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IMPACT OF INSECURITY ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SS II STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IMO STATE

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Abstract
This paper examined the impact of insecurity on the academic performance of SSII students in the public secondary schools in Imo State. Three research questions were used the design of the study was descriptive survey design. The study sought to identify factors responsible for insecurity in the public secondary schools. The population comprised of all the 296 senior secondary schools in Imo State educational zones, made up of 569 SS Students. A sample size of 113 respondents which is 20% of the total population was used. Purposive sampling technique was used in selecting the sample. A-38-item questionnaire was constructed and used for data collection. Mean score statistics was used for data analysis. The instrument was validated by three experts in educational management at Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. The instruments were administered with the help of the SSII teachers in each school. The findings showed causes of insecurity which includes; terrorists attacks, lack of perimeter fence, fighting by host communities, peer influence attack by hoodlums.. Also poor academic performance, destruction of school properties, closure of schools are some consequences of insecurity. Recommendations were made by the researcher.
Keywords: Insecurity, Senior Secondary, Academic Performance, Public Secondary School, SSII Students.

Introduction
Nigerian educational system has been undergoing great changes and some security challenges in the recent. Frankly speaking, nothing works effectively in an unsecured environment especially learning environment, it affects the interaction of teachers and learners. Insecurity problems in Imo State is alarming and had cripped into the school environments, insecurity is a critical issue that has hampered secondary school education sustainability in the state. Insecurity led to poor academic performance of the students, closing down of schools, destruction of school properties. To buttress this point further, Adeleke as cited in Ndubuisi-okolo (2019) asserts that insecurity in Nigeria led to the destruction of lives, properties, relocative and closing down of businesses.

There is need to assess the impact of insecurity on the academic performance of the senior secondary school students which is the thrust of this study and SSII students are the focus of this discussion. The Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2015) NPE defined secondary school as the education a child receives after primary and before tertiary education. They are students between the ages of 12-17 years and are expected to acquire foundation for life-long learning as well as make citizen self-reliant.

Abubakar Otakey, Umar (2023) stated that secondary education, has witnessed challenges due to insecurity. Public secondary schools are secondary schools owned and managed by either the state or federal government. They are managed by instructions from the government, agencies or parastatals for effective an efficient running of the system. This has greatly affected its output, academic achievement, life skill and consistency. To buttress this fact, Imam (2015) observed that school safety is a major factor that affects the achievement of the goals of secondary education. It is the responsibilities of the principal as the administrator and the government to ensure the safety of the students and other personnel working in the school due to the fear uncertainty of security in the school environment teachers cannot impart knowledge to the learner and-learners cannot concentrate because of unconducive and environment. It is in the light of this that, Taylor and Adelman as cited in Iman, (2015) asserts that "if the secondary schools are to function well and students are to learn effectively, factors in the environment that interfere with students learning and performance must be addressed" what this implies is that secondary schools is there to equip the students with character training and opportunity for a better life.

Oxford (2001) defined insecurity as the state of being open to danger or threat, lack of protection. Insecurity is also a feeling of inadequacy and uncertainty. The task of security of lives and properties of the members of a society is of great concern in a good society. The Federal Government of Nigeria constitution 1999 provides in section 14, sub-section 1 (b) under the fundamental objectives and Directives principles of state policy provides that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of Government". Inability to achieve the said objectives, it has resulted to insecurity in the society and even the schools, calls for a great concern.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had in April 2022 said that insecurity had caused the closure of 11,536 schools in Nigeria since 2020. Report from UNICEF, is that insecurity challenges in Nigeria have affected education of 1.3 million children in less than 2 years. In some areas in Imo State teaching and

learning had come to a halt due to insecurity especially the Ohaji/Egbema Local Government Areas.

There are security concerns facing secondary schools in Imo State today which is of great concern to parents and stakeholders. Enoch and Sokpuwu (2021) opined that another problematic factor in secondary education development in Nigeria is insecurity, schools are destroyed by incessant bombings, attack by hoodlums, some are either inaccessible or taken over by armed groups or serve as Internally Displaced Person's Camps in areas where national security forces have control. In support of this fact in Ohaji/Egbema educational areas of Imo State incessant raids of armed herdsmen's, attacks by hoodlums, terrorists had made secondary school education inaccessible. Nwafor (2022) maintained that insecurity connotes a state of vulnerability, risk, fear, uncertain and defenselessness and it is occasional by the absence protection, safety and stability. Effective teaching and learning cannot take place, set educational school goal cannot be achieved, this had also led to dwindling secondary school population and increase in school drop outs as students are withdrawn from school by parents/guardians due to fear. To support this idea further Imam (2015) posited that "students learn best and achieve their fullest potentials where they are physically, socially and emotionally safe". There is this misconceived idea that terrorists attack only creates fear. Such mindset does not encourage schools to be proactive to prevent terrorists attack. Fear is best managed by awareness, preparation and not by denial or ignorance. The problem of insecurity not only endangered students and teachers but also threaten the achievement of the goals of secondary education. This was why the researcher tried to identity some factors and consequences of insecurity on the academic performance of the senior secondary schools.

Statements of Problem

The security challenges in Imo State have consequences on the education system and the society. The problem of this study put in a question form is: what are the impacts of insecurity on the academic performance of SS II students in public secondary schools in Imo State.

Objective of the Study

The study seeks to:

1. Identify the causes of insecurity on the academic performance of SSII students in public secondary schools in Imo State.
2. To find out the consequences of insecurity in public secondary schools in Imo State.
3. To proffer the strategies/remedies that will help to curb insecurity in the public secondary.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

i. What are the causes of insecurity in public secondary school in Imo State?
ii. What are the consequences of insecurity on academic performance of SSII students in Imo State public secondary schools.
iii. What are the strategies that will help to curb insecurity in the public secondary schools in Imo State.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design that covered 296 public senior secondary schools in Imo State. The population for the study was made up of 569 SSII students. A sample size of 113 respondents which is 20% of the total population was used using random sampling technique. The instrument for data collection was a 38 item questionnaire constructed by the researcher. Mean score statistics was used for data analysis. The instrument was validated by two experts from Department of Educational Management and one from Measurement and Evaluation all from Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike. The instrument was administered with the help of the teachers in each school.

The instrument titled "Insecurity and Students Academic Performance (IASAP) was used for data collection. The instrument was divided in two sections A and B. section A focused on demographic data of the respondents. While B addressed three clusters A-C based on the research questions. Cluster A-C elicited information from the respondents on the causes, consequences of insecurity and strategies to curb the problems. The instrument was a four-point rating scale of strongly agree (4 points) Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point). The instrument was validated by three experts. The instrument was trial tested for reliability using Cronbach alpha which yielded coefficient values of 0.90, 0.90 and 0.95 for the three clusters respectively. Mean was used to analyse the research questions. A mean of 2.50 and above was accepted as positive item while mean below 2.50 was rejected.

Table 1: Mean ratings of the causes of insecurity on Academic performance of SSII students

S/No	Item Description	Mean $\overline{X}$
1.	Physical environment (porous)	
2.	Bad government influence	3.90
3.	Attacks by herdsmen	3.80
4.	Peer influences	3.95
5.	Ethnic crises	3.46
6.	Social background	3.99
7.	Poverty	3.75
8.	Social vices in students home and security threat	3.50
9.	Teachers feel unsafe	3.85
10.	Moral decadence	3.95
11.	Fighting by host communities	3.91
12.	Youthful exuberance	3.65
13.	Absence of perimeter fencing	3.99
14.	Terrorist attack	4.00
15.	Attacks by hoodlums	3.80
	Clusters Mean $\overline{X}$	3.76

Table 1 indicated that the respondents agreed that all the items listed were the causes of insecurity on the academic performance of SSII students.

Table 2: Mean rating of the consequences of insecurity in the academic performance of SSII students

S/No	Item Description	Mean $\overline{X}$
16.	Poor academic performance	4.00
17.	Destruction of school properties	3.95
18.	Religious/Ethnic crises	3.50
19.	High drop-out/low school enrolment	3.95
20.	Poverty in the state	3.80
21.	Kidnapping of students	3.92
22.	Crime and substance abuse by students	3.91
23.	Poor teaching/learning	3.90
24.	Disruption of learning activities	3.88
25.	Closure of schools	3.89
26.	Students performance	3.65
	Clusters Mean $\overline{X}$	3.65

Table 2 showed that all the respondents agreed that the items stated were academic performance of SS II students in public secondary schools. The academic performance of students reduces due to insecurity and crisis in the communities.

Table 3: Mean ratings of the strategies that will help to curb insecurity in secondary schools

S/No	Item Description	Mean $\overline{X}$
27.	Intervention by the state government	4.00
28.	Building of perimeter fences in schools	3.95
29.	Capacity building for security personnel	3.80
30.	Professional development for teachers & Principals	3.75
31.	Peaceful school environment	3.85
32.	School safety policy	3.70
33.	Employment of security personnel	3.82
34.	Partnership with families & community	3.60
35.	Respect for human lives and rights	3.72
36.	Spirit of rejection of all forms of violence	3.55
37.	Policies to create a safe school environment	3.78
38.	Early intervention & targeted support	3.50
	Clusters Mean $\overline{X}$	3.75

Table 3: Showed that the respondents rated the items listed as strategies that will help to curb insecurity in secondary schools in Imo State.

Discussions

Based on the results of the study the causes of insecurity on academic performance of SSII students include, physical environment, bad government, peer group influence, ethnic crises, moral decadence, terrorist attack, attack by hoodlums, absence of perimeter fence, teachers feel unsafe attack by herdsmen, drug abuse, security threats by cultists, fighting by host communities among others. This finding is line with Horne as cited in Osamiro (2015) observed that, war, terrorism and other forms of transitional political violence are in many ways more threatening today than ever before as causality has been on increases.

Findings of the study revealed that consequences of insecurity on the SSII students academics achievement are poor academic performance, destruction of school properties, students drop-out, breakdown of law and order, poverty, poor teaching and learning closure of schools, mortality of students (youths), and kidnapping of students in the school. This finding agreed with Abubakar (2013) who stated that, low involvement, disruption of an academic programme and destruction of basic school infrastructure facilities were some of the negative impacts of insecurity on secondary schools in Nigeria.

The finding of the study indicated that the strategies that will help to curb insecurity in the public secondary schools in Imo State and federal government, building of perimeter fence in the schools training of security personnel in the schools, peaceful

environment, good safety plan for each school, respect of lives and right partnership with families and community on student well-being among others will help to stop this ugly situation that is preventing the achievement of secondary education goals and objectives in Imo State for its sustainability.

Concept of value education

Education is the process of acquiring knowledge, skills, values, and habits through various forms of learning. It is a lifelong process that empowers individuals to reach their full potential and contribute to society. Value base education is important for the overall development of an individual, inculcating good value in the students will enable students to understand what is good or bad in the society. In addition, value education plays a critical role in enhancing security in Nigeria by fostering a culture of morality, discipline and social responsibility among individuals and community. (open AI, personal communication, September 8, 2024) asserted "in Nigeria, where crime rate are high due to poor Civic responsibility, value education will ensure safety and security. Value education will help to create a safer and more secure environment. Similarly, value education instills honesty, respect, empathy and integrity which is essential for peaceful existence in the society which will go a long way to curb insecurity in Nigeria.

Nwafor , (2022) posited that inculcating of appropriate values would enable members of the society to acquire skills, characters and attitudes that would enable them to achieve personal fulfillments and service in their lives . When individuals are taught values, they would contribute adequately to the national development and peaceful coexistence.

Value education is a critical factor in curbing the prevailing insecurity in Nigeria.

Accordingly Duvie (2018) stated that the primary concerned of value education is to ensure that societal values are preserved ,passed on from one generation to another and the modification of values in line with present reality in society.

Considering the above assertions, for the Nation like Nigeria to sustain value in education, the teaching profession must as a matter of necessity uphold defined ethical codes of conduct and the teachers must be made to conform to those ethics of teaching profession.

Conclusion

Insecurity is now a cankerworm eating up the academic performance of students mostly in public schools in Imo State. These problems have caused panics and fear on the students, parents, teachers and school stakeholders. The security challenges facing the secondary school today calls for internal and external proactive measures to ensure safe schools. The principal, state and federal government and all stakeholders must come to terms with the changing educational climate of public

secondary schools with its attendant security issues which have created a need for schools to identify tools, strategies and model programme that enhance the safety and success of the students, teachers as well as other school personnel who serve them.

Value based education is important in the total development of the citizens.
Hence, it brings about upholding empathy, integrity and peaceful coexistence.

Recommendations

- The state government should ensure that all public secondary schools are well fenced with strong gates.
- Trained security personnel should be employed in the schools.
- There should be policies to create safe school environment by the government.
- Government should introduce capacity building programme for school administrators and teachers on how to handle security issues.
- There should be a school warning system and an exit plan/ route for staff and students in case of emergency, which should be clearly communicated and understood by all in the school environment.
- Government should be involved in operationalizing the Imo State security Trust Fund as well as establish a comprehensive criminal database for all local vigilantes operating in the state to cover school environment.
- Education managers should organise capacity building workshops for teachers and school administrators on value education, to create more awareness. This will go a long way in ensuring and sustaining the spirit of tolerance and peaceful coexistence.

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