

INSECURITY, SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS AND ACADEMIC ADJUSTMENT AMONG STUDENTS OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA, KADUNA STATE- NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the relationship of Insecurity, Socio-Economic Status and Academic Adjustment among Students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State-Nigeria. The instrument used to gather data was questionnaire on insecurity, socio-economic and academic adjustment. A correlational design was adopted for the study. A structured questionnaire was designed and validated for the study. This instrument was administered on 357 respondents in the sampled tertiary institution, this was in line with Krejcie and Morgan (1996) sample selection. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics. The hypotheses formulated were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The result showed that a significant relationship exists between insecurity and academic adjustment ($r = 0.7612$, $p = 0.001$). The finding also revealed that a significant relationship exists between socio-economic status and academic adjustment ($r = 0.7113$, $p = 0.000$). Therefore, it is recommended, among others, that university psychologists in collaboration with security agencies be able to address students with security tips that will overcome their fear for better academic adjustment and subsequently enhance academic performance; and for students' to achieve their academic goals, Parents should give their children the adequate financial support and other supports needed, so as to stabilize their adjustment in the university and further enhance their academic achievement.

Keywords: Insecurity, socio-economic status and students' academic adjustment.

Introduction

Insecurity is globally becoming a household word as there is no nation that is completely absolved from its effect. Rourke (2008) observes that insecurity, war, terrorism and other forms of transnational political violence are in many ways more threatening today than ever before as civilian casualty has been on increase. A well secured learning environment that is devoid of security threats is perceived to enhance learning (Akintunde, & Selzing-Musa, 2016). Indeed, the worldwide manifestation of insecurity has been evident in Africa, but also in Nigeria.

University education is regarded as the highest peak of education in Nigeria and the world all over. It is an institution of education that is anchored on teaching, research and community services but unfortunately this institution of education have been affected by insecurity challenges facing the country. Most worrisome is the emerging new forms of insecurity challenges in contemporary Nigeria which have taken a disturbing dimension to the extent that it has almost crippled the various sectors of societal structure, especially the education sector in Nigeria (Solomon & Solomon, 2021) cited in (Ogunode 2023).

Nigerian universities and other institutions of higher learning was set up to provide quality education and to bring about the overall development of the society at local and global scales. Statistics have shown that many Nigerian tertiary institutions are finding it increasingly difficult to achieve these set-out goals as a result of the high level of insecurity in the country (Solomon & Solomon 2021). Situations of insecurity trigger traumatic disorder and toxic stress that affect learning negatively. According to Akintunde and Selzing-Musa (2016), insecure school environment affects the learning of students. General school attendance and enrolment are equally affected as parents pull their wards out of schools while in some extreme cases, insecurity has led to the closure of schools. The attacks on schools usually lead to loss of life, vandalization and outright destruction of school facilities which discourage the establishment of new facilities. Insecurity continues to threaten basic school, secondary schools and tertiary institution in Nigeria to the extent that university managers, lecturers and students have all got their pains from the insecurity problem in the country (Ogunode, Godwin & Unoaku 2021).

The emergence of Boko Haram insurgency, kidnapping, cattle wresting, farmer-herdsmen clashes and bandit activities just to mention but few has pose threat to national security. To combat the increasing waves of crime, the Nigerian government has budgeted a huge amount of money on security, and the National Assembly passed the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011 (Stanley, 2017). Despite these efforts, the level of insecurity in the country is still high, and a confirmation of this is the low ranking of Nigeria in the Global Peace Index. Added to this, the plethora of security measures taken to address the daunting challenges of insecurity in the country, the efforts have not completely produced the desired positive result (Adebayo, 2013). Thus, the existence of these problems has affected the educational system negatively, for the fact that, tertiary institutions in the country are no longer safe for academic activities, hence, effective learning of students is dependent on a secured environment that will necessitate psychological stability and adjust to the learning environment.

Environmental insecurity puts the Nigerian students in stressful conditions that can affect students' behaviour and impede learning. No nation grows beyond its level of educational development, the need to adequately provide a secure school environment cannot be over-emphasized. Enamiroro (2021) examined the nexus between insecurity and academic performance in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, a sample of 1500 respondents was selected through stratified random sampling from nine tertiary institutions in the six geo-political zones. The questionnaire was the instrument for data collection and ANOVA method of estimation was employed. The finding revealed that insecurity has a significant effect on the academic achievement of students in North Central, North East, North West and South East. Ebokaiwe (2020) investigated the issues of school insecurity and academic performance using secondary data and employed a vector auto regressive model. The result revealed that insecurity hurt the overall development of education in Nigeria.

Adebayo (2019) studied the effect of insecurity in the school environment on the academic performance of secondary school students in Ibarapa Area of Oyo State. Five hundred respondents responded to a self-structured questionnaire. The chi-square statistics method of estimation was employed. The findings showed that insecurity in the school environment significantly affects the academic performance of secondary school students. Adebayo (2014) examined the nexus between higher education, security challenges and sustainable development in Osun State. The study employed a primary source of data collection through a self-administered questionnaire and the Chi-square method of estimation was employed. The result revealed that insecurity is one of the prominent challenges facing higher institutions

and impedes sustainable development in the long run.

This insecurity problem has as well contributed to low socio-economic level of people, endemic rural and urban poverty, high rate of unemployment, debilitating youth unemployment, low industrial output, unstable and deteriorating exchange rate, high inflation rate, inadequate physical and social infrastructure (Stanley, 2017). It is generally assume that Socio Economic Status (SES) affects income, health through social gradient, social exclusion, education, psychological status and other factors. People with lower socio-economic have lower autonomy to work, corresponding to a more pressure and negative emotions. Mukherjee (1999) states that socio economic status is used as a measure of an individual's or group's social position in the community. He also reported that mothers' education is the strong predictor of students' academic performance and achievement. Socio-economic status is a term used by sociologists, economists, and other social scientists to describe the class standing of an individual or group. It is measured by a number of factors, including income, occupation, and education, and it can have either positive or negative impact on a student's academic adjustment (Ashley, 2019).

According to Jeynes (2002), the socio-economic status of a child is usually determined by parental occupational status and income level, and the environment in which the child is brought up. It is also affected by parents' involvement in learning activities and effective parent-teacher relationship. It is understood that low socio-economic status negatively and depressingly affects students' academic adjustment, motivation and leads to test anxiety due to high additional stress and tension at home, thereby affecting students' academic achievement in the long run.

Therefore, academic adjustment has been seen as a term used for student based on how well they are doing in studies, classes and achievement. Achievement in academics for university student is also seen as the extent to which a student has adjusted in his educational goals. This means that the student's academic performance is measured by the extent to which he/she has reached the educational goal he has set for himself. The university measures academic achievement in several ways which include Continuous Assessment Test (C.A.T) and a number of standardized test and examinations (Pekrun & Perry, 2007).

Academic progress or achievement in school is viewed in the context of adjustment at school. It involves attitudes of students towards school, relationship with teachers and peers, and ability to take initiative in curricular and co-curricular activities. Therefore, academic achievement depends on academic adjustment. Student's academic adjustment is a phenomenon that is of great concern to educationists who need to know what they can do to help their students adjust and benefit from school (Winga, Agak, & Ayere, 2011). Academic adjustment is a broad construct which consists of many different aspects such as academic achievement, school satisfaction, school engagement, socio-economic background and pro social behavior.

As far as academic adjustment is concerned, children are expected to be independent on their activities in the school where they need to adjust with the new academic demands, unfortunately, student from low socio-economic background experienced academic adjustment difficulties. Here they have to face more competition, deal with more academic load and to maintain pace with other members in the class they need to have economic stability to be able to face various academic realities on ground. However, Sharma (2012) found no significant relationship between achievement and adjustment. Academic adjustment difficulties arise from the differences between the expectations of socio-economic status of students and realities of school life. The nature of children expectations about schools and their relation with academic adjustment in schools were examined in a longitudinal investigation by Jackson, Pancer, Pratt, and

Hunsberger (2000) who saw children whose expectations were low socio-economic status, fearful reported more stress, depression, and poorer school adjustment than children with other types of expectations who are particularly prepared.

Statement of the Problem

In the educational landscape of Nigeria, specifically within Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State, there is a growing concern about the intricate interplay between insecurity, socio-economic background, and academic adjustment among students. This complex nexus warrants an in-depth exploration as it holds significant implications for both individual student success and the broader educational system. Again, the fear associated with insecurity issues in Nigerian society often discourages students from seeking necessary support and may hinder their academic adjustment. Meanwhile, in a region characterized by varying degrees of economic disparities, understanding how socio-economic factors influence students' academic pursuits is crucial, since it could affect their academic adjustment and overall well-being. Academic adjustment is a central concern of any educational institution, as it reflects the effectiveness of the educational process. To ensure that students reach their full potential, it is essential to examine how insecurity and socio-economic factors influence their academic adjustment. It is against this backdrop that this paper focuses on investigating the relationship between insecurity, socio-economic status, and academic adjustment among students at Ahmadu Bello University Zaria in Kaduna State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

1. To find out the relationship between insecurity and academic adjustment among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.
2. To determine the relationship between socio-economic status and academic adjustment among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria.

Research Questions

The study answer the following research questions:

1. What is the relationship between insecurity and academic adjustment among students in the study area?
2. What is the relationship between socio-economic status and academic adjustment among students in the study area?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between insecurity and academic adjustment among students in the study area.
2. There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic adjustment among students in the study area.

Methodology

The study adopts correlation research design where a researcher seeks to investigate the nature of relationships, or associations between and among variables, rather than direct cause-effect relationships. The population of the study comprised four thousand, nine hundred and thirty (4,930) students that was drawn from five faculties in the university. The researchers purposely target 100L students. Sample size of three hundred and fifty seven (357) students was used for the study, this was in line with Krejcie and Morgan (1996) sample selection. Three instruments were used to collect data, they are Insecurity Scale (IS) by Hohman and Hogg (2015), Socio-Economic Scale (SES) by Bandura (1997) and Academic

Adjustment Scale (AAS) was adopted from Dyadiac Adjustment Scale (2015). IS consists of 18 items, SES consists of 15 items while AAS consists of 14 items, which is designed to measure academic adjustment of students. IS had a reliability coefficient of .75, SES had a reliability coefficient of .90 while academic adjustment inventory had a reliability coefficient of .768. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to test the study hypotheses, all hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between insecurity and academic adjustment among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State-Nigeria.

Table 1: Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between insecurity and academic adjustment

Variables	N	Mean	Std.dev	Df	Correlation	P
Insecurity	270	30.38	12.35	268	0.7612**	0.001
Academic adjustment	270	3.02	0.589			

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Significant relationship exists between insecurity and academic adjustment of students in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria at a correlation index r level of 0.7612**. Reasons being that the p value of 0.001 is lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the type of relationship between the two variables is directly proportional, that is the higher the level of insecurity, the higher the academic adjustment and vice versa. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between insecurity and academic adjustment among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State-Nigeria is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between socio-economic status and academic adjustment among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State-Nigeria.

Table 2: Pearson product-moment correlation (PPMC) statistics on the relationship between socio-economic status and academic adjustment.

Variables	N	Mean	Std.dev	Df	Correlation	P
Socio economic status	270	50.2593	8.92115	268	0.7113**	0.000
Academic adjustment	270	3.02	0.589			

***.* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Significant relationship exists between socio-economic status and academic adjustment of students in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria at a correlation index r level of 0.7113**. Reasons being that the p value of 0.000 is lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance, the type of relationship between the two variables is directly proportional, that is the higher the level of socio-economic, the higher the academic adjustment and vice versa. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between socio-economic and academic adjustment among students of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Kaduna State-Nigeria is hereby rejected.

Discussions

The finding of this study revealed that a significant relationship exists between insecurity and academic adjustment. The relationship between the variables is directly proportional. It enables individuals to realize their potential, productivity, possible contribution to the community they live in and to adequately cope with everyday stressful situations. The finding agrees with Adebayo (2014) whose study revealed that insecurity is one of the prominent challenges facing academic adjustment in higher institutions and

impedes sustainable development in the long run.

Environmental insecurity puts the Nigerian students in stressful conditions that can affect students' behavior and impede learning.

Finding of this study also revealed that a significant relationship exists between socio-economic status and academic adjustment. This finding collaborates with that of Jackson, Pancer, Pratt, and Hunsberger (2000) who saw children whose expectations were low socio-economic status, fearful reported poorer school adjustment, stress and depression than children with other types of expectations who are particularly prepared. It is understood that low socio-economic status negatively and depressingly affects students' academic adjustment and leads to test anxiety due to high additional stress and tension at school, thereby affecting students' academic achievement in the long run.

Conclusion

From the result of this study, it is concluded that insecurity and socio-economic background have significant relationship with academic adjustment. Thus, students are face with the challenge of adjusting in changing environments at every stage of their life. The struggle to be able to get adjusted in various areas such as academics, health, family, social, etc. is obstructed when insecurity takes control of the person from low socio-economic background. Therefore it becomes important to cope with such feelings in order to be a better adjusted and fully functioning person in all field of life.

Recommendations

1. University psychologists in collaboration with security agencies be able to address students with security tips that will overcome their fear and tension for better academic adjustment and subsequently enhance academic performance
2. For students' to achieve their academic goals, Parents should give their children the adequate financial support and other supports needed, so as to stabilize their adjustment on academic activities in school.

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