Indonesian Journal of Multidisciplinary Research

Journal homepage: http://ejournal.upi.edu/index.php/ IJOMR/

Insecurity and Assessment Practices in University

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ABSTRACTS

The study examined the relationship between insecurity and assessment practices in universities in Katsina State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlation research design. The population was made up of 14,963 final-year students in the two public universities in Katsina State. A sample of 372 students from two universities was used for this study. This sample size was determined by cluster random sampling techniques. The instruments for data collection were sets of constructed rating scales titled Insecurity Rating Scale (IRS), Lecturers Instructional Assessment Procedure Scale (LIAPS), and Students' Test-taking Practice Scale (STTPS). The rating scales were validated by three specialists in Educational Measurement and Evaluation for face and content validity before administering them to the respondents. The reliability of the instruments was established at 0.76, 0.78, and 0.77 for IRS, LIAPS, and STTPS respectively using the Cronbach alpha statistic. The research questions were answered with PPMCC while the hypotheses were tested with simple linear regression at a 0.05 level of significance. It was found among others that there is a very low correlation between insecurity and assessment practices in universities in Katsina State. This indicates that as insecurity increases, assessment practices decrease in universities, showing a converse link between the variables. It was recommended that since insecurity negatively affects assessment in universities, the state and federal government should ensure that security officers are provided in the universities to improve Lecturers' instructional assessment.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:
Submited/Received 12 May 2022
First revised 05 Jun 2022
Accepted 28 Jun 2022
First available online 30 Jun 2022
Publication date 01 Mar 2023

Keyword:
Assessment practices,
Universities,
Insecurity.

1. INTRODUCTION

The maintenance of quality and standards in secondary education depends largely on the extent to which administrators effectively carry out their responsibilities (security inclusive). Security means the state of being safe or a state of protection from harm. Security is the basic condition of safety from harm and deprivation, which applies to a person, living things, an entity, and inanimate objects. Security is the state of being free from danger or injury, the freedom from apprehension, anxiety, or care; confidence of safety; hence, assurance and certainty. To have security means to be safe, secured, protected, and to enjoy peace of life; that is, the state of being or feeling secure/freedom from fear, anxiety, anger, or doubt; something that gives or assures safety, tranquility, certainty, protection and safeguard. Security offers the basis for growth and economic prosperity to the individual, group, and the state. A secured environment engenders long-time planning and projection, safety assurance, and predictability of human actions and sequence. Socially, a secured school environment fosters social cohesion and cultural harmony among students and staff. It breeds the growth of an environment devoid of rancor and acrimony. The management of security is paramount to the effective management of schools and it is an issue that has attracted a great deal of attention and concern from learners, educators, parents, and the public at large. Concerning security, some reports defined safety as a state of being safe from danger or harm. She further explained that safety in school entails the provision of adequate protection and the right type of environment that will guarantee effective teaching and learning. To be safe in school, security management is sacrosanct.

The school security management denotes all aspects of the school coordination and administration which contributes to the understanding, maintenance, and improvement of the safety of the school population consisting of the school children and school personnel. A safe school environment is concerned with the provision of an environment in the school conducive to healthy living and desirable practices. Effective learning can only take place in a school that provides a good standard safe environment. Day-to-day experiences in a good school environment should result in improved knowledge, attitudes, and practices. It is therefore pertinent that every school should ensure safe management practices through the provision of security, cutting down of sharp trees, provision of first aid kit, having a school pharmacy, maintenance of classroom roofs, inspection by a sanitary perfect, removal of sharp objects around the classrooms, ensuring adequate exercise for the students and staff, clearing bushes around the learning environment, sanitizing the playing ground, fumigating the school premises, good transportation system, clean water utility, lightening and cleaning of the pathways (Onye & Amaechi, 2016).

The promotion of the safety of learners and school staff is a critical step towards improving quality service delivery to achieve educational objectives. Safety plays an important role in schools irrespective of the type and level. It is a truism that “a healthy nation is a wealthy nation”. Hence, the need for organizations particularly schools to ensure teachers' and students’ safety. Ensuring safety in schools has been part of the ethical responsibilities of the school system to live up to the confidence reposed in it by members of the public. In recognition of this responsibility and to provide the legal framework to effectively carry it out, the Federal Ministry of Education (FME) in conjunction with the Federal Ministry of Health, 2006 came up with a policy document and guidelines on managing safety and health in schools, particularly post-universities in Nigeria (see http://www.hsa.ie/eng/Education/Guidelines_on_Managing_Safety_Health_and_Welfare_in_Primary_Schools.pdf and www.fme.gov.ng/school_health_policy.pdf).

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxx
p- ISSN 2776-608X e- ISSN 2776-5970

Insecurity issues have threatened society and education at large. Nevertheless, it must be said that the title of this study is expedient and timely at this point considering the wave of cultism, kidnapping, terrorism, raping, building collapse, and diverse kinds of ethical ills that have characterized the Nigerian society including the education industry. Thus, like other public services, universities are adapting to a period of considerable change as well as making effort to meet existing challenges. There are worries relating to the safety of both lecturers and students in universities. In the light of recent developments where schools such as Chibok girls' school in Borno State and Federal Polytechnic, Yola were attacked by Boko Haram terrorists, the recent case of sexual assault on a University female student by her course lecturers in Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU), as well as the kidnapping of lecturers and students are becoming very common in university communities in Nigeria. All these cases are awakening calls to the fact that there is a need to raise safety consciousness in Nigerian universities. Therefore, universities must safeguard the staff and students in their care while at the same time creating risk awareness among staff and students through relevant safety education. In addition, the advantages of an effective safety service cannot be over-emphasized. When properly managed, school safety practices have the capability of yielding significant contributions to school-based safety programs, health-related interventions, feeding, and smoking cessation programs in the prevention of cardiovascular disease in children and in detecting large city-wide epidemics. According to Kirui *et al*. (2011), the inter-related linkage between proper school safety and academic performance, and other long-term outcomes and vice versa, is therefore worthy of note and paramount significance.

The effective school safety policy implementation can help increase school attendance, assessment practices, and academic performance and decrease school drop-out rates (Kirui *et al*., 2011). Assessment is a means whereby the teacher obtains information about knowledge gains, behavioral changes, and other aspects of the development of learners. It can be described as the process of defining, selecting, designing, collecting, analyzing, interpreting, and using the information to increase students' learning and development. It involves the deliberate effort of the teacher to measure the effect of the instructional process as well as the overall effect of school learning on the behavior of students. Assessment can be formative or summative. Formative assessment takes place as instruction progresses while summative assessment is done at the end of a program.

The classroom assessment; its techniques and procedures as a form of formative assessment are considered in this study. Formative assessment is expected to lead to actions towards overcoming learning deficiencies; aid in motivating learners and increase retention and transfer of learning. Formative testing is designed to identify learners' difficulties to provide remediation measures to enhance the performance of the majority of students (Ajogbeje, 2013). Therefore, if the assessment is not effectively carried out in the class, then the objectives of the lessons cannot be achieved. The assessment covers all aspects of the school experience both within and outside the classroom. It covers the cognitive, affective as well as psychomotor aspects of learning. This classificatory system covering all aspects of school learning originated from the work of Bloom in 1971 (Idowu & Esere, 2009).

Bloom and his associates categorized the cognitive domain into six levels. These are knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The affective domain covers such social and personality characteristics as values, attitudes, interests, adjustment, habits, perception, social relations, and beliefs. The psychomotor domain involves skills acquired by learners in manipulation, following specified procedures, and body movements (Amaechi, 2014). It ranges from simple handwriting to drawing, handling of implements, apparatus, vehicles, and equipment, playing of instruments and using

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxx
p- ISSN 2776-608X e- ISSN 2776-5970

keyboards, stage performance and dance, and games/sporting skills. These three domains are interrelated and interdependent (Idowu & Esere, 2009).

Hence, the purpose of conducting classroom assessment cannot be ruled out of the learning process if one wants to be sure that the learning objectives have been achieved in the learners. This was after relevant materials and methods of teaching, that is, inputs have been used appropriately for the learners, and then the assessment can be made. Assessment will show if the learners possess desirable learning outcomes or not, otherwise, the whole process will need to be repeated again but if the learning outcomes have been achieved, new objectives are set and pursued in the same manner for the students in any educational system as part of the school function (Lamidi, 2013). In this study, we hypothesized that assessment is in the form of procedures used by the lecturers' students' progress in learning. How the lecturers prepare their assessments and how the students prepare and take assessments could be a factor that may relate to the security of the school administration of the test and assessment process. Empirically, some reports showed among others that some security devices for the improvement of security situations as well as the emergency response plans for managing security in public universities were not available. Also, Obasi and Madu (2016) revealed among others that most school facilities are in bad condition and therefore unsafe for the users. Similarly, Oragwu and Nwabueze's (2016) findings revealed among others health and safety facilities needed for quality service include: good school buildings, ventilated classrooms, ventilated libraries, smooth sitting/writing desks, well-fenced environment, good laboratory facilities, clean toilet facilities, functional health centers, fire-fighting equipment, refuse disposal bins, good working ambulance, lifeguards, first aid boxes, functional street lights, constant electricity generation, constant flow or good water for drinking and domestic use, and well-protected doors and windows.

Similarly, Onye and Amaechi (2016) found that the proportion of universities that ensure safety and health management practices in Abia State is 0.44. Also concluded was that the proportion of universities that ensure safety and health management practices in Abia State is not significantly greater than 0.75. Additionally, Woke *et al.* (2016) revealed that inadequate safety policies, bad management of safety risk, numerous challenges facing safety management, and strategies are not put in place for safety management for quality public senior secondary school education in Rivers State.

Consequently, stakeholders in education have lamented the poor performance of students in internal as well as external examinations. These abysmal performances are tied to so many factors. One of such factors is insecurity in Katsina State, especially incidences of banditry and kidnapping which have ravaged the state. One begins to ponder the state of assessment in these areas. Therefore, the problem of this study posed a question: what is the magnitude and direction of the relationship between insecurity and assessment practices in universities in Katsina State?

The following research questions guided the study:

(i) What is the relationship between insecurity and Lecturers' instructional assessment in universities?

(ii) What is the relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities?

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

(i) **Ho_1:** There is no significant relationship between insecurity and Lecturers' instructional assessment in universities.

(ii) **Ho_2:** There is no significant relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxx
p- ISSN 2776-608X e- ISSN 2776-5970

2. METHODS

The study adopted a correlation research design. The population of the study comprised 14,963 which made up of 10942 final year students and 4021 lecturers from the public universities in Katsina State. A sample of 372 students and lecturers from two universities was used for this study. This sample size was determined by cluster random sampling techniques. The instruments for data collection were: sets of constructed rating scale titled Insecurity Rating Scale (IRS), Lecturers Instructional Assessment Procedure Scale (LIAPS), and Students' Test-taking Practice Scale (STTPS). Each of these instruments has 10 items prepared along a four-point scale. The rating scales were validated by three specialists in Educational Measurement and Evaluation for face validity before administering them to the respondents. The reliability of the instruments was established at 0.76, 0.78, and 0.77 for IRS, LIAPS, and STTPS respectively using the Cronbach alpha statistic. The research questions were answered with Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient while the hypotheses were tested with simple linear correlation at a 0.05 level of significance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Research Question 1 RQ_1: What is the Relationship Between Insecurity and Lecturers' Instructional Assessment in Universities?

Table 1 shows the relationship between insecurity and lecturers' instructional assessment in universities. From the analysis, an index of -0.14 was obtained. This shows that the coefficient of relationship between insecurity and lecturers' instructional assessment in universities is negatively very low. This index indicates that there is a very low negative tendency for schools that have insecurity to also have lecturers that practice adequate instructional assessment. The negative nature of the relationship explains that as insecurity increases, lecturers' instructional assessment decreases, implying an inverse relationship between the two variables.

Table 1. Correlation matrix of relationship between insecurity and lecturer's instructional assessment in universities.

		Insecurity	LIAU
Insecurity	Pearson Correlation (R)	1	-0.14
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.412
	N	372	372
LIAU	Pearson Correlation (R)	-0.14	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.412	
	R^2	0.020	
	N	372	372

Note: LIAU = Lecturers Instructional Assessment in Universities. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), N = Number of respondents.

3.2. Hypothesis 1 Ho_1: There is no Significant Relationship Between Insecurity and Lecturers Instructional Assessment in Universities.

The result of the analysis in **Table 2** shows the F-calculated value of 1.800 at a 0.05 level of significance with a p-value of 0.412, which is greater than the alpha value of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between insecurity and lecturers' instructional assessment in universities is thereby retained. This means that there is no significant relationship between insecurity and lecturers' instructional assessment in universities.

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Table 2. Simple linear regression analysis for the insecurity and lecturer's instructional assessment in universities.

Variables	Term	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	Sig.	Decisions
Insecurity	Regression	31.366	1	31.366			
					1.800	.412	S
	Residual	6482.1	372	17.425			
LIAU	Total	6513.466	372				

Note: R = -0.14[a], R^2 = 0.20 (value of the consistent), S = significant at P≤ 0.05, LIAU = Lecturers Instructional Assessment in Universities.

3.3. Research Question 2 RQ_2: What is the Coefficient of Relationship Between Insecurity and Students' Test-taking Practices in Universities?

Table 3 shows the relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities. From the analysis, its result (index) of -0.07 was realized. This shows that the coefficient of relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities is negatively very low. This index indicates that there is a very low negative tendency for schools that have insecurity to also have good test-taking practices among the students. The negative nature of the relationship explains that as insecurity increases, students' test-taking practices decrease, implying an inverse relationship between the two variables signifying that the strength of the relationship between students' test-taking practices and insecurity in universities is not uniform.

Table 3. Correlation matrix of relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities.

		Insecurity	STPU
Insecurity	Pearson Correlation (R)	1	-0.07*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.434
	N	372	372
STPU	Pearson Correlation (R)	-0.07*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.434	
	R^2	0.005	0.005
	N	372	372

Note: STPU = Students' Test-Taking Practices in Universities. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), N = Number of respondents.

3.4. Hypothesis 2 Ho_2: There is No Significant Relationship Between Insecurity and Students' Test-Taking Practices in Universities.

The result of the analysis in **Table 4** shows the F-calculated value of 2.227 at a 0.05 level of significance. **Table 4** also shows a p-value of 0.034 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities is thereby retained. This means that there is no significant relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities.

It was revealed in this study that there is a very low negative relationship between insecurity and Lecturers' instructional assessment in universities. Thus, the relationship is not significant. This shows that there is an inverse relationship between the variables, indicating that as one variable increases, the other variable decreases. This shows that an increase in insecurity is likely to bring about a decrease in lecturers' instructional assessment. This is true

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxx
p- ISSN 2776-608X e- ISSN 2776-5970

because the lecturers cannot carry out their instructional assessment practice in a non-secure environment, thus affecting the classroom instructional objectives. Conforming to the insecurity in universities, some results showed among others that some security devices for the improvement of security situations as well as the emergency response plans for managing security in public universities were not available in most schools. Supporting this finding, Obasi and Madu (2016) revealed among others that most school facilities are in bad condition and therefore unsafe for the users.

Table 4. Simple linear regression analysis for the significant relationship between Insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities.

Variables	Term	Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F-cal	Sig.	Decisions
Insecurity	Regression	31.366	1	31.366	2.227	0.434	S
	Residual	5225.535	371	14.085			
Students' test-taking practices	Total	5256.901	372				

R = -0.07[a], R^2 = 0.005 (value of the consistent), S = significant at P≤ 0.05 Predicted STPU = Students' Test-Taking Practices in Universities.

Similarly, Oragwu and Nwabueze's (2016) findings revealed among others health and safety facilities needed for quality service include: good school buildings, ventilated classrooms, ventilated libraries, smooth sitting/writing desks, well-fenced environment, good laboratory facilities, clean toilet facilities, functional health centers, fire-fighting equipment, refuse disposal bins, good working ambulance, lifeguards, first aid boxes, functional street lights, constant electricity generation, constant flow or good water for drinking and domestic use, and well-protected doors and windows. The similarities thus recorded may be attributed to poor security management in universities in Nigeria as a whole.

It was also revealed in this study that there is a very low negative relationship between insecurity and students' test-taking practices in universities; thus, the relationship is not significant. This shows that there is an inverse relationship between the variables, indicating that as one variable increases, the other variable decreases. This shows that an increase in insecurity is likely to bring about a decrease in students' test-taking practices. This finding shows that students may not be diligently and systematically taking their tests in an environment that is prone to security challenges. This finding is in agreement with Oladunjoye and Omemu's (2013) study which revealed that school attendance is affected in the areas prone to Boko Haram attacks in Northern Nigeria.

We also discovered that schools record very low school attendance as parents disallow their children from attending school. Similarly, Onye and Amaechi (2016) found that the proportion of universities that ensure safety and health management practices in Abia State is 0.44. Also concluded was that the proportion of universities that ensure safety and health management practices in Abia State is not significantly greater than 0.75. Additionally, Woke *et al*. (2016) revealed that inadequate safety policies, bad management of safety risk, numerous challenges facing safety management, and strategies are not put in place for safety management for quality public senior secondary school education in Rivers State. Although the studies were carried out in different locations, the results were related due to the insecurity-prone nature of the Nigerian environment.

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxx
p- ISSN 2776-608X e- ISSN 2776-5970

4. CONCLUSION

The study examined the relationship between insecurity and assessment practices in universities in Katsina State. Based on the findings, we concluded that there is a very low and inverse association between insecurity and assessment practices in universities in Katsina State. This indicates that as insecurity increases, assessment practices decrease in universities, showing a converse link between the variables. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made: (i) Since insecurity negatively affects assessment in schools, the state and federal governments should ensure that security officers are provided in the universities to improve lecturers' instructional assessment, (ii) The government and other stakeholders in education like the national university commission should ensure that staff and students are secured on the campus through the provision of security personnel that will monitor security issues in school.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.17509/xxxx.xxx
p- ISSN 2776-608X e- ISSN 2776-5970