

Institutional Variables and The Supervision of Security in Public Secondary Schools in Cross River State.

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper was to examine institutional variables and the supervision of security in secondary schools in Cross River State. The study specifically sought to determine whether there was a significant influence of school population, school type and school location, on the supervision of security in public secondary schools in Cross River State. Three null hypotheses were formulated accordingly to guide the study. 360 students and 120 teachers resulting in a total of 480 respondents, constituted the sample for the study. The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire while Independent t-test was used to analyze data and test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance using Microsoft Excel version 2013. The results of the findings revealed that school population, school type and school location, all have an influence in the supervision of security in public secondary schools of Cross River State. It was also revealed that lowly populated, mixed-gender, and urban public secondary schools were more efficient in the supervision of security than their counterparts such as highly populated, single-gender and rural secondary schools. Based on the findings of this study, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made.

Keywords: Institution; Institutional Variables; Supervision; Supervision of Security; Public Secondary Schools.

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Introduction

Supervision of security is a vital aspect of school administration. Supervision of security refers to the effective monitoring and checking of security situations as well as overseeing security guards to perform their functions of ensuring safety, protecting lives and properties effectively. 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. According to Stephen (2004), school security management refers to strategies and procedures required to co-ordinate the diverse activities of the institution in order to achieve safety. One of the important duties of the school manager is to ensure that safety programmes are implemented and that necessary steps are taken whenever situation arise which could be potentially dangerous (Bucher and Manning, 2005).

Supervision of security in schools is highly necessary because it is as important as the establishment of the school itself, because the school was established for the people and cannot continue if everybody in the school is dead. Security is the precaution taken to safeguard an environment from impending danger or injury. It is a measure taken to prevent dangers and threats. These are the measures taken to make the school environment safe. A place where there is security is a place of safety, (Haughton and Metcalf, 2000). How security is managed and supervised in public secondary schools, will also go a long way to

influence the stability of the school, the work attitude and the overall performance of staff and students of the institution. It is the duty of the principals to ensure that both materials and human resources at his/her disposal are adequately maintained and guaranteed safety. According to Applebury (2018), providing proper school security and keeping schools safe allows children to look forward to being in an encouraging environment that promotes social and creative learning. When their basic safety needs aren't met, children are at risk for not feeling comfortable at school and may stop showing up, or they may remain on edge throughout the day. Promoting school safety creates an open space for kids to explore, learn and grow. A safe learning environment is essential for students of all ages.

Institutional variables refers to the characteristic and attributes that a school possess or that can be judged as being applicable to a particular school. Some institutional variables such as school location, school population, and school type, etc. could influence the supervision of security in secondary schools in Cross River State.

School location refers to where a school is situated or sited, it can be located in a rural location, urban location, and sub-urban regions. According to OECD (2003), school location refers to the community in which the school is located, such as a village, hamlet or rural area (fewer than 3 000 people), a small town (3 000 to about 15 000 people), a town (15 000 to about 100 000 people), a city (100 000 to about 1 000 000 people), close to the centre of a city with over 1 000 000 people or elsewhere in a city with over 1 000 000 people. School population refers to the total number of students and teachers that are available in a school at a given point in time. School population refers to the total number of students and teachers that are available in a school at a given point in time. A school can be said to have a large population or a small population depending on the number of observations that are presents, Humann and Griffin (2014) maintained that schools with small populations are defined as having enrollments under 800 people, while large schools are those defined as having enrollments greater than 1,600. That enrollment size is often associated with other community characteristics that contribute to educational performance. School type on the other, refers to the nature and composition of students in a school; it can be classified as mixed or single gender schools. The type of elementary school attended include public secular, public Madrassah, private secular, private Madrassah, private Muslim non-Madrassah, or private other (Newhouse & Beegle, 2005).

Every child should feel safe from violence in their school, yet there are many children who do not feel safe in our institutions. Today, it is not unusual for students to violently attack other students, teachers, security guards, and school personnel, showing a complete lack of respect for authority. These attacks often result in injury and at times, death. According to Holt, Finkelhor and Kantor (2007), witnessing these acts can also cause intense fear and anxiety within other students as well as staff members, making the school environment a psychologically distressing place to be. With the recent happenings in Cross River State and its environs, one can say with all amount of confidence that there are serious security challenges that have called for urgent attention. Cases have been heard how parents invade schools to threaten teachers and other staff. Some even invade schools with other family members to assault teachers. There have also been cases of kidnapping like the one that happened in a secondary school in Ogoja Local Government area of Cross River where a young school girl in JSS2 was kidnapped during break period in the school compound. In a community in Etung local Government area, it was reported that some hoodlums strolled into the school premises and forced some SS2 and SS3 male students out through bush

tracks for initiation into secret cult. These and many other stories have emerged in recent times where students' vulnerabilities are exposed. Students are faced with many dangerous situations that requires effectiveness and proper supervision of security. The problem of security supervision is not only occurring in Cross River State, it occurs even in other sister states. The case of the Chibok girls and the more recent case of the abducted Dapchi girls are indicators that points to the fact that other states are perhaps, also encountering the same security challenges. Therefore, there is need for secondary school principals to monitor and ensure that proper security measures are in place and are functioning effectively to provide the needed safety to human and other properties in the school. It is against this background that this study was conducted to examine institutional variables and the supervision of security in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Statement of the problem

Under an ideal situation, secondary schools need to be adequately managed and supervised to ensure safety and promote teaching and learning. Effective teaching and learning on the other hand, is believed to provide room for the acquisition of skills and the improvement of oneself as well as his entire society. Students, teachers as well as school facilities are supposed to be protected against fear, threat, theft or damage. All relevant stakeholders are supposed to ensure that proper measures are in place and are working enough to provide safety to everyone/thing in the school for effectiveness in teaching, learning and discharge of duties.

However, with the recorded cases of secondary school students involving in such negative activities as cultism, fighting and assault, bullying, victimization, sexual attacks, theft or robbery, classroom disorder, use of weapons, Violent crime etc., is an indicator that the educational system is suffering a setback in terms of security supervision. Engagement in these activities sometimes have led to killings, destruction of properties and threats posed to individuals within the setup. The external invasion into secondary schools to put teachers and students into fear, and the damages caused is an indication that most of our secondary schools are not safe. In Cross River State, the examples of cases shown above are unpleasant. Even in Nigeria at large there have been problems of security supervision. For instance, in Chibok, a town close to the boundary between Bornu and Adamawa States of Nigeria, Ndahi on the 14th of April 2014 reported how the gunmen invaded and abducted more than 200 senior secondary school girls from the school compound. Nigeria woke up on February 19, 2018 to the shocking news of a replica of the Chibok experience (which took place on April 14, 2014). It was the abduction of 110 innocent and defenseless girls from a government-owned secondary school in Dapchi, Yobe State. Stories about this incident have since been in the news.

Such security threats need to be defined, acknowledged and prevented. If something drastic is not done, the existing security threats such as invasion, terrorism, bombing, armed insurgency robbery and lack of proper physical security facilities like fences, good security personnel could spiral out of control, leaving large number of students fearful, injured and deceased. There is a problem because most schools do not run as expected. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to provide answer to the question: Could institutional variables such as population, type or location be related to the supervision of security in

public secondary schools in Cross River State? An attempt to answer this question renders this study germane.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of institutional variables on the supervision of security in public secondary schools in Cross River state. Specifically, this study sought to examine the influence of:

- i. Population of institution on the supervision of security in public secondary schools.
- ii. Type of institution on the supervision of security in public secondary schools.
- iii. Location of institution on the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

Research hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study.

- i. Population of institution does not significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.
- ii. Type of institution does not significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.
- iii. Location of institution does not significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

Literature Review

The term ‘security’, can be defined as the provision of cover, protection and safety to lives and properties against theft, or destruction. According to Rogers (2009), security can broadly be defined as a means of providing effective levels of protection against pure risk. It is a process used to create a relatively crime free area. The aim of security is to assess the vulnerability to risk and thereafter to employ techniques and measures in order to reduce that vulnerability to reasonable level. Security will therefore assist in creating a stable, fairly predictable environment in which individuals may move freely with reduced or without any disturbance or injury (Lambaard and Kole, 2008).

Since supervision is an aspect of management, the terms “supervision of security” or “management of security” will be used in this study interchangeably in this study. School security management is the process of creating conducive and proper internal environment in the school (Dimsey, 2008). It can be likened to the efforts which are to be made to protect the environment where students learn and teachers teach in a warm and welcoming environment which will be free from intimidation and fear of violence (Henry, 2000).

An effective way of ensuring that there is safety and security of the school plant was suggested by the Warsaw Community Schools Bylaws and Policies (Ike, 2015). The policies stated that the school board should provide notice to all students; the public and its employees of the potential of video surveillance and electronic monitoring in order to protect corporation property that promote security and health, welfare and safety of staff and visitors. Also, it stated that the supervisors should develop and supervise a programme for the security of the entire students, staff, visitors, school grounds, school equipment and vehicles in compliance with statute and rules of the state (Ike, 2015).

There is a wide range of physical security measures that can be put in practice to supervise security activities in schools. They can be divided into categories, consisting of the outside perimeter measure, inner middle perimeter measure and internal measures (Lamboard and Kole, 2008). The outside perimeter measures are those measures that can be found outside the school building normally the perimeter of the premises such as signs, fences and other barriers, lighting, alarms and patrols. The inner middle perimeter measures are the security measures used within the boundaries of the facility and can include fence and other barriers, alarms, light, CCTV external cameras, warning signs, doors, lock, burglar proofing on windows, security staff and access control system. Lastly, there are the internal physical security measures which are the ones that can be found within building such as alarms, CCTV cameras, turnstiles, windows and door bars, locks, safes, vaults protective lighting and other barriers (Ike, 2015).

To enhance the supervision of security in a school compound, there is need to have one entrance to the school building for proper monitoring of who enters or leaves the school compound. Ideally, this entrance does not grant immediate access to the buildings but will rather require passage through of a reception window, glass wall, or electronic access system (Ken, 2008). Emergency services must be granted quick access to and from the building and signs referring students, staff and visitors to the monitored unlocked entrance should be clearly visible (Sprague and walker, 2005). For proper school security, there is need for a communication device in the school. This provides easy and immediate facilitation of communication among faculties, administrators and school bus driver. According to Sprague and walker (2005), every room within a school building should provide immediate notification and contact capabilities in the event of an isolated or school-wide emergency. There should be a public address system which should have the capacity to reach every individual school member regardless of their location.

Shannon (2006) conducted a study on school security practices; their consequences on students and climate. The researcher observed that many public secondary schools do not have safety and security devices needed to keep school safe. Shannon found out that schools that have safety and security devices perform better in their academics than in the schools where few of the devices were found. Secondary, that student in the schools where few of the security devices were found were more security conscious than student in the schools where they were not found at all.

Similarly, a study was conducted by Nompumelelo (2010) on exploration and promotion of safety in schools. The purpose of the study was to discover security prevention strategies for handling safety and security threats in the public secondary schools. To guide this study, four research questions were posed and two hypotheses were formulated. The design of the study was Ex-post-facto research design. Stratified random sampling was used to select 78 respondents which comprise of teacher, students and principals. The instruments for data collection were questionnaires. The method of data analysis was Mean and Standard deviation while ANOVA was used to test the hypotheses. The researcher revealed that the school stakeholders were not involved in the threats prevention strategies made for the schools. Thus the strategies set were ineffective. The researcher also found out that most of the schools lack admission policies, copies of code of conduct for the teachers and learners which enhances security threats free environment.

Alokan (2010) found out that students' problems are strongly associated with poor performance and that sex and location do not affect the negative relationship between student problems and academic performance. In another development, Considine and Zappala (2002) studied students in Australia and found out that geographical location does not significantly predict outcomes in school performance. Shield and Dockrell (2008) while looking at the effects of classroom and environmental noise on children's academic performance found out that both chronic and acute exposure to environmental and classroom noise have a detrimental effect upon children's learning and performance.

Surveys of school staff showed that smaller schools tend to cultivate better attitudes towards work among school administrators and teachers, leading to greater staff collaboration and more successful school improvement efforts (Klonsky, 2006) than highly populated schools. The likely causes of this effect include the more favorable school climates and deeper personal relationships found in smaller schools. Still, it is difficult to attribute improved teacher satisfaction solely to enrollment size. Often, smaller schools employ other strategies that may also improve educator satisfaction. For example, small schools may use a distributed leadership model and may enjoy greater support from the district office. Both of these factors have been found to have positive impacts on teacher satisfaction and motivation (Rochford, 2005).

In another study, Newhouse and Beegle (2005) presented a model in which households select a school type based on their wealth and preference for academic achievement, which raises the prospect of selection bias in empirical estimates of the effect of school type on test scores. Our empirical results, however, suggest that after controlling for a large number of household characteristics, selection bias due to parental preference for achievement is small. OLS, fixed effects, and instrumental variables estimation methods indicate that public school students have significantly higher exit scores than their privately schooled peers. We find no evidence that private schools are more effective than public schools at raising test scores.

It can be seen from the foregoing that there exist limited empirical researches in the area of school security management or its relationship with other variables. From the few available studies, none were conducted in Cross River State. No study has also been conducted specifically in the area of institutional variables and the supervision of security in public secondary schools. This means that there are still many gaps that needs to be filled in this area. An attempt to fill such gaps, gave rise to this study.

Methods

The research design adopted for this study was an ex-post facto research. This design was considered most appropriate because the intended phenomena to be studied has already occurred. The population of this study included all the teachers and students of all the public secondary schools in Cross River State. However, 6 public secondary schools were selected from Calabar metropolis, 3 each from rural communities of Boki and Obubra local government areas of Cross River State, resulting in a total of 12 public secondary selected using simple random sampling technique. Out of these 12 schools, four were single-gendered (2 boys and 2 girls school); 6 were urban schools while the other 6 were rurally based; 6 were highly populated and 6 were low populated schools.

Cluster and stratified random sampling techniques were adopted to select a sample of 30 students and 10 teachers from each school, implying that from each school, a sample of 40 participants were selected. In summary, a total of 360 students and 120 teachers resulting in a total of 480 participants selected across the selected schools, constituted the study sample. The instrument used for data was a questionnaire titled: Supervision of Security in public

secondary schools Questionnaire (SSPSSQ). The instrument was organized in two sections – A and B. Section A, elicited respondents’ demographic data, while section B contained 15 items organized on a 4-point Likert scale to obtain data on the supervision of security. Independent t-test was used to analyze the collected data with the use of Microsoft Excel version 2013, and to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

HO₁: Population of institution does not significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

Table 1. Summary of results for population of institution and the supervision of security

Population of institution	N ₁	Mean ₁	S ₁ ²	T-cal.	T-crit.	α	df
	480	36.610	45.875				
				2.64239	1.96244	.05	958
	480	37.858	61.182				
Supervision of security	N ₂	Mean ₂	S ₂ ²				

The results presented in table 1 above indicates that the calculated t-values 2.64239 is greater than the critical values 1.96244 at .05 level of significance and 958 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis stated above and maintain that population of institution significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

HO₂: Type of institution does not significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

Table 2: Summary of results for type of institution and the supervision of security

Type of institution	N ₁	Mean ₁	S ₁ ²	T-cal.	T-crit.	α	df
	480	36.733	52.029				
				2.31647	1.96244	.05	958
	480	37.858	61.182				
Supervision of security	N ₂	Mean ₂	S ₂ ²				

From the results presented in table 2, the calculated t – values 2.31647 is greater than the critical values 1.96244 at .05 level of significance and 958 degrees of freedom. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that type of institution significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

HO3: Location of institution does not significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

Table 3: Summary of results for location of institution and the supervision of security

Location of institution	N ₁	Mean ₁	S ₁ ²	T-cal.	T-crit.	α	df
	480	34.965	80.335				
				5.32938	1.96244	.05	958
	480	37.858	61.182				
Supervision of security	N ₂	Mean ₂	S ₂ ²				

From table 3, the results presented indicates that the calculated t-values 5.32938 is greater than the critical values 1.96244 at .05 level of significance and 958 degrees of freedom. We reject the null hypothesis therefore, and uphold the alternate hypothesis that location of institution significantly influences the supervision of security in public secondary schools.

Discussion of results

The findings of this study has been able to establish that population of institution significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools. Schools with low population were better in terms of efficiency to supervise security. In addition to this, they responses indicated low populated schools had less security issues than highly populated schools. Almost all the populated secondary schools in Cross River State had issues of security challenges. Due to limited studies in this area, there is no available empirical evidence that support or contradict this finding. This finding support the findings of Klonsky, (2006), who surveyed school staff and revealed that smaller schools tend to cultivate better attitudes towards work among school administrators and teachers, leading to greater staff collaboration and more successful school improvement efforts than highly populated schools. Though the survey did not cover management of security as dependent variable, it had a relationship to this study because a student with good attitudes will pose little or no threat to the school.

The findings of this study also revealed that type of institution significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools. Mix-gendered schools were more efficient in the supervision of security than single-gendered public secondary schools in Cross River State. Similarly, there is no available literature that supports or contradicts this finding due to limited researches in this area. This finding has a relationship with the findings of Newhouse and Beegle (2005) who in their model, indicated that public school

students have significantly higher exit scores than their privately schooled peers. Their study revealed no evidence that private schools are more effective than public schools at raising test scores.

The findings of this study also revealed that location of institution significantly influence the supervision of security in public secondary schools. Urban public secondary schools were more efficient in the supervision of security than rural secondary schools in Cross River State. Almost all the rural public secondary schools were not fenced, and the few ones that were fenced, made use of bamboo and other local materials like palm fronds for local construction of fences. It was also revealed that none of the secondary schools had up to five security guards, and even the few available ones were not armed with sophisticated weapons. Many rural secondary schools also had more than one entrance which made them more vulnerable to security attacks. However, security issues were more predominant in urban secondary schools than rural secondary schools. There is also no available empirical evidence to support or contradict this finding due to limited studies in this area of school security supervision. This finding supports the finding of Alokun (2010) whose study revealed that, students' problems are strongly associated with poor performance and that sex and location do not affect the negative relationship between student problems and academic performance. It also supports the position held by Considine and Zappala (2002) whose study revealed that geographical location does not significantly predict outcomes in school performance.

Generally, it was observed that 80% of the schools are not equipped with security alarms, and warning signs/symbols. The PTA in most schools have been actively involved in supporting the schools to tackle security situations. However, the results of this study is consistent with the position held by the findings of Shannon (2006) who observed that many public secondary schools do not have safety and security devices needed to keep school safe. Shannon found out that schools that have safety and security devices perform better in their academics than in the schools where few of the devices were found. Secondary, that student in the schools where few of the security devices were found were more security conscious than student in the schools where they were not found at all.

Conclusion

Through the findings of this study, it can be concluded that a lot of security challenges are facing many secondary schools in Cross River State. There is also a low level of awareness of the measures that can be used to supervise, monitor and cushion security situations in many secondary schools in Cross River State. Populated schools, urban schools, and single-gendered schools have more security challenges than their counterparts; which has made school population, type, and school location to all have an influence in the supervision of security in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made.

- i. Secondary schools should regulate the number of students they admit per time to avoid over population and promote effectiveness in the supervision of security.
- ii. Efforts should be made by the government and other parties to provide adequate fencing facilities and other security control/defense materials to every secondary school, so as to avoid the invasion of hoodlums and other entities that might be malicious to the school environment.
- iii. At least 5 security men with sophisticated arms, should be employed and posted to schools with relatively high population; while at least 3 security men with adequate arms should be employed and posted to secondary schools with low population.
- iv. Each secondary school especially rural schools, should be provided with one entrance so as to enable proper checks and regulation of who goes in and out of the school premises.
- v. Single-gender schools especially girls' schools should be provided with enough security men, communication devices, alarms and proper orientation. They should also be guided during sports or other co-curricular activities of the school.

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