RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE IMPACT OF INSECURITY ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ORLU, IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The paper examined the Impact of insecurity on academic achievement of secondary school students in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State. In line with the purpose of study, three research questions were formulated for guidance. It utilized a descriptive survey design. Six Hundred and Fifty-Four (654) teachers from the nine (9) selected Secondary School in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State formed the population out of which 315 teachers were sampled through simple random sampling technique which comprised 35 teachers in 9 selected schools. Structured Questionnaire which the researcher prepared and was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation was the only instrument for the study. Mean was the statistical tools used to carry out analysis and the result among others showed that causes of school insecurity were identified to include lack of school fence, lack of use of well-trained security guard's poor security knowledge by some school administrators, incomprehensive school security policy guide lines. It was recommended among others that Imo State Government in conjunction with Orlu Local Government should make a concerted effort in prioritize and address insecurity as it is fundamental to improving academic achievement in the affected areas. Secondly, Imo State should implement and reinforce robust security measures within schools, supported by proactive counselling services and comprehensive support systems to alleviate students' fears and create an environment conducive to learning. There is need for stakeholders in the education sector to foster open communication channels within schools to encourage dialogue about safety concerns and ensure that students feel heard and supported.

Keywords: Academic achievement, impact, insecurity, secondary school, students

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Education is the fulcrum that prop meaningful development to any nation. There is no nation that can achieve any development when the type of education given to the people at all levels especially at the higher level is that which makes the individual become a nuisance not only to himself but also to the society. This is because education is seen as the key factor for national development and empowering the citizens to master their environment in order to compete for survival, (Mbachu, 2019), agrees that education has to be a powerful instrument and of good quality to enable the recipient grow into a functional member of his family and of his nation. It is obvious that several third world countries are enmeshed in poverty, disease infestation, unemployment, and harsh economic conditions.

Education goes beyond literacy alone because for an individual, education means the provision of opportunity for him to realize his potentials, goals, and abilities in life. Education includes the acquisition of functional skills, moral identity, and ambition to succeed in life and thereby improve the society. Eunice and Zita, (2019), see education as having two ideas implicit in the world. One is that leading out into new knowledge and experience, the other is that of feeding and thereby growing and developing.

Insecurity is incompatible with sustainable development. Insecurity truncates or slows down the possibility of achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG). The debilitating state of insecurity in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State has resulted to bad consequences in different sectors, notably in education, primarily and secondary schools. Insecurity refers to various incidents of violence and lawlessness that make environments unsafe and unfavorable for various human activities. Recent years have marked an increase in violent occurrences like abductions, militant attacks, and civil unrest. These activities adversely affected the Orlu educational system's capacity to fulfill its fundamental mandate, which is knowledge transfer and human development. Insecurity in schools, whether manifested as bullying, gun violence, drug abuse, or terror threats, not only poses grave harm to students but also greatly inhibits their academic achievements and personal development. This research work critically examines the impact of insecurity in secondary schools in Imo State.

Insecurity according to (Abubakar, 2021; Ezeoha, 2021 Akinola, 2019; Ndoma-Egba, 2023) is a major challenge confronting humanity today. Challenges of insecurity are so pervasive

that it dominates the news items in every mass communication media throughout the world. For instance, the whole of the Arab world has known no peace since the Al-Qaida group led by Osama Bin Ladin bombed the United States of America's World Trade Centre on the 11th of September 2001, wars and threats of wars are common features in most of the developing nations of the world. The pervading threats of wars are not limited to international level but also manifests in various forms of intra-national wars.

Although insecurity has manifested in Nigeria since the colonial era, reaching a very high pitch during the nation's civil war between 1967 and 1970, the level of insecurity being experienced in the country since 1999 is not only unprecedented in the history of the nation, but takes diverse forms. For example, in Southwestern Nigeria, insecurity manifests in form of armed robbery, kidnapping for rituals, communal clashes and armed struggles between members of the National Union of Road Transports Workers (NURTW). In the South-south and Southeast regions, insecurity manifests in form of oil bunkering, pipe-line vandalization, kidnapping for ransom, communal clashes and armed struggles for political independence (via Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra [MASSOB]). Insecurity in the three northern regions of the country manifests mostly in form of ethno-religious clashes, the most prominent of which is the activities of a religious fundamentalist group generally known as 'Boko Haram' (Western Education is forbidden).

1.1. Research Objectives

1. To determine the factors that constitute to insecurity of Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.
2. To ascertain the impact of insecurity on students' academic achievement in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.
3. To investigate the measures implemented to counter the activities of Unknown gun men in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.

1.2 Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study.

1. What are the causes of insecurity in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?
2. What are the impacts of insecurity on students' academic achievement?
3. What measures have been implemented to mitigate the activities of Unknown gun men in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

2.0. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AMD THEORITICAL FOUNDATION

2.1. Conceptualization of Insecurity

The concept, insecurity connotes the state or quality of being insecure. Security in simple terms means protection of lives and properties from destruction. National security is a key factor in those national interests which leaders and policy makers hardly compromise. Security is seen beyond traditional maintenance of military strength to ward off aggression against the state, or the expansion of apparatus of internal security to ensure domestic order. The security of a nation traverse through the complex web of political, economic, social and cultural structures, and links with the whole range of inter-state relations(Abaneme &Nwagbo, 2015).   According to Onifode, Imhonopl and Uorim (2019) security is the dynamic condition which involves the relative ability of a state to counter threats to its core values and interest and their primary beneficiaries are the citizens. In addition, sharing the view Abraham Maslow, Onifode, Imhonopl and Uorim (2019) stated that an insecure person perceives the world as a life-threatening jungle, feels unsafe, unhappy, rejected, hostile, and pessimistic, shows a sign of tension, conflict and guilt, and tends to be neurotic and generally egocentric. It therefore seems that when a student studies in an environment that is characterized by insecurity, the student may suffer socially, mentally and emotionally and it makes sense hypothetically to state that all these are likely to affect not only his behaviour and psychosocial adjustment but may also affect his academic achievement.

Insecurity might result from government neglect or even political interest of the political class. Abaneme (2025) gave instances whereby the politicization of religion by gave rise to emergence of boko haram that has almost destroyed academic activities in the North Nigeria. According to Abaneme after transition of 1999, Northern state governors insisted on implementing full Sharia to win the support of the citizens. Consequently, the fundamentalists utilized the opportunity to strengthened boko harm which became security threats to academic activities in the region. Even the present Fulani – Farmers, crisis in Benue state Nigeria, was attributed to political completion in Nigeria, identity based on ethnicity and religions as a determining factor of which candidate or political party to vote for by the citizenry during election. (Nwago & Abaneme, 2019).

It is threat to learning either in the primary schools, secondary schools and universities. Nations that has suffered from insecurity losses lives of their loved ones, property, freedom of movement and association. Insecurity in Nigeria ranges from Niger delta militancy in Niger Delta region, clashes between herds men and farmers, Cold war, area boys restiveness, Gang conflicts, Kidnapping, robbery food insecurity, Mob attack and ritual killing, snatching of bags, car snatching, brutality and extrajudicial killings. Schools are soft targets for hoodlums, especially schools with no perimeter fence and inadequate human security. Insecurity could dovetail to abduction, kidnapping in the high way.

According to Miller (2020), Insecurity brings atmosphere of fear and distrust between friends or colleagues either at home, work places or in school. The poor achievement of SS3 students in sports and national exams such as NECO and school certificate examination is as a result of insecurity in Imo state as students stay at home every Monday because of fear of the unknown. Inter school friendly marches are no more practiced to reinvigorates the spirit of sportsmanship in public schools In Imo state, this is because of insecurity.

In the same vein, Wanger (2021) asserts that, Insecurity in the public schools, is gradually lowering student's intellectuality due to lack of concentration at school. No wonder, Uche (2020), hinted that insecurity that has been existing in the secondary schools, havespread to higher education institutions and that the impacts are very dreadful even in the communities where people are domiciled. Community schools are symbol of identity to communities.

Jimoh H.O, Gyan D.A, Adeniyi N. A (2022) evaluated the effect of insecurity of school environment on academic achievement and school enrollment of secondary students in Kastina state. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics and chi-square test. The result of this study revealed that insecurity has negatively affected secondary school students' achievement, school attendance and enrollment rate in Kastina state. The study recommended that insecurity impacted teaching-learning process negatively, it is important that the government and other stakeholders make concerted effort to promote the safe school initiative.

Ochigbo, SH., Bala, NM., Charles-Zalakore. JL. (2021) investigated the effect of insecurity in school on academic achievement of secondary students in Benue state. The study used a

survey research design. Mean and standard deviation were calculated to answer the research questions and independent samples t-test was used to test the hypothesis. The result of this study revealed that insecurity has significant effect on academic achievement among secondary school students.

The consequences of this deteriorating security situation are far-reaching. Families are being pushed into the depths of poverty, and existing school facilities are being systematically destroyed. The pervasive climate of violence, marked by killings and kidnappings, has sown fear and anxiety in the hearts of the populace. As a result, boarding schools are forced to shut their doors, and those tasked with overseeing the education system, including inspectors, supervisors, teachers, and even parents, grapple with profound apprehension in the execution of their responsibilities concerning the educational development of the youth.

However, the fundamental needs of a community are peace, healthy economic activities as well as education. The major activities in the education sector are teaching and learning which requires a conducive atmosphere whereby both learners and teachers feel secured so that they will be able to learn effectively especially in the core subjects like English Language, Mathematics, Basic Science Social Studies that require the full attention of the learner for the learning to take place.

According to Ojukwu and Nwanma (2020), 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 impacts and clashes of a local community interfering with school business. Also, they stated that in insecure school environments the psychological problems of the students are never met or carelessly handled, there are always segregations in the school community along religions, tribal and sectarian lines as students may ignore teachers' directives and may also challenge the teachers on certain concepts and school properties may likely be deliberately damaged by the students to show their disapproval of managements decisions (Ojukwu and Nwanma, 2020).

Academic achievement entails that students are required to maintain a satisfactory academic record and meet the obligations of the courses they are enrolled (Ojukwu, and Nwanma 2020). Academic achievement is the outcome of education, the extent to which a student

achieved the educational goals. Put in another way, good academic achievement is the personal comportment and commitment of the student to actualize his/her academic purposes which may include concentrating on one's studies, having confidence to success oriented academic activities in school and so in other to maximally actualize his life career or dream (Olofintoye, 2022).

Good or bad academic achievement can make or mar the goals of a student's life as well as the national goals and development. A good academic achievement would bring about the motivation and enthusiasm the student needs to attain a high academic standing when compared with his/her mates. It brings about resilience and makes the student success-oriented (Morgan, 2021).

The need for education cannot be over emphasized in human development. Education brings reformation and socialization in the life of an individual. According to Whawo (2019) in Ukrebor (2020) "Education develops an individual physically, mentally, morally and socially capable of fending for his /her own welfare, his immediate family and the society at large. Education brings change. The betterment of people's future comes from education especially people who has committed their resources and other efforts to it. Education starts from the day we are born to the day we will die.

This decline can be attributed to the pernicious activities of Unknown-gun-men and Ebube-agu, kidnappers, in various Villages in Orlu local government areas of State. The problem that generated this study tends to find out the impact of insecurity on academic achievement of secondary school students in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State with a view to understanding the broader implications of insecurity on academic achievement of secondary school students.

2.2. Theoretical Framework: Relative Deprivation Theory

Sociologist Samuel Stouffer is credited with developing the theory of relative deprivation, which he introduced in his 1949 book; The American Soldier. Stouffer's theory was based on his study of World War II American soldiers' attitudes toward their treatment, particularly their feelings about promotions.

This theory is a middle range contemporary theory in social sciences that is indistinguishably linked to poverty and social segregation. The theory dates back to ancient Greece and it is largely associated with Gurr. Thus, drawing inspiration from the principle of Aristotle that revolution is driven by a relative sense or feeling of inequality rather than an absolute measure. It contends that instead of a total standard of deficiency, a breach between projected and accomplished well-being result in cooperative dissatisfaction. Therefore, the main root of human capacity for violence appears to be the frustration-aggression mechanism; the anger brought by frustration is an inspiring force that positions men to belligerence, regardless of its instrumentalities. The relative deprivation is the term employed to signify the strain or tension that emerges from a disagreement between the "ought" and the "is" of collective value satisfaction which prompts humanity to violence. Giving credence to this theory, the prerequisite of "relative deprivation" as: (where individual A feels deprived of object X): individual A does not have X; individual A wants to have X; individual A knows of other persons who have X; individual A believes obtaining X is realistic. The construct of this theory shows that systemic failure or structural defect in a given society is significantly connected with frustration and aggression that prompt criminality and violence.

2.3. Empirical Review

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Ochigbo, Bala, Charles-Zalakore (2021) investigated the effect of insecurity in school on academic achievement of secondary students in Benue state. The study used a survey research design. Mean and standard deviation were calculated to answer the research questions and independent samples t-test was used to test the hypothesis. The result of this study revealed that insecurity has significant negative effects on academic achievement among secondary school students, school owners, and stakeholders in Benue State.

The consequences of this deteriorating security situation are far-reaching. Families are being pushed into the depths of poverty, and existing school facilities are being systematically destroyed. The pervasive climate of violence, marked by killings and kidnappings, has sown fear and anxiety in the hearts of the populace. As a result, boarding schools are forced to shut their doors, and those tasked with overseeing the education system, including inspectors, supervisors, teachers, and even parents, grapple with profound apprehension in the execution of their responsibilities concerning the educational development of the youth.

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3.0. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. Nworgu (2010) views this form of research as the one that aims at collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristics, and features of facts about a given population. The study was carried out in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State. Orlu Local Government Area is found in Imo State, South-East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. The population of the study consists of Six Hundred and Fifty Four (654) teachers from the nine selected Secondary School in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State. The sample size was 315 teachers. Random sampling technique was used to select 315 teachers which comprises of 35 teachers in 9 selected schools with a population of 654 teachers in the Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State. The instrument for used for the study was a structured questionnaire which was validated by two experts in the Department of Measurement and Evaluation. The questionnaire was

administered using face – to – face method. Data collected was analyzed using weighted mean descriptive statistics to answer the research question at a criterion mean of 2.5. This means that any mean response below 2.5 was rejected; otherwise it was accepted.

4.0. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Presentation of Results

4.1.1. Research Question One: What are the causes of insecurity in Orlu, Imo State?

Table 1: Mean rating the causes of insecurity in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	N	$\Sigma F\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Does the security situation in Orlu local government has any effect on academic Achievement of Students	200	55	50	10	315	1075	3.4	Accepted
2.	Before the current insecurity, our students perform very well academically.	198	67	42	8	315	1085	3.4	Accepted
3.	Any time we hear the signal of the unknown gun men we immediately shut down the school activities	165	100	40	10	315	1050	3.3	Accepted
4.	The academic activities has been reduced to the lowest level due to insecurity	195	77	35	8	315	1089	3.5	Accepted
5.	Our economy has been grossly affected by the insecurity	210	90	10	5	315	1135	3.6	Accepted
	Grand mean							**3.4**	

Source: Authors' Analysis (2025).

The results in table 1 in item number one showed that the respondents agreed that the security situation in Orlu local government has effect on academic Achievement of Students with the (mean of 3.4), in item two they agreed that before the current insecurity, their students performed very well academically with the (mean = 3.4), the respondent in item three any time they hear the signal of unknown gun men they immediately shut down the school activities with the (mean = 3.3), item four of the same table agreed that the academic activities of the Orlu Local Government area has been reduced to the lowest level due to insecurity with (mean = 3.5), and finally in item five of the same table agreed that our economy has been grossly affected by the insecurity with (mean = 3.6).

4.1.2 Research Question Two: What are the Impacts of Insecurity on Students' Academic Achievement?

Table 2: Mean Response on the impacts of Insecurity on Students' Academic Achievement.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	N	ΣF$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$	Decision
1.	Does the insecurity affects enrollment in schools of the affected areas	193	100	20	2	315	1114	3.5	Accepted
2.	Do the teachers and students that are affected face any stigmatization in society?	170	110	30	5	315	1075	3.4	Accepted
3.	Creates fear among teachers which can make them ineffective in teaching	185	95	25	10	315	1085	3.4	Accepted
4.	Leads to some lateness of teachers to school	190	100	20	5	315	1105	3.5	Accepted
5.	Leads to some lateness of Students to school	200	90	15	10	315	1020	3.2	Accepted
	Grand mean							**3.4**	

Source: Authors' Analysis (2025).

Table 2 present the effect of insecurity on the students' enrolment. It showed that the respondents agreed that insecurity affects the enrolment in schools located in the affected areas with (mean = 3.5), in item two they agreed that the teachers and students that are affected face any stigmatization in society with the (mean = 3.4), the respondent in item three agreed that insecurity creates fear among teachers which can make them ineffective in teaching with the (mean = 3.4), item four of the same table the respondent also agreed with the opinion that insecurity leads to some lateness of teachers to school with (mean = 3.5), and finally in item five of the same table they agreed insecurity the LGA leads to some lateness of Students to school with (mean = 3.2). Thus, the effect of insecurity on the enrollment of students in the affected areas is positive and severe in nature.

4.1.3. Research Question Three: What measures have been implemented to mitigate the activities of Unknown gun men in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State?

The results in table 3 showed that the respondent agreed that teachers and students need special training amidst the security situation of their area (mean = 3.5), in item 2 they agreed communal effort to fight activities of unknown gun men and other criminal activities with

(mean = 3.4). In item 3 the respondent agreed that the society is not happy and frowns at kidnapping and rustling activities in the area (mean = 3.5), in item 4 of the same table they agreed that the communal effort approved by the government receives security and logistic support to curb unknown gun men (mean = 3.5) and finally in item 5 of the same table the respondent agreed that provision of comprehensive security guidelines are needed with (mean = 3.2) Thus it is the communal effort fully supported by the government that constitute a measure to curb unknown gun men and other criminal activities in insecurity prone areas.

Table 3: Mean Response on the Solutions to Insecurity Problem in Secondary Schools.

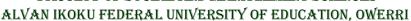| S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	N	ΣF$\overline{X}$	$\overline{X}$	Decision
1.	Do teachers and students' need special training amidst the security situation	180	120	10	5	315	1105	3.5	Accepted
2.	Is there communal efforts to fight the activities of unknown gun men and other criminal activities	170	110	30	5	315	1075	3.4	Accepted
3.	Does the society frowns at kidnapping and rustling activities	200	90	15	10	315	1110	3.5	Accepted
4.	Does the communal effort approve by the government and also receive security and logistic support	200	95	14	6	315	1119	3.5	Accepted
5.	Provision of comprehensive security guidelines	200	90	15	10	315	1020	3.2	Accepted
	Grand mean							**3.4**	

Source: Authors' Analysis (2025).

4.2. Summary of Results

The result of the study is summarized as follows

1. The causes of school insecurity were identified which include: lack of school fence, lack of use of well-trained security guards' poor security knowledge by some school administrators, incomprehensive school security policy guide lines among others.

2. The possible ways through which security insecurity negatively impact students' academic achievement were identified which among other include the insecurity contribute to: students and teacher's lateness to class, absentee, student truancy, fear in the mind of students which reduce learning.

3. Lastly the study identified possible ways of tackling the problem of insecurity in school which include: adequate punishment of erring student and teachers, proper construction and maintenance of school plant among others.

4.3. Discussion of Findings

The findings of the research question one is in line with that of some scholars who discovered similar results (Manga, 2019). This finding of the present study is very in instructive to government who has it as a duty to protect life and properties, school administration who is the manager of the schools and the parents. They could work together to ensure that the tackle these causes of insecurity in schools with the view to stop it.

The finding of the second objective showed that school insecurity negatively impacts students' academic achievement. The result showed among others that school insecurity contributes to students and teachers' lateness to class and absentee, create fear in the mind of student which leads to lack of concentration, poor understanding of what is being taught and consequently hinders improvement on the students' achievement it is also revealing to some major stake holders in education. It is very clear that school insecurity if not prevented or controlled it could disrupt normal school activities which will definitely affect students' academic achievement negatively.

The results identified in relation to question three indicate ways of tackling the issue of school insecurity in the secondary school in Orlu Local Government Area of Imo State. With these findings, it means that the stakeholders of secondary school education, the government, the parents, and principal need to harness these findings in solving the security situations.

5.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

The study has shown that insecurity has negative impact on student academic achievement. It has equally identified some of the causes of school insecurity and solution to school insecurity. It is then left for those concerned to harness the provided information in tackling the problem of insecurity in secondary schools and all institutions at large The study therefore aligned with Abaneme(2025)that the government should not use the youths at all cost including arming them to win elections. Political office seekers should avoid politicizing

religion so as not to further throw the nation into the kind of insecurity that Bokoharam has unleashed on the Nigerian state.

5.2. Recommendations

The following recommendation was made based on the findings:

1. Imo State Government in conjunction with Orlu Local Government should make concerted efforts in prioritize and address insecurity as it is fundamental to improving academic achievement in the affected areas.

2. Imo State should implement and reinforce robust security measures within schools, supported by proactive counseling services and comprehensive support systems to alleviate students' fears and create an environment conducive to learning.

3. There is need for stakeholders in the education sector to foster open communication channels within schools to encourage dialogue about safety concerns and ensure that students feel heard and supported

Competing Interest

The author declares that no conflicting interest exist in this study**.**

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