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**Psychosocial Variables and Sustainable Safety Environment in
Secondary Schools in Calabar Education Zone**

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Abstract

The study centered on investigating psychosocial variables and sustainable safety environment in secondary schools in Calabar Education Zone. The study adopted a survey research design with a census sampling technique since the population was not large and the researchers can handle all the members of the population. A total of 86 principals were used in Calabar Education Zone. A questionnaire titled 'Psychosocial variables and sustainable safety environment scale (PVSSSES) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three Experts in Measurement and Evaluation, University of Calabar, Calabar and the reliability was established using Cronbach alpha technique. The coefficient of the sub scales ranged from .87-88 and was considered high for the instrument to be used for data collection. The data were collected by the researchers and the data analysis were carried out using Pearson product Moment correlation using SPSS version 20.0 and the result showed There is no significant relationship between school- community relationship, provision of security measures, principals attitude to security issues and sustainable safety environment in secondary school. It was recommended that school managements should ensure that they maintain a cordial relationship with host communities in order for them to provide security cover to schools and that measures such as provision of security personnel to schools as well as erection of

comprehensive fence be built in secondary schools to avoid break ins. That principles should be alert to identify security threats in the school and report same to operatives in order to forestall breaches that may affect the lives of the teachers and students in the school.

Introduction

School is a social environment created by the society to ensure that there is continuity of social values transmission. It is an organized social system that helps the students acquire values skills, competencies and knowledge that can aid the child function very well through his/her contribution to the society and self. This therefore implies that the school is an important social agent for survival of the society. Given the relevance of school, it is thus expected that the environment that the child stays to learn must be safe and secured for the child and teachers to comfortably stay for teaching/learning. However, it is observed with dismay that the school environment is threatened in the contemporary times with all forms of vices.

According to Onifode, Imhonopl and Uorim (2013) 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, Iyenger (1977) 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).

Matazu (2014) noted that since 2009-date, there have been issues of security threat in the north East where Islamic Sect called Boko Haram abducted 276 girls from Girls Secondary School in Chibok, Borno State. That on the 25th February, 2014 there was an attack on Federal Government College Buni-Yardi and that of College of Agriculture in Gujiba on 29th September 2013 in which many students were killed and some abducted (Abdulmalik, 2013). Both institutions are in Yobe State, Nigeria. Also, today, the students, school principals and teachers of various schools are not confident of the security of their lives talk less of the properties in the school. This is occasioned by the number of crimes that is perpetrated in schools in Nigeria. School safety is often a critical obstacle to learning. Crime, violence and abuse affect all aspects of our community, and schools are not always free from fear, intimidation or victimization.

The effect of this attack on the educational institution is manifested in most student's poor attitude to school, parents' withdrawal of students from school among others. Efforts made by the government and most community people to ensure that these students are sent to school have not yielded the right result as most students are still afraid of been kidnapped or killed and

as such prefer to stay at home. This is because there is a symbiotic relationship between education and security. The researchers are poised to investigate psychological variables influences sustainable safety environment in secondary schools among administrators in Calabar Education Zone

Literature Review

In a study on effect of insecurity of school environment on the academic performance of secondary school students in Imo State by Ojukwu (2017), a total of 1000 made up of 500 each of male and female students responded to a self-structured validated questionnaire designed for the study. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Means and standard deviations were calculated to answer the research questions and independent samples t-tests were used for testing the hypotheses. Major findings revealed that insecurity of school environment significantly affects the academic performance of secondary school students while students' gangsters, smoking of Indian hemp, abusing other hard drugs, cult and related violent activities were some of the factors that constituted insecurity of the school environment which eventually cause boys to leave school and join trading while leading girls to drop out and settle for marriage.

Musa, Meshak and Sagir (2016) carried out a study on adolescents' perception of the psychological security of school environment, emotional development and academic performance in secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis. A sample of 239 (107 males and 133 females) secondary school students selected via stratified random sampling from four public and private secondary schools in Gombe Metropolis participated in the study. A self-developed questionnaire titled "Psychological Perspective of the Security of School Environment, Emotional Development Academic Performance of Adolescents Questionnaire" with a Cronbach Alpha reliability of (.71) was used for the study. Simple Percentage and Multiple Regression were used to analyse the data. The findings reveal that adolescents perceived the psychological security of secondary schools' environments as insecure; there are significant relationships between insecurity of school environment with emotional development and academic performance of adolescents

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine psychosocial variables influences sustainable safety environment in secondary schools among administrators in Calabar Education Zone. Specifically, the researcher sought to find out whether

- i. School community relationship relates with sustainable safety environment in secondary school
- ii. Provision of safety measure relates with sustainable safety environment in secondary school
- iii. Attitude to security issues relates with sustainable safety environment in secondary school

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised for the study

- i. What is the relationship between school- community relationship and sustainable safety environment in secondary school?
- ii. What is the relationship between provision of security measures and sustainable safety environment in secondary school?
- iii. What is the relationship between principal's attitude to security issues and sustainable safety environment in secondary school?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were stated in null form

- i. There is no significant relationship between school- community relationship and sustainable safety environment in secondary school
- ii. There is no significant relationship between provision of security measures and sustainable safety environment in secondary school
- iii. There is no significant relationship between principals' attitude to security issues and sustainable safety environment in secondary school

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design with a census sampling technique since the population was not large and the researchers can handle all the members of the population. A total of 86 principals were used in Calabar Education Zone. A questionnaire titled 'Psychosocial variables and sustainable safety environment scale (PVSSSES) was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three Experts in Measurement and Evaluation, University of Calabar, Calabar and the reliability was established using Cronbach alpha technique. The coefficient of the sub scales ranged from .87-88 and was considered high for the instrument to be used for data collection. The data were collected by the researchers and the data analysis were carried out using Pearson product Moment correlation using SPSS version 20.0 and the result is presented below

Presentation of Result

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between school- community relationship and sustainable safety environment in secondary school. The independent variable in this hypothesis is school-community relationship while the dependent variable is sustainable safety environment all measured continuously. To test this hypothesis, Pearson product Moment correlation analysis was used and the result as presented in Table 1 showed that ($r = .798, p < .05$). Since $p (.000)$ is less than $p (.05)$, this implies that there is a strong positive significant relationship between school- community relationship and sustainable safety environment in secondary school. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 1: Pearson product Moment correlation analysis of the relationship between school- community relationship and sustainable safety environment

| Variables | N | X | S.D. | df | r-cal | p-val |
|--------------------------------|----|-------|------|----|-------|-------|
| School- community relationship | 86 | 14.67 | 3.21 | 84 | .798 | .000 |
| Sustainable safety environment | 86 | 21.67 | 5.44 | | | |

Hypothesis two

There is no significant relationship between provision of security measures and sustainable safety environment in secondary school. The independent variable in this hypothesis is provision of security measures while the dependent variable is sustainable safety environment all measured continuously. To test this hypothesis, Pearson product Moment correlation analysis was used and the result as presented in Table 2 showed that ($r = .521$, $p < .05$). Since $p (.000)$ is less than $p (.05)$, this implies that there is a strong positive significant relationship between provision of security measures and sustainable safety environment in secondary school. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2: Pearson product Moment correlation analysis of the relationship between provision of security measures and sustainable safety environment

| Variables | N | X | S.D. | df | r-cal | p-val |
|--------------------------------|----|-------|------|----|-------|-------|
| Provision of security measures | 86 | 14.67 | 3.21 | 84 | .521 | .000 |
| Sustainable safety environment | 86 | 21.67 | 5.44 | | | |

Hypothesis three

There is no significant influence of principal's attitude to security issues on sustainable safety environment in secondary school. The independent variable in this hypothesis is principal's attitude to security issues categorized as positive and negative while the dependent variable is sustainable safety environment all measured continuously. To test this hypothesis, independent t-test analysis was used and the result as presented in Table 3 showed that ($t = 4.09$, $p < .05$). Since $p (.000)$ is less than $p (.05)$, this implies that there is a significant influence of principals attitude to security issues on sustainable safety environment in secondary school. Thus, the hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: Independent t-test analysis of the of the influence of principal's attitude to security issues on sustainable safety environment

| Variables | N | X | S.D. | df | t-cal | p-val |
|-------------------|----|-------|------|----|-------|-------|
| Positive attitude | 34 | 15.33 | 2.51 | 84 | 4.09 | .000 |
| Negative attitude | 52 | 13.01 | 4.28 | | | |

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one that stated that there is no significant relationship between school- community relationship and sustainable safety environment in secondary school was rejected. This implied that there is a significant relationship between school- community relationship and sustainable safety environment in secondary school. This could be due to the fact that the community serve as the strongest security to the school. Where the relationship between the school and the

community's alien, that is, the community do not put an eye to the welfare and activities of the school, there is every tendency that members of the same community may be utilizing the school properties for their immediate gains to the detriment of the students, teacher and school management. However, where there is a cordial relationship between the school and the community, there is every tendency that the community will protect the school from external aggression and intimidation which will help the teacher and students be confident in the activities of the school. The findings of the study were in line with the finding of Adams (2016) that carried out a study on challenges to security breaches in secondary schools in Kogi State. The findings of the study showed that poor finances, inadequate security personnel's and poor school community relationship were identified as challenges to the school security.

Hypothesis two that stated that there is no significant relationship between provision of security measures and sustainable safety environment in secondary school was rejected. This implied that there is a significant relationship between provision of security measures and sustainable safety environment in secondary school. This could be due to the fact that prevention is better than cure. Where the school administrator takes drastic steps of ensuring that the school environment is protected through the mounting of tall fences, provision of security operatives in the school, it will facilitate the protection of the school environment from trespass and spy which have over the years exposed schools to threats. The findings of the study collaborate with that of Utyin (2016) that noted that the problem of security challenges in school is due to absence of security operatives especially in public schools where everything goes. That where government provides security in schools, there will be reduced issues of kidnapping, killings and molestation of students by students and teachers in the school.

Hypothesis two that stated that there is no significant influence of principal's attitude to security issues on sustainable safety environment in secondary school was rejected. This implied that there is a significant influence of principal's attitude to security issues on sustainable safety environment in secondary school. This could be due to the fact that in most schools, some school principals do not look at security as their administrative affair. They rather shift it to the government especially in secondary schools in Nigeria where principals collect little or no impress to run the school. This, they tend to be negligent about issues of security and may even fail to report certain security threats to appropriate quarters for fear of intimidation by some hoodlums that threatens the peace and tranquility of the school.

Counselling Implications

- There is the need for the community and the school administrators to go through a process of counselling in order to see the need for having a cordial relationship so as to avert any threat to the security of the school and its inhabitants.
- The school administration should be counseled and made to know that it is their responsibility to also keep a watch and be conscious of security matters in order to create a conducive atmosphere for teaching and learning.
- The counsellor should counsel the community leaders by letting them know that they have a crucial part to play in securing the school which is housed in their community for this will make the parents, guardians and wards to be at peace in the school environment and also boost the performance of the learners academically.

- The counsellor should make the government to see the need for securing both live and property in any school for this will also help the parent, guidance and ward to be at peace and encourage teaching and learning in such schools.
- The counsellor should let both the community and the school administration know the need for harmonious living for mutual benefit.
- The counsellor should counsel the people – the government, the community leaders and the school administration on how to work in synergy in order to collectively protect the school from insecurity and make the environment habitable for scholarly exercise (teaching and learning).

Conclusion/Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that school-community relationship, provision of security measures and principals' attitude to security in schools influences sustainable safety environment in secondary school. Thus, it was recommended that

- i. School managements should ensure that they maintain a cordial relationship with host communities in order for them to provide security cover to schools.
- ii. Measures such as provision of security personnel to schools as well as erection of comprehensive fence be built in secondary schools to avoid break ins
- iii. Principles should be alert to identify security threats in the school and report same to operatives in order to fore stall breaches that may affect the lives of the teachers and students in the school

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