Security Threat Eventuality: Strategies School Administrators Are Planning to Adopt in Delta State, Nigeria

Nkedishu, V. C.
Department of Educational Management and Foundations
Delta State University, Abraka

ABSTRACT: *This study investigated security threat eventuality: strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in Delta state, Nigeria. This inquiry was based on two research questions and two hypotheses, using the descriptive survey. The population consisted of 476 school administrators in Delta State, of whom 190 were selected through stratified sampling. A Security Threat Questionnaire (STQ) was used to gather information. Data obtained were coded and analysed using mean and standard deviation and a t-test to test formulated hypotheses at a .05 significance level. Findings revealed that security threats school administrators in Delta State are prone to include stealing among students, fighting, kidnapping of teachers and students, and destruction of school property by students, among others. Also, strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat include contacting security operatives, encouraging students to report any security threat, and informing teachers and students to be more vigilant during school hours, among others. It was thus recommended amid others that school administrators should contact security operatives like the Nigerian Police Force, community police, or those who volunteered to keep the community and schools safe from any security threat.*

KEYWORD: Security Threat Eventuality, Strategies, School Administrators, Delta State.

INTRODUCTION

The question of security should be one of the primary concerns of every person, community, nation-state, and member of the universal community. The condition known as security is the state of affairs that comes about as a direct consequence of the implementation of safeguards designed to protect people, information, and property from the activities, influences, and behaviours of adversaries (Akin 2008). This indicates that security is the existence of conditions within which people in a society can go about their normal daily activities without any threats to

their lives or properties. Security encompasses all measures aimed at protecting the populace and the resources of people, organisations, corporations, and the government against sabotage or violent acts. As such, Achimba and Ighomereho (2013) defined security as the stability and continuity of livelihood (stable and steady income), predictability of daily life (knowing what to expect), and freedom from psychological harm (safety or protection from emotional stress) that result from knowing what one is wanted, accepted, loved, and protected by in one's community or neighbourhood and by people around them. Security is a guarantee for accelerated development. Politics, the economy, and technology flourish in areas where life and property are safe. In a broad sense, "security" refers to the state of being shielded from or free from perilous circumstances that endanger the continued existence and eminence of the referent object.

Just like there is security, there is insecurity. Insecurity is the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection (Beland, 2005). The absence or lack of security of lives and property in a given location is referred to as tacit insecurity. It is the condition of being vulnerable to harm or danger. Achumba et al. (2013) define insecurity as the state of being unprotected or unsafe. Fear or anxiety brought on by feeling unsafe is what insecurity is all about, according to Beland (2005). So, one definition of insecurity is the state of being defenceless against an attack or threat that might result in death or severe emotional, psychological, social, or bodily injury to oneself or one's community. The government's development strategy, which includes the provision of high-quality education, is hampered by the trauma of insecurity in Nigeria. A number of variables, including those of a historical, religious, ethno-regional, social, economic, and political nature, have contributed to the recurrence of violent conflicts, leading to a state of insecurity. Some of Nigeria's most pressing security concerns include terrorism, maritime security, the Niger Delta insurgency, kidnapping, illegal bunkering and pipeline damage, armed robbery, youth unemployment, porous borders, and climate change. In order to tackle terrorism, which requires a multifaceted strategy, insecurity in certain areas of the nation is blamed on underdeveloped law enforcement agencies, such as the Nigeria Customs Service (NCS) and the Nigeria Immigration Service (NIS). Yagboyaju and Akinola (2019) stressed that the military has been involved in policing the nation, in what he called an "aberration," in an endeavour to safeguard and rescue the country from the shackles of insecurity stemming from high-level criminal activities.

In today's world, there is not a single educational institution without difficulties with safety and protection. These difficulties also differ from one educational establishment to another. For instance, the form and extent of a security threat at a secondary school, college of education, polytechnic, or university will be different from one institution to another. Threats to the safety of educational institutions may take several forms, ranging from relatively minor civic unrest to widespread violence and cultism, and even armed insurrection or terrorism in extreme cases. These threats might be aimed against other students, teaching and non-teaching staff, internal and external security personnel, janitors, cafeteria workers, business centres, utility suppliers,

and so on (Alimba, 2018). Problems with safety and security at educational institutions may often be located in one of two primary locations: either the institution's own facilities or the surrounding community.

The aspiration of society to achieve political, social, and economic development through education is achieved through the enactment of various curricula at the school or institutional level. This places a lot of responsibility on schools. The roles of the first two educational levels (i.e., primary and secondary) are crucial in determining the achievement of the overall objectives of education because they lay the foundation and are mostly accessed by the public, unlike tertiary education. The effectiveness of primary and secondary schools, therefore, is very imperative because the subsequent level (higher education) depends on the products from these levels. Unfortunately, in recent epochs, the Nigerian school setting has not been excluded from insurgency and security threats. There are reported cases of violent and high-profile attacks on the Nigerian educational system in which both students and teachers were not spared. This applies to the whole educational system. According to Fayeye (2018), physical threats of kidnapping and hostage-taking of students have impacted school attendance, school dropout rates, and the personal safety of staff, students, and other members of the school community.

From 1990 to 2013, 3,400 assaults on schools were documented by Alonge and Awulor-Hephzibah (2019). The kidnapping of 276 female students from Chibok in 2014 and the kidnapping of 2,105 Dapchi female students in Yobe State in 2018, among other violent attacks on Nigerian schools, are all contributing factors to the unstable situation of the country's educational system. It is on this note that Nkedishu (2021) posited that extremist religious terrorism is a genuine danger to sustainable development in any nation. Isah (2013), Odumakin (2013), and Nwanegbo and Odigbo (2013), however, posited that unemployment, poverty, corruption, and poor leadership are potent factors that account for the high rate of distrust in the society in which schools are not isolated. It therefore suggests that the ugly cases of kidnapping and attacks on schools and colleges are manifestations of a breakdown of law and order arising from the poor political will and weak legal and social security nets that could be used to tackle this menace by relevant authorities. About the educational system's susceptibility to security risks and obstacles, Isah (2013) and Fayeye (2018) identified factors responsible for the security threat, including school location, ownership of the school, population, and externality of school procedures, school facilities, school type, previous experiences, knowledge of security instructions by school management, and a poor communication system, among others. The role of the administrative school heads in the management of the modern school in a society that is characterised by insecurity and other challenges is very vital to the accomplishment of school goals. The school head should not only evolve preventive measures but also be proactive, innovative, and dynamic in his leadership skills to guarantee the safety of staff and students in a school system. Thus, to achieve a positive and effective learning environment that guarantees

effective learning, schools are required to be safe, meaning that school security and safety are extremely important issues for effective schooling (Atanda 2013).

Statement of the Problem

Every sector, organisation, and institution seems to be experiencing a security threat in Nigeria generally and in Delta State specifically. While churches, villages, and communities have been attacked, schools might not be an exception. The question that comes to the mind of the researcher is, "Should administrators wait until schools are assaulted before developing ways to reduce the security threat?" There seems to be a great demand for security specialists who are well-versed in all areas of security management and operational administration due to the ever-changing nature of security concerns in the 21st century. This is the reason why Atanda (2013) emphasised that it is no longer breaking news that Nigeria is prone to many actions that risk the lives of the whole population. Lives are cut short, properties are wasted and destroyed, and development in all its ramifications are stalled. No sector of society is left out of this security menace. In reality, schools in certain regions of Nigeria have been significantly impacted. Lives and school infrastructure have been destroyed. If this security threat is not put under control, Nigeria's aspiration to realise its development vision through education might remain a dream. The reason is not far-fetched because effective learning only takes place in a safe and conducive environment. Thus, the major aim of this study is to investigate security threats and the strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in Delta State. In specific terms, the study was set out to identify identity security threats prone to school administrators and strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in case of an eventuality involving a security threat.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised;

1. Which security threats are school administrators in Delta State prone to?

2. What strategies are school administrators planning to adopt in the event of a security threat?

Hypotheses

1. Significant differences do not exist in the security threats school administrators in Delta State are susceptible to when gender is compared.

2. Significant differences do not exist in the strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat when gender is compared.

METHODS

Study Design

The design of this study was a descriptive survey. A descriptive survey is a useful tool for researchers to gather information about a particular population or phenomenon and gain a better understanding of its characteristics, behaviours, and attitudes.

Population, Sample and Sampling Method

The population consisted of four hundred and seventy-six school administrators in Delta State government schools, from which a sample of one hundred and ninety respondents were selected by the stratified sampling method and represented forty percent of the entire population.

Instrument

The instrument was developed by the researcher and titled the Security Threat Questionnaire (STQ). The instrument was designed in line with the research questions and hypotheses, which gave the study a direction. The instrument contained a total of twenty items, ten for each question, and respondents were requested to rate on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agreed (SA) =4 points, Agreed (A) = 3 points, Disagreed (D) =2 points, and Strongly Disagreed (SD) =1 point. From the above, all that respondents needed to do was to tick (✓) on the opinion that best suited them.

Validity and Reliability of Instrument

For the instrument to measure the objectives of the study, it was subject to face plus content validity. This was necessary since it was the only way to ensure that the instrument was valid for the study. The procedure was carried out through expert judgement to ascertain the content and language of the instrument. Their inputs were used to form the final draft of the instrument. The reliability of the instrument was also tested by administering it twice to a convenient sample excluded from the main study, and the collected data were collated and analysed using Pearson r .87 coefficients was obtained, making the instrument reliable for the study.

Method of Analysis

Data obtained from instrument administered were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to provide responses to the research questions and inferential statistics (t-test) to test formulated hypotheses at a .05 significance level.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: Which security threats are school administrators in Delta State prone to?

Table 1: Mean responses to security threats school administrators are prone to

S/N	Security Threats	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Stealing among students	2.84	.81	+
2.	Students fighting	3.01	.82	+
3.	Kidnapping of teachers	2.89	.82	+
4.	Kidnapping of students	2.95	.80	+
5.	Destruction of school property by students	2.78	.82	+
6.	Students disrupting classes	2.99	.83	+
7.	Formation of cultism within the school	3.05	.82	+
8.	Sexual harassment	2.91	.83	+
9.	External influence	3.01	.84	+
10.	Scrubs around the school premises	2.73	.82	+

Table 1 shows information on the mean responses to security threats school administrators are prone to. Results on Table 1 revealed that respondents agree with mean scores of 2.84, 3.01, 2.89, 2.95, 2.78, 2.99, 3.05, 2.91, 3.01, and 2.73 on stealing among students, students fighting, kidnapping of teachers, kidnapping of students, destruction of school property by students, students disrupting classes, formation of cultism within the school, sexual harassment, external influence, and scrubs around the school premises respectively as security threats school administrators are prone to.

Research Question 2: What strategies are school administrators planning to adopt in the event of a security threat?

Table 1: Mean responses on strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat

S/N	Strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in case of security threat eventualities	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Contact security operatives	3.01	.81	+
2.	Encourage students to report any security threat	2.92	.80	+
3.	Inform teachers and students to be more vigilant during school hours	2.92	.83	+
4.	Discipline students who display immoral act	2.93	.84	+
5.	Occasionally invite security operatives to school	3.03	.81	+
6.	Enforce discipline among students	3.06	.82	+
7.	Put security checks in place	3.05	.79	+
8.	Properly check visitors	3.10	.79	+
9.	Organise seminars regularly on the need to protect our environment	2.98	.83	+
10.	Unwanted visitors should not be allowed into the school premises	2.67	.81	+

Table 2 shows information for mean responses on strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat. The result on the table shows that respondents agree with the following mean scores: 3.01, 2.92, 2.92, 2.93, 3.03, 3.06, 3.05, 3.10, 2.98, and 2.67 on contacting security operatives, encouraging students to report any security threat, informing teachers and students to be more vigilant during school hours, disciplining students who display immoral acts, occasionally inviting security operatives to school, enforcing discipline among students, putting security checks in place, properly checking visitors, organising seminars on the need to protect our environment, and unwanted visitors should not be allowed into the school premises, respectively.

Hypothesis 1: Significant differences do not exist in the security threats school administrators in Delta State are susceptible to when gender is compared.

Table 3: t-test on security threats school administrators in Delta State are prone to when gender was compared

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Level of Sig.	Df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Decision
Male Principals	109	3.02	.82	0.05	188	1.87	1.96	Not Significant
Female Principals	81	2.82	.81					

Table 3 shows a t-test analysis of the security threats school administrators in Delta State are prone to when gender is compared. The table revealed that male principals were 109, with a mean of 3.02 and SD of .82 while female principals were 81, with a mean of 2.82 and SD of .81. The calculated t-value was 1.87 and t-critical was 1.96 with df of 188 at the 0.05 significance level, so the hypothesis was retained. Thus, significant differences do not exist in the security threats school administrators in Delta State are susceptible to when gender is compared.

Hypothesis 2: Significant differences do not exist in the strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat when gender is compared.

Table 4: t-test on strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat when gender was compared

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Level of Sig.	Df	t-cal.	t-crit.	Decision
Male Principals	109	2.89	.80	0.05	188	1.31	+1.96	Not Significant
Female Principals	81	3.04	.79					

Table 4 shows a t-test analysis on strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat when gender is compared. The table revealed that male principals were 109, with a mean of 2.89 and SD of .80 while female principals were 81, with a mean of 3.04 and SD of .79. The calculated t-value was 1.31 and t-critical was 1.96 with df of 188 at the 0.05 significance level, so the hypothesis was retained. Thus, significant differences do not exist in the strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat when gender is compared.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Security threats school administrators are prone to include stealing among students, students fighting, kidnapping of teachers and students, destruction of school property by students, students disrupting classes, the formation of cults within the school, sexual harassment, external

influence, and scrubs around the school premises. A hypothesis test revealed that significant differences do not exist in the security threats school administrators in Delta State are susceptible to when gender is compared. This finding supports Obasi and Adeniyi (2016), whose study found that the security challenges facing public secondary schools in Nigeria include theft, vandalism, arson, kidnapping, and cultism. It also examines the implications of these challenges for educational planning and policy. The finding concurs with Aluko, Abimbade, and Adeyemo's (2017) study, which examined the level of school safety and security in Nigerian secondary schools and found that fighting, stealing, cultism, prevalence of violence, and crime ranging from different levels were security threats school administrators experienced. The finding is in line with Ogundokun, Oke, and Ajayi's (2018) finding that safety and security issues in Nigerian secondary schools include cultism, bullying, sexual harassment, drug abuse, theft, and violence. The authors argue that these challenges have negative effects on the academic performance and emotional well-being of students, and they also undermine the reputation of Nigerian secondary schools. This observation lends credence to theft, cultism, abduction, rape, room break-ins, office break-ins, cellphone snatching, shoplifting, violent demonstrations by students, graffiti, and other types of assault that have been identified as important security concerns on campuses by Abdullahi and Orukpe (2016) and Enang (2019). The finding also supports Oladipo, Awoyinfa, and Adefarakan's (2018) observation that the existence of cultist groups on campus has made life unsafe and scary for both staff and students. It is asserted that the cultist possesses, in many cases, more deadly and functional weapons than campus security agencies and often uses supernatural and mystical powers in their activities. The finding also supports Ajayi and Adesope's (2021) findings, which discovered that school safety and security are major challenges in Nigerian schools. The challenges include deprived school infrastructure, pitiable funding of schools, inadequate security personnel, poor screening of visitors to schools, poor monitoring of schools, poor response to emergencies, poor collaboration between schools and security agencies, poor parent involvement in school security, and poor training of school personnel on safety and security measures.

Strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat include: contacting security operatives, encouraging students to report any security threat, informing teachers and students to be more vigilant during school hours, disciplining students who display immoral acts, occasionally inviting security operatives to school, enforcing discipline among students, putting security checks in place, properly checking visitors, organising regular seminars on the need to protect our environment, and not allowing unwanted visitors on the school premises. A hypothesis test revealed that significant differences do not exist in the strategies school administrators are planning to adopt in the event of a security threat when gender is compared. This finding supports those of Adegoke and Olojede (2018), whose study assessed the perceptions of school administrators on security measures in secondary schools in Nigeria, including the effectiveness of security personnel, security devices, and security policies. This finding is in agreement with Adebayo, Ojo, and Adebayo (2017), in which their study examines

the challenges of ensuring school security in Nigeria and proposes some strategies that could be implemented, including the use of security personnel, technology, and community involvement. This finding is in agreement with Olorundare's (2018) study, which identified approaches to include physical security measures such as fencing, lighting, and surveillance cameras as well as human security measures such as security personnel, student and staff training, and crisis management plans. This finding is in agreement with Adekunle and Adeyemi's (2017) finding that effective leadership and management by principals are essential in developing and implementing safety and security policies, procedures, and programmes in schools. The study identified various strategies that principals can adopt to enhance school safety and security, including risk assessment, crisis management planning, staff training, and community involvement. This finding is in agreement with Ajayi and Adesope (2021), whose findings revealed the provision of adequate funding for school safety and security, the deployment of more security personnel to schools, the establishment of a national database of school security personnel, the development of a standard screening procedure for visitors to schools, the establishment of a national school safety and security policy, the provision of regular safety and security training for school personnel, and the involvement of parents in school safety and security.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Secondary schools face a range of security challenges that can impact the safety and well-being of students, teachers, and other supporting staff. No child will be able to succeed academically if they do not first feel safe in school. No teacher will be able to teach at their best if they are not confident that plans are in place to ensure their school is well prepared for an emergency. Keeping the school environment free of hazardous situations that could put the lives of teachers and students at risk is therefore necessary for the realisation of educational goals.

It is therefore recommended that school administrators contact security operatives such as the Nigerian Police Force, community police, or those who volunteered to keep the community and schools safe from any security threat. Also, school administrators should encourage students to report any security threat observed within the school. Teachers and students should be informed to be more vigilant during school hours. Morality should be inculcated in the school curriculum, which should focus on discipline. Occasionally, school administrators should invite security operatives to the school to instill security measures within the school. Unwanted visitors should not be allowed onto the school premises during school hours.

REFERENCES

Abdullahi, A., & Orukpe, P. E. (2016). Development of an integrated campus security alerting system. *Nigerian Journal of Technology,* 35(4), 895-903.

Achumba, I.C., Ighomereho, O.S. and Akpan-Robaro, M.O.N. (2013). Security challenges in Nigeria and the implications for business activities and sustainable development. *Journal of Economics and Sustainable Development* 4(2) 79-99.

Adebayo, O. O., Ojo, A. O., & Adebayo, A. O. (2017). A Study of School Security in Nigeria: Challenges and Strategies. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(16), 171-179.

Adegoke, O. A. & Olojede, A. A. (2018). Perception of School Administrators on Security Measures in Secondary Schools in Nigeria. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(6), 107-114.

Adekunle, A.O., & Adeyemi, J.O. (2017). School Safety and Security in Nigeria: What Roles for Principals? *Journal of Education and Practice*, 8(21), 31-39.

Ajayi, M. O., & Adesope, O. F. (2021). Safety and security in Nigerian schools: Challenges and the way forward. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 83, 102366. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102366

Akin-I.O. (2008). *The Utility of Close –Circuit Television (CCTV) Intelligence Gathering by Security Operatives in Nigeria.* Proceedings of conference on Intelligence security, Lagos.

Alimba, C. N. (2018). Security and security measures for schools operating in domains prone to insurgency in Nigeria. *International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research* (IJPAMR), 4(3), 38-50.

Alonge, H.O. and Awulor-Hephzibah, B.N. (2019). School Administrators Knowledge of Insecurity and Management Skills against Insurgency in Public Secondary Schools in Edo State. *KIU Journal of Social Sciences*, [online] 5(3), 243–250. Available at: https://www.ijhumas.com/ojs/index.php/kiujoss/article/view/594 [Accessed 20 Mar. 2023].

Aluko, O. O., Abimbade, A., and Adeyemo, O. A. (2017). Assessment of School Safety and Security in Nigerian Secondary Schools. *Journal of Education and Practice,* 8(10), 75-81.

Atanda, A.I. (2013). Towards Effective School: The Emerging Role of Classroom Teachers. In Araromi, M.A. Araromi, Moronkola, O.A. and Ademokoya, J.A (Eds.) *Teaching and Evaluation in Regular and Special Secondary Schools.* Ibadan: Royal People (Nigeria) L.t.d. 96-106.

Bland, D. (2005). *Centre for European studies*, Worrumy paper series 126. USA, Washington DC. Insecurity. From moral panic to blame avoidance and organized irresponsibility.

Anon, I. I. (2019). *Strengthening campus internal security against criminalities and unacceptable conducts.* Paper presented at security workshop for Association of Heads of Security of Tertiary institutions at University of Calabar from 26th-28th June, 2019.

Fayeye, J. (2018). *Managing insecurity in Public Schools: A Teacher – Student Approach*. Paper presented at 61st All Nigeria Confederation of Principals Secondary Schools (ANCOPSS National) Annual Congress held in Akure, Ondo State.

Flaster, A. (2018). Kids, College, and Capital: Parental Financial Support and College Choice. *Research in Higher Education*, *59*(8), 979–1020. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-018-9496-0

Isah, E.A. (2013). Managing Ibadan municipal secondary schools in periods of increasing National Insecurity, Oyo State, Nigeria. *Nigerian Journal of Educational Administration and Planning NJEAP*, 13(3) 2-8.

Nkedishu, V. C. (2021). Students' malfeasance acts, consequences and administrative approaches in public secondary schools, Delta State, Nigeria. *European Journal of Education Studies*. 8(6), 29-46. http://dx.doi.org/10.46827/ejes.v8i6.3751

Nwanegbo, C. J. and Odigbo, J. (2013). Security and National Development in Nigeria: The Threat of Boko Haram. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science,* 3(4), 285-297.

Obasi, C. C. And Adeniyi, A. E. (2016). Security Challenges Facing Public Secondary Schools in Nigeria: Implications for Educational Planning and Policy. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 7(17), 113-118.

Odumakin, J. (2013). Woman of the sun. *Global Journal INC*. Vol. 4 October 16 (USA).

Ogundokun, M. O., oak, O. J., and Ajayi, J. A. (2018). Safety and Security Challenges in Nigerian Secondary Schools: The Way Forward. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(23), 52-57.

Oladipo, S. A., Awoyinfa, J. O., & Adefarakan, O. S. (2018). Institutional critical factors in university personnel security. *International Journal of Innovative Business Strategies (IJIBS)*. 4 (2), 219-227.

Olorundare, S. O. (2018). School Security and Safety Management in Nigeria: A Review of Literature. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 9(9), 101-109.

Yagboyaju, D. A., & Akinola, A. O. (2019). Nigerian State and the Crisis of Governance: A Critical Exposition. *SAGE Open*, 9(3). https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244019865810