
Mitigating Strategies to Students Abduction in the Nigerian Schools as a relief to School Administrators Security Stress: A Case Study of Imo State

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to assess the mitigating strategies to students' abductions in Nigerian schools as a relief to school administrators' security stress in Imo State. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Imo State. The population of the study comprised security operators, principals, vice principals, and teachers. A stratified sampling technique was used to select 50 security operators, 20 principals, 40 vice principals, and 100 teachers, giving a total of 210 respondents used for the study. The instrument, titled "Mitigating Strategies to Students' Abduction and Security Stress Relief Questionnaire" (MSSASSRQ), was developed for the study. Validation of the instrument was carried out by an expert in test, measurement, and evaluation in Imo State University while the Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the level of reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.72, which was proved high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to percentage analysis, used to answer the research questions, and simple regression analysis, used to test the hypothesis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels. The study revealed that there is low levels of student abductions in Imo State and that unemployment, bad governance, lack of quality education or training, etc., contribute immensely to the abduction of students and are responsible for the general state of insecurity in Nigeria. Also, there are various strategies that help mitigate students' abductions, including peace education, peace communications, information and computer technology. reinforced peace building, peaceful democratisation, improved social conditions, and the need to strengthen the judiciary for a rule of law regime. It was also observed that there is significant effect of the strategies adopted by Imo State government on school administrators' security stress. One of the recommendations was that government and private educational institutions/schools should be equipped with adequate and effective counter-surveillance programs to help improve, strengthen, and increase their security and smoothen the teaching and learning environment.

KEYWORDS: Mitigation Strategies, Students Abduction, Nigeria Schools, Administrators and Security

INTRODUCTION

The deteriorating security situation in Nigeria is worrisome. Recently, Nigeria has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity ranging from intra-communal, inter-communal and interethnic clashes; religious violence; armed robbery; assassination, kidnapping and "book haram" insurgency (Abubakar, 2011). Insecurity in Nigeria is causing developmental challenges such as endemic penury, a high rate of unemployment, inured corruption, low industrial output, an unstable and deteriorating exchange rate, a high inflation rate, inadequate physical and social infrastructure, large domestic debt, and a rising external debt profile (Ewetan, 2013). According to Akintunde and Musa (2016), an insecure school environment affects the learning of students. Situations of insecurity trigger traumatic disorder and toxic stress that affect learning negatively. Odumbo, Shittu, Akinyemi, and Momoh (2017) noted that the abduction of secondary school students has become rampant and the high incidence of insecurity in student kidnapping has portended danger for the peace, progress, and development of the nation. Based on these assumptions, it is important to note that economic depression, poverty, moral decadence, poor standard of living, high cost of living, inflation, graduate unemployment, poor parental upbringing, greed among the youth, get rich quick mentality, inadequate crime control, and insecurity are the major issues that contribute to secondary school student abduction. It is in the light of this that all stakeholders in education, such as government, policy makers, nongovernmental organizations, community leaders, parents, teachers, and students, must collaborate and work assiduously to motivate and commit the Nigerian Police and other security forces to fighting the crime rate and security challenges of student kidnapping (Odumbo, et. al., 2017).

Statement of the Problem

Recently, major stakeholders in education, such as the government, communities, parents, schools, even students, and many others have been lamenting over the abduction of students and insecurity in Nigerian schools. Researchers and authors have speculated on reasons for the insecurity and the cause of abduction, channeling it on the part of bad governance. It is due to this fact that this research is carried out, which is in order to find out the mitigation strategies for student abductions in Nigerian schools as a relief to school administrators' security stress.

Objective of the Study

1. Find out the levels of students' abduction in Imo State
2. Examine the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management to stop or minimize the problem of student abduction
3. Determine the effect of these strategies on school administrator's security stress in Imo State

Research Questions

1. What is the levels of students' abduction in Imo State?
2. What are the strategies adopted by Imo State government to stop or minimize the problem of student abduction?
3. What is the effect of these strategies on school administrators' security stress relief in Imo State?

Research Hypothesis

H0₁: There is no significant effect of the strategies adopted by Imo State government on school administrators security stress.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Concept of Insecurity

Udeh, Okoroafor and Ihezue (2013) define insecurity as a fear of the unknown; a feeling of trepidation and being unsafe. It is the state of being unable to protect lives and property. In other words, the person is vulnerable to damage, injury, or loss from both internal and external causes. Insecurity as an antithesis of security refers to a condition that exists due to lack of effective measures put in place to protect individuals, information and property against hostile persons, influences and actions (Umaru, Pate and Haruna, 2015). Insecurity is simply a situation in which individuals in a given society cannot go about their daily activities as a result of threat and harmful disruption of their lives and property. According to Beland (2005) insecurity entails lack of protection from crime (being unsafe) and lack of freedom from psychological harm (unprotected from emotional stress resulting from paucity of assurance that an individual is accepted, has opportunity and choices to fulfill his or her own potentials including freedom from fear. Omede and Omede (2015) noted that many factors have been postulated as causing insecurity in Nigeria. Some researchers put their blames on the government while some others pass the bulk on parents. Other writers hold the youths as being responsible while others settle on the combination of these factors. Putting all these factors together provide the following as responsible factors for the general state of insecurity in Nigeria such as, unemployment, bad governance, lack of quality education or training, lack or inadequate basic infrastructures, corruption and corrupt practices of government officials, perceived victimization, arrant poverty in the midst of affluence, ethnic superiority, religious superiority, domination and exploitation, materialism and the display of it with impunity, etc. Akwara, Akwara, Enwuchola, Adegunle & Udua (2013) contend that as the roots of violence and insecurity tend to be complex, sometimes people resort to violence when they are oppressed, discriminated against, socially excluded or economically deprived.

Concept of Human Abduction

In criminal law, kidnapping is the unlawful transportation, asportation, and confinement of a person against their will (Wikipedia, 2017). It can also be defined as false imprisonment by means of abduction, both of which are separate crimes that when committed simultaneously upon the same person merge as the single crime of kidnapping. Human abduction defined in Trafficking Protocol as the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation (FAQs, 2017). In the past, and presently in some parts of the world, kidnapping is a common means used to obtain slaves and money through ransom. In less recent times, kidnapping in the form of shanghaiing (or "pressganging") men was used to supply merchant ships in the 19th century with sailors, whom the law considered unfree labour (Wikipedia, 2017). In some jurisdictions, abduction accompanied by bodily injury, sexual assault, or a demand for ransom elevates the crime to first-degree or aggravated kidnapping. Although the terms kidnapping and abduction are, at times, used interchangeably, abduction is broader, generally not requiring the threat or use of force (Cornell Law School, 2017). According to United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2018), almost every country in the world is affected by abduction, whether as a country of

origin, transit or destination for victims. Handrahan (2004) point out that kidnapping is a global phenomenon, which can be argued to have been in existence since humans created a coordinated society that provides a coordinated attack on fellow humans. The motive behind kidnapping is based on the culture of different societies (Menon, 2003).

Concept of School Administration

School administration, according to Kashyap (2016), is regarded as the process of integrating the appropriate human and material resources that are made available and made effective for achieving the purposes of a programme of an educational institution. School administration involves the management of all school operations, from creating a safe learning environment to managing the school budget. In school administration, one needs to consider the different areas of school administration and who performs these school administrative duties. The term "administration" doesn't refer to any single process or act. It is like a broad umbrella encompassing a number of processes such as: planning, organizing, directing, coordinating, controlling and evaluating performance. The same situation occurs in the field of educational administration (Kashyap, 2016). Educational administration, according to the National Society for the Study of Education (NSSE), is a social statemanship that guides educational activities, plans, programs, and facilities and provides leadership in a long-term but broad social perspective. Babalola and Hafsatu (2016) posit that educational administration "consists of facilitating the development of goals and policies basic to teaching and learning, stimulating the development of appropriate programmes for teaching and learning, procuring and managing personnel and materials to implement teaching and learning." Generally, it could be observed from the above definitions that school administration involves the management of human, material, and financial resources towards the attainment of a set of organizational goals and objectives.

Strategies to Mitigate Student Abduction

Ani (2010) noted that, sequel to the revelation of the fact that kidnapping is multi-dimensional in nature with several explanations as well as several approaches to curbing it, peace building measures help to bring kidnapping to an end in Nigeria.

Peace Education: Ngada and Nseendi (2010) wrote that peace education sets out to redress the culture of violence and aggression and to inculcate values of non-violent change among young people and adults alike. Nwafor (2007) noted that peace education is associated with respect for people, personal relationships, conflict resolution, social justice, sharing the world's resources, cooperation, and the recognition that violence has to do with power. Through peace education, the violent mind set of kidnappers and other conflict actors could be transformed into non-violent behaviour (Ani, 2011).

Peace Communications: Wilson (2009) stated that peace communication is vital in the enthronement of a peace culture in Nigeria. Media programs on security behaviors, ethical behaviors, peace jingles, peace advertisements, and peace socialization programs can assist parties in achieving peace by influencing every member of society, including kidnappers and the larger society living in fear of kidnappers. Saliba and Ani (2010) showed that the media sets the agenda for peace and that through the media; it will be easier to achieve peace building as public opinion will be shaped to support the peace process. The media can also help victims of abduction and their relatives overcome grief, fear, and mistrust planted by kidnappers and enhance a greater sense of security.

Information and Computer Technology Reinforced Peace Building: Information and Communication Technology (ICT) reinforced peace building is vital in the counter-kidnapping peace process. Ronald and Crawford (2007) noted that information and communication technologies can be a huge aid in the effort to build lasting peace. Wilson and Nuhu (2009) wrote that ICT enhanced security measures through forensic science and that, again, hi-tech media systems could track-down kidnapers in the blink of an eye. ICT packages like digital cameras and smart phones would help people communicate their views, expose information about kidnapers and help the security networks make counter-kidnapping decisions, etc. Goodchild (2009) asserted that every kidnapping is preceded by a planning stage. An organization with an effective counter-surveillance program has a good shot at intervening or detecting a threat, increasing security and motivating potential kidnapers to go elsewhere.

Peaceful Democratisation and improved Social Condition: The increasing growth in unemployment, poverty, and inequality is attributed to politics without ethics orchestrated by elite capture. This prevalent parochial political culture promotes crime economy tendencies among the actors in kidnapping (Anyago 2009). Ejiogu and Onyene (2008) wrote that if freely elected governments are the root of peace and if education is the root of intelligent elections, then the whole solution may be seen as one of world-wide mass education.

Strengthening the Judiciary for a Rule of Law Regime: Paton, cited in Ani and Nweke (2014), wrote that since the earliest times of human history, law, whether written or unwritten, has remained a powerful instrument for ensuring the effective administration of justice. The safety of lives and properties in this era of kidnapping across the Nigerian states could be checked through the progressive strengthening of the judiciary to ensure the rule of law to harness the anti-kidnapping laws. The national anti-kidnap law could be found within the Nigerian Terrorism (Prevention) Act, 2011, which is meant to promote "the protection of persons and their properties from abuse" as well as enhance the "freedom of others in the same society" (Ani and Nweke, 2014).

Effect of Insecurity on Education System

In recent times, many countries have suffered plaques of crisis, each leading to loss of lives and destruction of properties. The insecurity crisis in Nigeria include kidnapping, armed robbery, and insurgency among others (Ishaq, Aisha, Abdulhafiz and Zainab 2019). Zukang cited in Dambazau (2014) links education acquisition of genuine wealth and happiness whereas lack of it exacerbates one's level of ignorance and leads to blunders, poverty, unhappiness, and sometimes the commission of crimes. To him, the relationship between lack of education, poverty and poor health conditions diminishes opportunities to social and economic advancement which often leads to criminality. Education is also essential in the military and para-military organizations which include the police that is saddled with the security of the nation. Dambazau (2014) stresses that education is used more as a strategic tool for advancement of technology needed for nation's economic and socio-cultural development. Otite (2012) submits that the state of insecurity in Nigeria could be attributed to security lapses on the part of security agents. Abubakar (2005) pinpoints failure of government to provide or manage the basic human needs of their citizens, ethnic disagreements, and national resource contentions as some of the factors responsible for insecurity in Nigeria. In addition, Abraham Maslow cited in Ojukwu, (2017) 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 behavior and psychosocial adjustment but may also affect his academic performance. According to Ojukwu and Nwanma (2015), 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. 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 & Nwanma, 2015).

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study was conducted in Imo State. The population of the study comprised security operatives, principals, vice principals, and teachers. A stratified sampling technique was used to select 50 security operatives, 20 principals, 40 vice principals, and 100 teachers, giving a total of 210 respondents used for the study. The instrument, titled "Mitigating Strategies to Students' Abduction and Security Stress Relief Questionnaire" (MSSASSRQ), was developed for the study. Validation of the instrument was carried out by an expert in test, measurement, and evaluation in Imo State University while the Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the level of reliability of the instrument. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.72, which was proved high enough to justify the use of the instrument. The researcher subjected the data generated for this study to percentage analysis, which was used to answer the research questions, while simple regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis. The test for significance was done at 0.05 alpha levels.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Questions One: The research question sought to find out the levels of students' abduction in Imo State. To answer the research percentage analysis was performed on the data, (see table 1).

Table 1: Percentage analysis of the levels of students' abduction in Imo State

LEVELS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
VERY HIGH LEVEL	13	6.19*
HIGH LEVEL	26	12.38
LOW LEVEL	78	37.14
VERY LOW LEVEL	93	44.29**
TOTAL	210	100%

** The highest percentage frequency

* The least percentage frequency

SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 1 presents the percentage analysis of the levels of students' abduction in Imo State. From the result of the data analysis, it was observed that the highest percentage

(44.29%) of the respondents affirmed that the level of student abduction is very low, while the least percentage (6.19%) of the respondents stated that the levels of students' abduction in Imo State is very high.

Research Questions 2: The research question sought to find out the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management to stop or minimize the problem of student abduction. To answer the research percentage analysis was performed on the data, see table 2.

Table 2: Percentage analysis of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management to stop or minimize the problem of student abduction

STRATEGIES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Peace Education	90	42.86**
Peace Communications	46	21.90
ICT Reinforced Peace Building	17	8.10*
Peaceful Democratisation and improved social condition	34	16.19
Strengthening Judiciary for rule of law regime	23	10.95
TOTAL	210	100%

** The highest percentage frequency

* The least percentage frequency

SOURCE: Field survey

The above table 2 presents the percentage analysis of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management to stop or minimize the problem of student abduction. From the result of the data analysis, it was observed that the tagged "Peace Education" (42.86%) rated the highest percentage affirmed by the respondents of the strategies while "ICT Reinforced Peace Building" (8.10%) rated the least percentage affirmed by the respondents of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management to stop or minimize the problem of student abduction.

Research Questions 3: The research question sought to find out the effect of these strategies on school administrators security stress in Imo State. To answer the research descriptive analysis was performed on the data, (see table 3).

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the effect of these strategies on school administrators security stress in Imo State

Variable	N	Arithmetic mean	Expected mean	R	Remarks
SECURITY STRESS	210	13.54	12.5	0.93	*Strong to Perfect Relationship
STRATEGIES		17.38	12.5		

Source: Field Survey

The above table 3 presents the result of the descriptive analysis of the effect of these strategies on school administrator's security stress in Imo State. The two variables were observed to have Strong to Perfect Relationship at 70%. The arithmetic mean for security stress (13.54) was observed to be greater than the expected mean score of 12.5. In addition to that, the arithmetic mean as regards strategies (17.38) was observed to be higher than the

expected mean score of 12.5. The result therefore means that there is remarkable effect of these strategies on school administrators security stress in Imo State

Hypothesis One: The null hypothesis states that there is no significant effect of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management on school administrator’s security stress. In order to test the hypothesis simple regression analysis was performed on the data, (table 4).

TABLE 4: Simple Regression Analysis of the effects of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management on school administrators’ security stress

Model	R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the Estimate	R Square Change
1	0.93a	0.87	0.87	0.57	0.87

***Significant at 0.05 level; df= 208; N= 210; critical R-value = 0.139**

The above table 4 shows that the calculated R-value (0.93) was greater than the critical R-value of 0.139 at 0.5 alpha levels with 208 degrees of freedom. The R-Square value of 0.87 predicts 87% of the effects of these strategies on school administrators’ security stress. This rate of percentage is highly positive and therefore means that there is significant effect of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management on school administrator’s security stress. It was also deemed necessary to find out the influence of the variance of each class of independent variable as responded by each respondent (see table 5).

TABLE 5: Analysis of variance of the effects of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management on school administrators’ security stress

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	440.47	1	440.47	1354.44	.000b
Residual	67.64	208	0.33		
Total	508.11	209			

a. Dependent Variable: SECURITY STRESS

b. Predictors: (Constant), STRATEGIES

The above table 5 presents the calculated F-value as (1354.44) and the P-value as (.000b). Being that the P-value (.000b) is below the probability level of 0.05, the result therefore means that there is significant effect exerted by the independent variables strategies on the dependent variable which is secondary administrators. The result implies that there is significant effect of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management on school administrator’s security stress. The result is cognate to the research findings of Goodchild (2009) who noted that every kidnapping is preceded by a planning stage, and any organization with an effective counter-surveillance program has good shot at intervening or detecting a threat, increasing security and motivating potential kidnapers to go elsewhere. Wilson (2009) stated media programs on security behaviours, ethical behaviours, peace jingles, peace adverts and peace socialization programs can help parties to reach peace by influencing every member of the society including the kidnapers, and the larger society living under the phobia of kidnapers. Also, media can help victims of abduction and their relatives to overcome grief, fear, and mistrust planted by the activities of kidnapers and

enhance greater sense of security (Saliba and Ani, 2010). The significance of the result caused the null hypotheses to be rejected while the alternative was accepted.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that abduction is one of the offspring of terrorism and social vices in Nigeria. Student kidnapping is a nefarious, villainous, terrible, seasonal crime that portends security challenges in many countries. The study found that unemployment, bad governance, lack of quality education or training, inadequate basic infrastructure, corruption and corrupt practices of government officials have contributed immensely to the abduction of students and are responsible for the general state of insecurity in Nigeria. The study outlines several strategies to mitigate the abduction of students, such as peace education, peace communications, ICT reinforced peace building, etc. Therefore, the study concluded that there is a significant effect of the strategies adopted by Imo State government school management on school administrators' security stress.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Government and private educational institutions/schools should be equipped with adequate and effective counter-surveillance programs to help improve, strengthen, and increase their security and smoothen the teaching and learning environment.
2. The government should give the education sector a priority in the nation's budget.
3. Government should create more jobs opportunities for the youths and unemployed graduate through the establishment of wealth creation centre.

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