and freedom (Ajudeon et al., 2017).

The numerous social ills afflicting the nation today appear to stem from a lack of quality education. Governmental reforms in the education sector, including the National Policy on Education and the UBE Act, along with the Education Roadmap, aimed to achieve impactful quality education amidst persistent challenges of underfunding, inadequate facilities, and implementation issues (Achor, 2013). Recognizing these challenges, there is a growing acknowledgment of the need for holistic and contextually relevant approaches to leverage education as a catalyst for peace and security in Nigeria. By addressing systemic barriers to quality education and promoting inclusive and equitable access to learning opportunities, policymakers can empower individuals and communities to become agents of positive change, fostering a more peaceful and prosperous society (Ojo & Iyanda, 2023).

Recent data from the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN), the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS), and international organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Bank highlight the socio-economic impacts of insecurity. For instance, the NBS reported a significant rise in unemployment rates to 33.3% in the fourth quarter of 2020, while the World Bank noted an increase in the poverty headcount ratio from 40.1% in 2018 to 42.3% in 2021 (World Bank, 2021). These statistics underscore the urgent need for effective strategies to mitigate insecurity and promote sustainable development.

This study aims to inform evidence-based policy interventions that prioritize education as a driver for peacebuilding and human development in Nigeria. It explores the characteristics of quality education and proposes measures to address insecurity through quality education in Nigeria. The paper is structured as follows: Section 1 introduces the topic. Section 2 reviews the literature on the relationship between education and security. Section 3 outlines the methodology. Section 4 presents the findings and discussion. Finally, Section 5 concludes with policy recommendations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Addressing insecurity through quality education is particularly critical in Nigeria, especially in the post-COVID-19 era. Quality education, as defined by UNESCO (2021), entails providing inclusive and equitable education that imparts essential skills for personal growth, active citizenship, and employment. In Nigeria, insecurity manifests in various forms, such as terrorism, banditry, and ethno-religious conflicts, and is compounded by socio-economic disparities and systemic issues like corruption and weak governance (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014; Mailuno & Mimi, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated the need for quality education to address these challenges by exposing existing vulnerabilities in the socio-political framework (NBS, 2021). The Social Capital Theory, proposed by Bourdieu and expanded by Putnam, emphasizes how education fosters social networks and civic values crucial for peacebuilding (Putnam, 2000). Empirical research indicates that higher educational attainment is associated with lower violence and crime rates, suggesting that education can enhance social cohesion and economic development (Adeyemi & Adeniyi, 2020; Oluwatobi & Ige, 2021). However, there are gaps in understanding the specific mechanisms through which education impacts security, particularly in non-formal educational settings (Aminu & Gidado, 2023; Olaniyi & Bolarinwa, 2022). Addressing these gaps is vital for developing evidence-based policies that leverage education as a tool for peacebuilding and human development in Nigeria (Ojo & Iyanda, 2023).

2.1 CONCEPTUAL LITERATURE

The concept of managing insecurity through quality education encompasses multiple dimensions, including accessibility, equity, relevance, and outcomes. UNESCO (2021) defines quality education as inclusive and equitable, providing learners with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes necessary for personal development, active citizenship, and employment. In Nigeria, insecurity manifests in various forms, such as terrorism, banditry, and ethno-religious conflicts, which have been exacerbated by systemic issues such as corruption, weak governance, and socio-economic inequalities (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014; Mailuno & Mimi, 2019). The relationship between education and security is bidirectional; while insecurity hampers educational access and quality, education has the potential to mitigate insecurity by fostering social cohesion, economic development, and civic engagement (Adeyemi & Adeniyi, 2020).

Education, though interpreted diversely by individuals, universally implies a quest for transformative change through the acquisition of new knowledge and practices. It encompasses formal and informal processes aimed at enhancing one's capabilities for assuming new roles or responsibilities. Education stands as a catalyst for change, guiding individuals through the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values necessary for meaningful societal contributions. However, the efficacy of education is contingent upon the quality of the learning process and its outcomes.

Quality education transcends mere instruction; it embodies a commitment to excellence and relevance. It equips learners with the necessary knowledge, skills, and character traits to thrive in a dynamic world. Quality education is multifaceted, integrating various elements such as skilled educators, adequate resources, and a robust curriculum. It empowers individuals and groups to explore, appreciate, and develop their potential, fostering security and self-confidence. Security, defined as the absence of threats to life, property, and socio-economic well-being, contrasts with insecurity, characterized by escalating threats, crime, injustice, and public disorder within society. Insecurity reflects a government's failure to provide essential necessities for its people and protect itself from external aggressions, potentially eroding a nation's cohesion, values, and freedom. The significant challenges posed by insecurity to development are evident in the resources expended by the Nigerian government to address it and the resulting destruction of infrastructure.

Insecurity permeates the socio-political landscape of many nations, posing challenges to peace and development. In Nigeria, insecurity manifests through ethnic tensions, religious conflicts, and criminal activities. Despite its complex socio-economic and political origins, education's role in addressing the root causes of insecurity is increasingly acknowledged. Quality education goes beyond imparting knowledge and skills; it cultivates resilience, promotes social cohesion, and empowers individuals to confront insecurity drivers. This challenges traditional views of education as neutral, highlighting its potential to shape values, attitudes, and behaviors conducive to peaceful coexistence. In the post-COVID era, disruptions to education systems have exacerbated existing vulnerabilities and inequalities, underscoring the importance of quality education in fostering socio-emotional development, critical consciousness, and civic engagement. The COVID-19 pandemic has further highlighted the importance of quality education in managing insecurity. The pandemic-induced disruptions to livelihoods, educational systems, and social services have heightened tensions and exacerbated grievances, fueling insecurity dynamics nationwide (NBS, 2021).

This paper advocates for a critical reassessment of the conceptual framework linking education, quality education, and insecurity. By challenging entrenched assumptions and embracing innovative perspectives, new pathways can be uncovered for leveraging education as a transformative force in Nigeria's pursuit of peace, stability, and sustainable development.

2.2 THEORETICAL LITERATURE

2.2.1 Human Capital Theory

Human capital theory, advanced by economists such as Theodore Schultz and Gary Becker, posits that education enhances economic potential and productivity, benefiting society as a whole (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961). This perspective suggests that quality education can play a crucial role in managing insecurity in Nigeria, especially in the post-COVID-19 era, by increasing employability, fostering economic stability, and reducing the allure of criminal

activities. High rates of unemployment and poverty are primary drivers of insecurity in Nigeria, often leading individuals to engage in illegal activities such as theft, kidnapping, and radicalism when economic opportunities are lacking (Eze, 2020). By equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills required for employment, quality education can address these issues, reducing poverty and economic desperation. Post-COVID-19 educational initiatives should focus on vocational training in areas such as business, technology, and agriculture to meet local economic needs (UNESCO, 2021). Additionally, the pandemic has underscored the importance of digital skills for remote work and learning, making the incorporation of digital literacy into curricula essential (World Bank, 2020).

Economic stability forms the foundation of societal security. Individuals with steady employment and financial opportunities are less likely to participate in activities that threaten societal safety (Eke, 2021). Education enhances economic potential and promotes overall economic stability. People with higher levels of education are more likely to become innovators, entrepreneurs, and drivers of economic growth (Olaniyan & Okemakinde, 2008). Therefore, post-COVID-19 curricula should include education on entrepreneurship to empower individuals to start their own businesses. Community-based economic initiatives, such as training in agriculture, can also enhance local development, improve food security, and create sustainable employment opportunities (World Bank, 2020).

In regions with limited employment prospects, criminal activity may appear as a viable means of subsistence, perpetuating cycles of violence and instability (Eze, 2020). Quality education offers attractive, lawful alternatives to illegal activities. Well-educated individuals are less likely to engage in criminal behavior as they are more inclined to seek legal employment (Oshewolo, 2010). Post-COVID-19 educational initiatives should target at-risk youth with mentorship, career counseling, and life skills training (UNESCO, 2021). For those already involved in criminal activities, rehabilitation and reintegration programs, including educational initiatives in prisons, are crucial to prepare inmates for productive lives after release (Eke, 2021).

2.2.2 Social Capital Theory

Social capital theory, articulated by scholars such as Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam, emphasizes the importance of social networks, trust, and cooperation in addressing insecurity (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000). By promoting educational strategies that enhance community engagement, cooperation, and trust, education can significantly reduce insecurity in Nigeria. Post-COVID-19, educational institutions have an opportunity to implement programs that build social capital, strengthening community bonds and reducing social fragmentation. By involving students and their families in local government and cooperative projects, education systems can enhance community participation, fostering social harmony and collective accountability. Classroom group projects and collaborative learning environments can further develop students' interpersonal skills and trust, extending these to broader community interactions. Moreover, incorporating civic education and initiatives that promote democratic values and active citizenship can cultivate a more accountable and engaged society. Strengthening local institutions through partnerships with educational bodies and community organizations is crucial for maintaining social order and security.

Post-pandemic educational strategies should involve engaging parents and community members in the educational process, training teachers to adopt diverse and innovative teaching

methods, and implementing hybrid learning models to increase educational accessibility. Focusing on these areas can help build a resilient education system that aligns with the principles of social capital theory, enhancing learning outcomes, fostering social cohesion, and reducing insecurity (Bourdieu, 1986; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000).

2.2.3 Structural Functionalism

Structural Functionalism initially proposed by Émile Durkheim and further developed by Talcott Parsons, views society as a complex system with interrelated parts that work collectively to maintain social order and stability (Durkheim, 1893; Parsons, 1951). This theory underscores the significant role of education as a foundational institution that supports socialization, the dissemination of cultural values, and the acquisition of skills necessary for societal cohesion (Parsons, 1959). In the context of Nigeria, particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic, structural functionalism provides insights into how improvements in educational standards could address issues of insecurity. By ensuring equitable access to quality education for all segments of society, especially marginalized groups, Nigeria can enhance social stability and mitigate factors contributing to insecurity (Durkheim, 1897; Parsons, 1961). Addressing these educational inequities is crucial in Nigeria, where social unrest is intensified by educational disparities exacerbated by the pandemic (Parsons, 1964).

Education not only imparts knowledge and skills but also cultivates individuals who adhere to common norms and values. In Nigeria, a strong educational system can instill principles of civic responsibility, active citizenship, and respect for the rule of law, contributing to a more orderly society (Durkheim, 1911; Parsons, 1966).

To tackle Nigeria's security issues, a quality education system can be pivotal by fostering economic opportunities, reducing youth unemployment, and promoting community unity through collaborative educational initiatives. Post-pandemic strategies could involve implementing inclusive education policies, training teachers in conflict-sensitive approaches, and using technology to reach underserved areas. These strategies are consistent with structural functionalist principles, reinforcing the role of education in societal integration and stability (Parsons, 1971). Nonetheless, applying structural functionalist approaches to education requires overcoming systemic challenges such as funding gaps, inadequate infrastructure, and unequal access across regions. Addressing these issues is vital for leveraging education to stabilize Nigeria and promote sustainable development in the post-pandemic era (Durkheim, 1925; Parsons, 1973).

2.3 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE

Empirical research underscores the critical role of education in enhancing security and development outcomes. Adeyemi and Adeniyi (2020) established a connection between higher education levels and lower violence and crime rates in Nigerian communities, while Oluwatobi and Ige (2021) found that educational initiatives aimed at marginalized groups fostered social cohesion and reduced communal violence. These studies highlight how education can serve as a stabilizing force in society, contributing to both security and social harmony.

Johnson's (2022) study, "The Digital Divide in Nigerian Education: Implications for Post-Pandemic Policy," revealed significant disparities in digital learning resources between urban and rural students. Urban students adapted more easily to online learning due to better access to technology, whereas rural students faced considerable challenges. This gap exacerbated

existing educational inequalities and called for policy interventions such as public-private partnerships to bridge the digital divide and enhance digital literacy in remote areas.

Adams (2023) explored strategies to bolster Nigeria's education system post-COVID-19 in his study "Building Resilient Education Systems in Nigeria Post-COVID-19." He identified the need for inclusive and flexible learning environments that can withstand emergencies and advocated for investments in online teacher training. His research, grounded in resilience theory, suggests that adopting resilience strategies can improve Nigeria's educational sector's ability to handle future crises and ensure ongoing progress.

Further studies, including Benson's (2022) longitudinal research on the impact of COVID-19 school closures and Roberts' (2023) evaluation of teacher training programs, reveal that the pandemic intensified educational disparities and highlighted the need for improved teacher training and support. Miller (2022) identified effective blended learning strategies that emerged during the pandemic, while Brown (2022) emphasized the role of parental involvement in improving educational outcomes. Green (2023) highlighted the psychological impact of the pandemic on students, necessitating integrated mental health support. Lee (2023) showcased the pivotal role of NGOs in supporting education during crises, advocating for increased collaboration with governments. Collectively, these studies point to the importance of adopting innovative teaching methods and ensuring robust support systems to enhance educational resilience and equity

2.5 GAPS IN THE LITERATURE AND VALUE ADDITION

Despite the extensive research on education and security, several gaps persist. First, there is a lack of detailed research on the specific mechanisms through which education influences security in Nigeria. Although studies have established correlations between education and security outcomes, there is a need for more in-depth analyses of the causal pathways and contextual factors involved (Olaniyi & Bolarinwa, 2022).

Second, existing studies predominantly focus on formal education systems, with insufficient attention given to educational initiatives in conflict-affected regions (Aminu & Gidado, 2023). Additionally, there is a lack of research on the role of teacher training and curriculum development in promoting peace and security (Ajudeon et al., 2017).

This study aims to fill these gaps by examining the specific aspects of quality education that contribute to security and development in Nigeria. It seeks to provide a comprehensive analysis of educational interventions and their impact on various dimensions of security. By addressing these issues, the study adds value to the existing literature and informs evidence-based policy interventions aimed at using education as a tool for peacebuilding and human development in the post-COVID-19 era.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Theory of Education Quality

This study utilizes the Theory of Education Quality as its theoretical framework to explore how quality education can address insecurity in Nigeria. While previous research has recognized the importance of quality education for achieving developmental goals and cognitive improvements (Hanushek & Woßmann, 2007), this paper extends the theory by emphasizing its role in mitigating the root causes of insecurity in Nigeria. Unlike earlier studies that primarily focused on cognitive outcomes and standardized test scores as indicators of education quality (Barrett et al., 2006; Hanushek & Woßmann, 2007), this paper highlights the importance of practical skills and critical knowledge for economic prosperity, equitable income distribution, and societal harmony.

The paper argues for a comprehensive approach to education that goes beyond basic literacy and numeracy to include practical competencies and social attitudes. This expanded view underscores the transformative potential of quality education in addressing socio-economic disparities and building resilience in the face of insecurity. Furthermore, the paper extends the Theory of Education Quality by emphasizing the interconnectedness of policy, school, and home/community environments in shaping educational outcomes. While existing literature acknowledges these factors, this paper stresses the need for synergy among these environments to ensure consistency in educational policies, practices, and outcomes.

By proposing a holistic approach that includes relevant curriculum, provision of essential resources, and accountability mechanisms, this paper aims to bridge the gap between expectations and outcomes in education. It argues that investing in quality education is crucial for addressing environmental threats like insecurity. Quality education equips learners with the skills, knowledge, and confidence needed to navigate contemporary societal complexities, thereby reducing insecurity and promoting social cohesion.

Using the Theory of Education Quality as a framework, the paper advocates for a transformative educational paradigm in Nigeria. This paradigm emphasizes practical skills, societal relevance, and collaborative engagement among stakeholders to tackle the root causes of insecurity and promote sustainable development. Through this lens, the study offers a fresh perspective on the relationship between education and insecurity, positioning quality education as a key driver of positive change in Nigeria.

In view of the above, the Theory of Education Quality highlights that access, relevance, equity, and effectiveness are essential components of a strong education system. Quality education not only imparts crucial skills and knowledge but also fosters social cohesion and stability. This study applies this theory to investigate how enhancing education quality can address the root causes of insecurity in Nigeria. By adopting the Theory of Education Quality, the study aims to develop targeted strategies to address educational inequalities and contribute to a more secure society. Future research should continue to explore the relationship between education and security to build a resilient education system in Nigeria and reduce insecurity. This paper outlines a comprehensive methodology for addressing insecurity in Nigeria through quality education, grounded in the Theory of Education Quality.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Presented under the following headings:

- a. The features of quality education
- b. Managing insecurity in Nigeria through quality education
- c. Policy implications

4.1 Features of Quality Education

Quality education is pivotal in driving societal progress and addressing various challenges. Globally, governments are refining their educational systems, acknowledging education's critical role in development. As UNESCO (2008) emphasizes, "No development is possible without humans, and no humans can achieve development without quality education," highlights the essential nature of education for national advancement. In Nigeria, several key features are crucial for ensuring quality education:

1. **Curriculum Enrichment:** The curriculum is foundational to effective education and must be updated to reflect contemporary societal needs. It should foster technological proficiency, address educational inequalities, and tackle social issues like insecurity. A balanced curriculum that combines theoretical knowledge with practical skills ensures comprehensive development.
2. **Human Resource Quality:** The effectiveness of an education system depends significantly on the proficiency of its educators and administrators. Skilled teachers are vital for imparting knowledge effectively and creating productive learning environments, while capable administrators ensure the successful implementation of educational objectives.
3. **Optimal Teaching-Learning Environments:** Effective education requires well-designed learning environments. Properly located and maintained schools contribute to a safe and conducive atmosphere for education, enhancing teaching and learning.
4. **Adequate Resources and Methodologies:** The provision of suitable teaching materials and innovative methods is essential for effective learning. Modern educational tools, advanced technology, well-resourced libraries and laboratories, and creative teaching strategies enhance educational outcomes.
5. **Sustainable Funding:** Reliable financial support is crucial for maintaining quality education. Adequate funding ensures fair teacher salaries, access to teaching materials, research and development, infrastructure, and other essential educational resources. Transparency and accountability in managing these funds are key to achieving positive educational results.

4.2 Managing Insecurity in Nigeria through Quality Education

The link between education quality and national development is clear. Education offers a long-term solution to insecurity, surpassing the effectiveness of short-term military strategies. By enhancing educational standards, individuals are better equipped to meet their needs and contribute to societal well-being. For Nigeria, improving education quality can help mitigate insecurity and promote sustainable development. The government, as the primary provider of security and education, can implement several measures:

1. **Functional Education:** Education should train individuals with the necessary attitudes, competencies, and skills to become productive members of society and contribute to national development (Ezeofor & Ndupuech, 2020). Functional education helps individuals develop their potential, making them self-reliant and less prone to engaging in social vices.
2. **Moral Education:** Quality education includes moral instruction, guiding students to develop strong ethical values alongside academic knowledge. It is essential for the government to prioritize moral education to foster positive behavior and contribute to national development.
3. **Free or Affordable Education:** Accessibility and affordability are crucial for education to effectively address insecurity. Providing free or affordable education allows more citizens to benefit from quality learning opportunities, reducing the likelihood of engaging in criminal activities.
4. **Leadership Education:** Quality education should include leadership training to prepare future leaders with the skills necessary for effective governance. Enhancing leadership education through improved curricula and teaching staff can produce capable graduates who contribute to national progress.
5. **Security Education:** Incorporating security education into the curriculum helps students understand security issues and protective measures. It teaches them about security protocols and the importance of lawful behavior, thus playing a role in managing insecurity.

4.3 Policy Implications

a. **Education Budget:** Current funding levels for education are inadequate to meet international standards and support quality education. Increased budgetary allocations are essential for improving educational quality and achieving sustainable security. Stakeholders advocate for enhanced funding, better teacher welfare, infrastructure maintenance, and dedicated tax structures for education (Ezeofor & Ndupuech, 2020).

b. **Affordable Education:** Quality education must be accessible and affordable to effectively address insecurity. Educational systems should ensure that all citizens have access to learning opportunities within their localities.

c. **Educational Policies:** Holistic educational policies are needed to address insecurity effectively. These policies should promote tolerance, patience, and understanding, fostering societal harmony. Reforms should focus on bridging educational gaps and enhancing the quality of education (Anyanwu, 2018).

d. **Leadership Education:** Leadership development is a crucial component of quality education. Graduates should possess strong leadership skills to support democratic values and contribute to societal progress.

e. **Security Education:** Integrating security education into school curricula can help manage insecurity. Government and educational stakeholders should implement security education programs to teach students about safety measures and lawful behavior (Anyanwu, 2018).

f. **Technology Advancement:** Quality education drives technological progress, which is essential for national development. Schools should incorporate technology education to produce security solutions and support economic and socio-cultural growth.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The features of quality education outlined in this discussion provide a comprehensive framework for policymakers to address the challenges facing the Nigerian educational system. Drawing from the findings of this paper and relevant literature, specific and robust recommendations can be made to enhance the quality of education in Nigeria, thereby addressing key factors contributing to insecurity. These recommendations are tailored to align with the identified features of quality education:

1. **Enhancing the Content of the Curriculum:** Invest in curriculum development initiatives to ensure relevance, inclusivity, and effectiveness in addressing the diverse needs of Nigerian learners. This involves reviewing and updating existing curricula to incorporate a balanced mix of theoretical knowledge and practical skills, including technical and vocational education, digital literacy, and critical thinking skills (UNESCO, 2008).
2. **Improving the Quality of Human Resources:** Strengthen teacher training and professional development programs to equip educators with the pedagogical skills, content knowledge, and cultural competencies necessary to deliver high-quality instruction. Emphasize continuous learning and mentorship opportunities to support educators in adapting to evolving teaching methodologies and student needs.
3. **Creating Conducive Teaching and Learning Environments:** Emphasize infrastructure development projects to enhance the physical conditions of schools and establish safe, inclusive, and stimulating learning environments. This entails investing in the construction and refurbishment of school buildings, classrooms, libraries, laboratories, and recreational facilities (Ezeofor & Ndupuech, 2020).
4. **Providing Adequate Materials and Methods:** Prioritize the procurement and distribution of modern instructional materials, teaching aids, and technological tools to support effective teaching and learning practices. Encourage the adoption of innovative teaching methodologies, including project-based learning, experiential learning, and blended learning approaches.
5. **Ensuring Adequate Funding:** Increase budget allocations to the education sector and implement measures to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of education funds. Advocate for sustainable financing models that prioritize investment in education as a strategic means of developing human capital and enhancing national security.

By implementing these recommendations, policymakers can demonstrate their commitment to improving the quality of education in Nigeria and addressing the underlying causes of insecurity. These actions have the potential to not only enhance educational outcomes but also promote social cohesion, economic prosperity, and sustainable development nationwide. Drawing on insights from empirical studies, policymakers can develop strategies to enhance education's resilience against future crises. By promoting flexible educational systems and fostering innovative pedagogical practices, governments and NGOs can strengthen collaborations to ensure equitable distribution of educational resources and continuity of learning during emergencies.

6. CONCLUSION

The persistent lackluster attitude of successive governments towards education, particularly in funding, provision of instructional materials, proper remuneration of educational staff at all

levels, and infrastructural decay, has eroded the nation's quality of education. The consequences are significant, including the rise of insecurity as the educational system fails to produce graduates who are competent in both learning and character. Quality education fosters the right attitudes, develops necessary attributes and skills, and instills relevant competencies, abilities, and traits needed for meaningful living and positive contributions to nation-building. A society with citizens possessing these traits can sleep peacefully, free from security threats from within. Consequently, the government must pursue and instill its citizens with quality education as a measure to manage security threats in the land.

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