



ABSTRACT

This study aimed at assessing the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. The study had two research questions and two hypotheses. The study was a descriptive survey design.

ASSessment of the INFLUENCE OF SECURITY CHALLENGES ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN DELTA STATE

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INTRODUCTION

Security of life and property is a fundamental human right guaranteed under Nigeria's constitution. The constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provided in section 14 (1b) that "the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of government". Successive governments have tried to ensure security, especially since 1999. Despite their efforts, the level of security in parts of the country has fallen, driven by poverty, wide income disparities, high unemployment, social dislocation caused by massive rural-urban migration, and the breakdown of societal values, leading to fraud and community unrest (National Planning Commission Abuja, 2004).



The population of the study consists of 225,991 students in Delta State. A sample of 120 students were selected using purposive sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools. The questionnaire was patterned after a Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument had face and construct validities. A reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha method of reliability as measure of internal consistency. Descriptive statistics of Mean was used to analyze the research questions formulated while inferential statistics of t-test was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Decision rule of mean of 2.50 was used as a benchmark for analysis. The findings of the study showed that security challenges affect students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. Based on the findings it was recommended that government at all levels should intensify efforts to minimize security challenges and causative factors of insecurity in schools.

Keywords: *Assessment, Security challenges, Academic performance.*

According to Aliyu as cited by Nweke and Nwachukwu (2014), security can be seen as a state of reduced or contained threats and tension in which the stability of a state is not in an imminent danger of disruption from within and without. In the absence of security, insecurity is inevitable. Insecurity is the antithesis of security and has attracted such common descriptors such as want of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, want of confidence, doubtful, inadequately guarded or protected, lacking stability, troubled, lack of protection and unsafe. These different descriptors run into a common reference to a state of



vulnerability to harm and loss of life, property and livelihood (Achumba, Ighomereho & Akpor-Robaro, 2013).

It's no longer news that Nigeria has been experiencing series of security challenges at an alarming rate (Egor, 2014). Security challenges undermine education and absence or poor quality education for citizens. Security challenges has severely impinged on the fundamental human rights to education in Nigeria. From 2009 until December 2018, 611 teachers were killed, 910 schools damaged or destroyed and more than 1,500 schools forced to close due to Boko Haram-related insurgency, interrupting the schooling of more than 900,000 children. Over 149 schools were burn from 2011 to 2017 in Benue State, and fighting there between pastoralists and farmers forced 300,000 pupils from school in 2018. However, over 112 of the 276 schoolgirls abducted on April 14, 2014, from a secondary school in the Chibok area in Borno state, remained missing in 2019; many were presumed to have been forced into early marriage and pregnancy by their captors based on accounts from released girls. (Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack, 2020). The goals of education can only be achieved in a conducive and peaceful school environment. If there is a feeling of insecurity within and outside the school environment, both students and teachers are likely to be deterred and this may inhibit academic performance of the students (Ojukwu, 2017). Academic performance is the outcome of education, that is, extent to which a student achieved the stated educational goals. Students' poor academic performance has for some time been attributed to teachers' ineffectiveness, poor Intelligent Quotient (IQ) of the students and poor mental alertness of the students, with less or no reference to the effect of insecurity of the school environment (Ojukwu, 2017). Ojukwu opined that when students study in an environment that is characterized by insecurity, the students may suffer socially, mentally



and emotionally and is likely to affect not only their behaviour and psychosocial adjustment but also their academic performance. Therefore, this study tend to assess the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Statement of the problem

In recent years, schools had witnessed various attacks in Nigeria. Schools in Nigeria have recorded a lot of security challenges ranging from Boko Haram insurgency, armed banditry, suicide bombings, abductions, rape, killings, kidnapping and an escalation in attacks on students and teachers, resulting in severe injuries and deaths. Not only has the continued state of security challenges threatened the very essence of national integration in the country and created the ecology of disquiet, fear and anxiety, it has also meted a deadly blow on the educational institutions.

Schools programme have often been adjusted, students sent home as a result of unprecedented attacks. There was a scenario in Delta State on 14th October 2019, when suspected armed herdsmen stormed Azagba Mixed Secondary School, Isele-Azagba in a black sport utility vehicle, abducted six teachers and students in a brood daylight operation. Many students ran into the bush during the invasion and some were discovered dead including teachers in later hours of that day (Ochei, 2020). Educational institutions which are seen as the bedrock of national development are now in a state of fears and threats of attack as a result of insurgency and terrorism. Therefore, what is the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State?



Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State?
2. What is the perception of male and female students on the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance.

- Ho₁: There is no significant difference between security challenges and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.
- Ho₂: There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Purpose of the Study

Generally, the purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. Specifically, the study sought to investigate the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.



Methodology

This is a descriptive survey design aimed at investigating the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. The population of the study consists of 225,991 students in Delta State. A sample of 120 students were selected using purposive sampling technique. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire titled: Assessment of the Influence of Security Challenges on Students' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools. The questionnaire was patterned after a Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument had face and construct validities. A reliability coefficient of 0.83 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha method of reliability as measure of internal consistency. Descriptive statistics of Mean was used to analyze the research questions formulated while inferential statistics of t-test was used to test hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Decision rule of mean of 2.50 was used as a benchmark for analysis.

Research Questions 1

What is the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Table I: Mean rating of the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

S/No	Items	Mean (\bar{X})	Decision
1	Closure of schools and reduction of admission.	3.30	Agreed



2.	Destruction of schools facilities and distortion of school programmes of activities.	3.33	Agreed
3.	Security challenges can cause reduction in the quality of education.	3.26	Agreed
4.	There is less enthusiasm in school and academic activities by the students.	3.49	Agreed
5.	Increase in fear of bombing and killing.	3.43	Agreed
6.	Insecurity has led to mistrust on school environment for boarders.	3.42	Agreed
7.	It has led to total breakdown of conducive environment for studying.	3.57	Agreed

Table 1 showed that the respondents accepted all the items that implies that security challenges had led to closure of schools and reduction of admission, destruction of schools facilities and distortion of school programmes of activities, reduction in the quality of education, less enthusiasm in school and academic activities by the students, increase in fear of bombing and killing, mistrust on school environment for boarders and total breakdown of conducive environment for studying. The respondents accepted all the items since their mean responses are above 2.50 which stood as the benchmark for decision taking.

Hypothesis 1 (Ho₁)

There is no significant difference between security challenges and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.



Table II: Mean, standard deviation and t-test of security challenges and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	Df	t-cal	t- crit	Decision
Security Challenges	60	27.18	1.07	118	8.30	1.96	Accepted
Students' Academic Performance	60	27.33	0.91				

Table II showed that a total of 60 respondents for Security Challenges had a mean value of 27.18 and a standard deviation of 1.07 while a total of 60 respondents for students' academic performance had a mean value of 27.33 and a standard deviation of 0.91, since the critical value of 0.05 level of significance was 1.96 and t-calculated value of 8.30 was greater than t-critical value, the null hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between security challenges and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Research Questions 2

What is the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State?

Table III: Mean rating of the perception of male and female students on the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

S/No	Items	Mean (\bar{X})	Decision
1.	Increase in abduction of male and female students and leading to the withdrawal of school children.	3.53	Agreed



2.	Security challenges have kidnapping and raping of school girls.	3.50	Agreed
3.	Students' vulnerability to harm and loss of life.	3.44	Agreed
4.	Students' exposure to risk or anxiety in their learning environment.	3.47	Agreed
5.	Gunshot around my school compound make students to run even when no one is attacking.	3.51	Agreed
6.	Security challenges have contributed to the falling enrollment or attendance of students.	3.34	Agreed
7.	Intimidation from bandit has forced teachers to abandon their jobs especially those in the rural areas.	3.55	Agreed

Table III showed that the respondents accepted all the items that is security challenges had led to the increase in abduction male and female students and leading to the withdrawal of school children, kidnapping and raping of school girls, students' vulnerability to harm and loss of life and students' exposure to risk or anxiety in their learning environment. They also accepted the fact that gunshot around my school compound make students to run even when no one is attacking, security challenges have contributed to the falling enrollment or attendance of students and intimidation from bandit



has forced teacher to abandon their jobs especially those in the rural areas. The respondents accepted all the items since their mean responses are above 2.50 which stood as the benchmark for decision taking.

Hypothesis 2 (H_{02})

There is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Table V: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-test of the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

	N	Mean (\bar{X})	SD	df	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	60	27.92	1.48	118	0.42	1.96	Accepted
Female	60	27.80	1.55				

Table V showed that a total of 60 male had a mean value of 27.92 and a standard deviation of 1.48 while a total of 60 female had a mean value of 27.80 and a standard deviation of 1.55, since the critical value of 0.05 level of significance was 1.96 and t-calculated value of 0.42 was less than t-critical value, the null hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.



Discussion of results

The influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Results from research question 1 and hypothesis 1 in tables 1 and 2 revealed that security challenges affect students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. It was observed that security challenges had led to closure of schools and reduction of admission, destruction of schools facilities and distortion of school programmes of activities, reduction in the quality of education, less enthusiasm in school and academic activities by the students, increase in fear of bombing and killing, mistrust on school environment for boarders and total breakdown of conducive environment for studying. However, hypothesis 1 tested showed that there is a significant difference between security challenges and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. This implies that security challenges negatively affect students' academic performance. This finding is in consonance with the view of Aro (2013) who stated that Boko Haram insurgency has not only led to closure or abandonment of people's business activities within the affected region. In the same vein, Mohammed and Ibrahim (2019) asserted that insurgency contributes significantly in terms of low level of education which is as a result of school's destruction, killing of students and student's abduction.

The perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

The results of data analyzed in research question 2 and hypothesis 2 in tables 3 and 4 showed that male and female students have the same perception on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta. It was observed that



security challenges had led to the increase in abduction of male and female students which lead to the withdrawal of school children, kidnapping and raping of school girls, students' vulnerability to harm and loss of life and students' exposure to risk or anxiety in their learning environment, gunshot around my school compound make students to run even when no one is attacking, falling enrollment or attendance of students and intimidation from bandit has forced teacher to abandon their jobs especially those in the rural areas. Nevertheless, hypothesis 1 tested showed that that there is no significant difference between the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. It implies that the perception of male and female students on the effects of security challenges on students' academic performance is the same. This is related to a study carried out by Ojukwu and Nwanma (2015) who stated that insecure school environment, including the dilapidated conditions and teachers' negative attitude to condone and accept the emotional needs of students, which will lead to undue influences and clashes of a local community interfering with school business. In the same vein, Ojukwu (2017) opined that as a result of the insecurity of the school environment, students become afraid of school as they feel insecure and hence they skip school, miss lessons which eventually affect their performance.

Conclusion

The major conclusion reached from the interpretation of the results is that security challenges affect students' academic performance. It was observed that:

- security challenges had led to closure of schools and reduction of admission.



- It has also led to the destruction of schools facilities, distortion of school programmes of activities and reduction in the quality of education.
- Security challenges have led to less enthusiasm in school, increase in fear of bombing and killing resulting in mistrust on school environment for boarders.
- security challenges had led to the increase in abduction of male and female students which lead to the withdrawal of school children.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Government at all level should intensify efforts to minimize insurgency and causative factors of insecurity in schools.
2. For effective teaching and learning to take place in schools, law enforcement agencies should be assign to different institutions of learning at all levels.
3. Effort should be made in terms of workshop, seminars and symposium.to educate students at all levels on security challenges and how to keep safety.

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