



## ASSESSMENT OF INSECURITY IN SENIOR SCHOOLS IN IBI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, TARABA STATE, NIGERIA

Ifeoma Priscillilian Okafor<sup>1</sup>, Isiaka Abdulaziz<sup>2</sup>, Thompson Toryuha AUN<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin, Nigeria

Corresponding author e-mail: [aunthompson17@gmail.com](mailto:aunthompson17@gmail.com)

**ABSTRACT.** Insecurity is a significant issue in Nigeria, affecting various aspects of life, including education. This study focuses on assessing insecurity in senior secondary schools within Ibi Local Government Area (LGA), Taraba State. Insecurity disrupts educational progress, with grave implications for the future if children cannot attend school safely. The study employed a descriptive survey design, encompassing all public senior schools in Ibi LGA. Participants included 13 principals, 23 vice principals, 38 heads of departments (HODs), and 146 school prefects, totaling 220 respondents across 20 schools. Data were collected using the insecurity in Senior Schools Questionnaire (ISSQ) and analyzed through percentages, mean ratings, t-tests, and ANOVA. Findings revealed that the level of insecurity in Ibi's senior schools is high. The main causes identified were bad governance, mismanagement, and lack of accountability and transparency. Proposed solutions included establishing crisis response teams for emergencies, adopting a holistic approach to insecurity, and implementing secure school designs. The study emphasized the need for educational stakeholders to address these issues effectively, ensuring that insecurity is minimized to foster a safe learning environment. This will enable students to pursue education without fear, contributing to the broader development of the region.

**Keywords:** insecurity, security, senior-schools, causes, solution

### INTRODUCTION

The greatest problem affecting every country today is the issue of insecurity. Heightened or promoted by factors like poverty, greed, politics, power tussle, arms proliferation, ignorance, illiteracy, religion, get-rich-quick attitudes, to mention but a few, Insecurity has caused, is causing and if not checkmated will cause several destructions in the world. This insecurity does not leave any sector of the world unaffected, ranging from economic, political, religious, and educational and that has not and is not going down well with these sectors. This persistent and constant level of insecurity bothers every dick, tom and harry in Taraba. School children are been kidnapped or abducted, raped, killed, starved of food, etcetera, all of which constitute insecurity. This issue of insecurity has led some parents to taking their children to day schools as against boarding school. In a lay man's understanding, insecurity is a feeling of lacking freedom or inadequacy and uncertainty; it can also be defined as breach of peace and security which has led to recurring and destruction of properties or lives.

Insecurity means absence of freedom or security of any kind; food, job, home, protection, medical

facilities, attention, water, territorial boundaries, etc. Insecurity is the inability of individual or group to be free. Insecurity arises from the perceived threat and the challenge faced by states and societies in preserving their distinct identity and operational stability against perceived adversarial influences (Ochogwu, 2019). Beland (2005) characterizes insecurity as a condition of apprehension or unease arising from a real or perceived absence of safeguarding. It is viewed as a menace to core principles that, if unaddressed, jeopardize the existence of a specific entity either currently or in the foreseeable future (Williams, 2008). Again, according to the United Nations programmes (Okorie, 2011) human security is a freedom from fear or wants. Consequently, insecurity has taken divergent forms in Nigeria that no part will claim to be exempted. From all parts of Nigeria, there exists different banditry gang names or groups, no part is left out.

According to the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, approximately 800,000 children are reported missing each year in the United States (National Center for Missing and Exploited Children, 2023). Furthermore, Ojukwu and Nwanma (2015) found that an insecure school environment,

including the dilapidated conditions of the school environment and teachers' negative attitudes that condone and accept the emotional needs of students, may lead to undue influences and clashes of the local community interfering with school progress.

Additionally, in an insecure school environment, the sociological and psychological problems of the students are often neglected, and they may be handled without caution. In the school community, there can be divisions along religious, tribal, and sectarian lines. Students may disregard teachers' instructions and challenge them on specific concepts. Additionally, students may damage school property to express their dissatisfaction with management decisions, as noted by Ojukwu and Nwanma (2015). The extent to which these variables interact with each other, either positively or negatively, in the school environment can either facilitate or hinder teaching and learning, which may impact student performance. When the interaction is positive, it leads to classroom effectiveness, enhanced student cooperation and learning, and promotes love and efficient planning by the school authority, as observed by Ojukwu and Nwanma (2015).

Conversely, when the interaction is negative, the opposite occurs. Chijoke and Innocent (2012) observed that Nigeria as a nation must make concerted efforts to raise the educational attainment of all its youths, who are the leaders of tomorrow, especially those who are deprived of regular school attendance due to insecurity and conflicts. Thus, school security relates more squarely to personal and physical security.

The 21st century is characterized by an increase in school attacks worldwide. Schools, as social organizations, have become targets for attacks by terrorists, with the aim of sending strong signals to state authorities (Mohammed, Alimba, Momodu, & Ika, 2016). In the 21st century, secondary schools have experienced a rise in violent activities, such as the abduction of school students, necessitating an urgent need to tackle insecurity before it destroys the future of young people. The dangers of insecurity cannot be overstated. When a nation is burdened with the problem of insecurity, every other plan is put on hold. The hope for the country seems grim if children cannot go to school safely (Chijoke & Innocent, 2012). It is in this light that the researcher deems it fit to assess insecurity among senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State.

#### *Statement of the Problem*

Today, educational stakeholders; government, industries, communities, teachers, parents, and school administrators alike or even students and many others are concerned about the porous and insecure nature of Nigerian schools. The issue of

insecurity has heightened that stakeholders, researchers and authors alike have speculated politics, poverty, unemployment, ignorance, illiteracy while some attribute it to failure on the part of the Nigerian schools, including those in Taraba State to adequately or properly fence and provide other needed gadgets or facilities that are required for the necessary for efficient security and smooth running of schools. This area seems to have been overlooked most time or say neglected by individuals and government in locating or choosing site for schools. Researches on the assessment of insecurity on school environment and the effect that it has had, is having and will have on the senior school students or schools as a whole has long ago been ignored or neglected by government when approving schools and by individuals when locating schools.

The cases of insecurity in Nigerian schools have become increasingly prevalent, ranging from kidnapping, rape, and abduction, among other issues (Nwangwa, 2014). The media has continued to highlight and discuss the incessant cases of armed robbery, kidnapping, bombings, abduction, rape, cult activities, as well as the increase in ethnic and communal clashes (Nwangwa, 2014). These incidents have become a new normal or regular occurrence, characterizing life in Nigeria (Nwangwa, 2014).

This made the Minister of Information Lai Muhammed to say that government believes in the ability of the nation's security agencies to tackle all the challenges and urged both political and religious leaders not to aggravate the security situation with 'incendiary and reckless comment' and try to be part of the solution rather than aggravating situations (Punch, Friday 21st February 2020). Accordingly, Taraba state is not an exception of these insecurity occurrences in senior schools or schools. The state has also experience different cases of insecurity such as human trafficking, child abuse among others. Teachers who are supposed to ensure security or at least, serve as guidance to these children while in schools have been on several occasions found guilty of sending them on errands which may lead to accidents on the road/street or abuse/molestation of such student while some are even part of their rape, abduction or kidnap gang.

Furthermore, researchers have carried out several studies on insecurity. Ojukwu (2017) conducted a study to investigate the impact of insecurity on the school environment and its subsequent effect on the academic performance of secondary school students in Imo State, Nigeria. The study involved a total of 1000 students, with 500 each of male and female participants, who responded to a self-structured validated questionnaire. The findings revealed that insecurity significantly affects

the academic performance of secondary school students, with factors such as gangsterism, smoking of Indian hemp, and cult activities contributing to this insecurity. The study recommended that school owners and education stakeholders take bold steps to protect school environments from intruders to ensure student safety. Alimba (2018) studied security and security measures for schools operating in domains prone to insurgency in Nigeria. Additionally, IS'haq, Musa, and Abdulhafiz (2012) examined the relationship between education and insecurity in Nigeria, focusing on Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Olokooba, Abdullahi, and Abdulaziz (2017) also investigated the impact of insecurity on the educational system in Nigeria. From the foregoing, it is discovered that none concentrated on the entirety of education stakeholders and even the one conducted in Taraba state. Accordingly, the present study involved teachers and a large number of other stakeholders, while robust statistical tool was used to analyse the data.

The study examined the level of insecurity in senior secondary schools within Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. The researchers highlighted the far-reaching consequences of poor academic performance among students, including its negative impact on the students themselves, their parents, society, and the nation as a whole (Chijoke & Innocent, 2012), it is crucial to address this issue. Accordingly, since there has always been lingering insecurity or conflict in Ibi Local Government of Taraba State (Nwangwa, 2014), it will be appropriate and a welcome development to assess the level of insecurity in senior secondary schools in this area, with the view of proffering solutions for a better and secure school environment for the students.

Accordingly, since there has always been lingering insecurity or conflict in Ibi local government of Taraba State, it will only be appropriate and a great development to assess the level of senior schools' insecurity in Ibi, Taraba, with the hope of solving the issue for safe and or secure school environment.

The primary objective of this research was to evaluate the extent of insecurity in senior secondary schools within Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. Additionally, the study aimed to investigate specific aspects of insecurity; assess the level of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State; assess causes of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi Taraba State; assess solutions to insecurity in senior schools in Ibi Taraba State; assess insecurity in senior schools on gender basis; and assess insecurity in senior schools in Ibi, Taraba on status basis.

The study tested the following null hypotheses: There is no statistically significant difference in how

male and female respondents assess the level of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. There is no statistically significant difference in the assessment of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State based on the respondents' status (e.g., student, teacher, administrator).

## METHOD

Quantitative research of descriptive survey design was adopted for this study to describe certain variables under study. Descriptive survey is considered significant and relevant to the study because it makes bare factual description of sample respondents as being observed. The study population comprised all education stakeholders (school principals, vice principals, teachers, students, teachers, parents, and Ministry of Education) of senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. There are 64 senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. The study used multistage sampling technique; at the first stage, simple random sampling technique was used to select 20 senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area for the study. At the second stage, purposive sampling technique was used to select the Principals, Vice principals, HOD's and prefects in Ibi, Taraba. That is, 13 principals, 23 vice principals, 38 HODs and 146 school prefects were purposively selected for this study, because these people are considered the major stakeholders in senior schools and are the people that will first be consulted in case of any security challenge in the school. Overall, a total of 220 respondents were sampled for this study.

The instrument that was used for data collection was a researcher design questionnaire titled; "*Assessment of Insecurity in Senior Schools Questionnaires (AISSQ)*". The questionnaire was in four sections: A, B, C and D. Section A focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondent while, section B contained 15 items on insecurity in secondary schools. Section C had 10 items on causes of insecurity in senior secondary schools, while section D also contained 10 items on solutions to insecurity in senior schools. The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale, consisting of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). To ensure the instrument's validity, a copy was distributed to experts for review and feedback, in the Social Sciences Education Department, University of Ilorin, for their input and all corrections made by the experts were taken to effect. The reliability of the instruments of AISSQ was established through test re-test reliability method between the intervals of three weeks to

establishing reliability. The first and second administrations of the instruments were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha statistical tool, realizing the reliability index of 0.78.

The researcher went to the field with the research instrument coupled with the introduction letter from the Department of Social Sciences Education, Faculty of Education, University of Ilorin and administered on targeted population after obtaining permission from the principals of the schools. The researcher with the assistance of a teacher in the selected schools administer the questionnaire in all sampled schools. The demographic characteristics of the respondents were describe using percentage, while research questions were answered using percentage and mean rating. The formulated hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using independent t-test and one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Result

The data presented in Tables 1 and 2 were organized based on the respondents' gender and school type, as shown below:

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	107	48.6
Female	113	51.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The results show that a total of 220 respondents participated in the study. Of these, 107 (48.6%) were male, while 113 (51.4%) were female. This indicates that the majority of respondents in this study were female.

Table 2. The distribution of respondents based on their status is as follows

Status of the Respondents	Frequency	Percent
Principals	13	5.9%
Vice Principals	23	10.5%
HOD's	38	17.3%
Prefect	146	66.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Table 2 above revealed that out of the 220 respondents that participated in the study, 13 representing 5.9% of the respondents are principals, 23 representing 10.5% of the respondents are Vice principals, 38 representing 17.3% of the respondents were HOD's, while, 146 which represents 66.4% of the respondents are prefects. It means that a greater proportion of the respondents in this study are prefects.

The study employed various methods to address its research questions. Research Question 1 was addressed using percentages, while Research Questions 2 and 3 were analyzed using mean ratings. Research Questions 4 and 5 were rephrased as research hypotheses, which were subsequently tested using statistical methods. Specifically, Research Hypothesis 1 was evaluated using the t-test, and Research Hypothesis 2 was examined using the One-way ANOVA.

*What is the level of insecurity in secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State?*

To address Research Question 1, the researchers collated the participants' responses from the questionnaire on the level of insecurity in secondary schools. The data collected from the sampled participants were summed. The minimum score was 15, the maximum score was 60, and the range score of the respondents was 45. The range was divided by the two levels of insecurity (high and low), and the cut-off was set at 15. Scores between 15 and 37.5 were categorized as a high level of insecurity, while scores between 37.6 and 60 were considered a low level of insecurity. The summary of the results is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary analysis of the level of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi LGA

Level of Insecurity	Range	Frequency	Percent
Low	37.6 – 60	28	12.7
High	25 – 37.5	192	87.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>15 – 60</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3 presents the responses of the respondents to items that aimed to gather information on the level of insecurity in secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State. The results in Table 3 show that 28 respondents (12.7%) agreed that the level of insecurity in secondary schools in Ibi LGA is significantly low, while 192 representing (87.3%) of respondents agreed that the level of insecurity in secondary school in Ibi LGA, Taraba State was high. This implies that the level of insecurity in secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba is low. Accordingly, insecurity was seen as an issue of grave concern to all stakeholders of education in Ibi local government.

*What are the causes of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State?*

Table 4. Mean Rating of Causes of Insecurity in Senior Secondary Schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State

Items on the causes of insecurity in senior secondary school	No of Respondents	Mean	Ranking
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Bad governance (mismanagement, lack of accountability and transparency)	220	3.59	1 <sup>st</sup>
Frustration can drive individuals to engage in harmful behaviours actions	220	3.41	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Low self-esteem can lead persons into acts that can endanger other people's lives	220	3.40	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Bad government policy	220	3.37	4 <sup>th</sup>
Poverty	220	3.32	5 <sup>th</sup>
The reality of porous borders	220	3.00	6 <sup>th</sup>
Weak security system in the country	220	2.87	7 <sup>th</sup>
Insecurity can arise from fear of examination failure by student	220	2.81	8 <sup>th</sup>
Poor basic amenities	220	2.78	9 <sup>th</sup>
The reality of the loss of moral value	220	2.76	10 <sup>th</sup>

Table 4 reveals that 220 respondents participated in the study. The top three causes of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State, as identified by the respondents, were: Bad Governance: Characterized by mismanagement, lack of accountability, and transparency, with a mean score of 3.59. Frustration: Which can lead individuals into dangerous actions, with a mean score of 3.41. Lack of Self-Confidence: That can lead people into acts that endanger others' lives, with a mean score of 3.40. On the other hand, the three least significant causes of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State, were: Fear of Examination Failure: With a mean score of 2.81. Poor Basic Amenities: With a mean score of 2.78. Loss of Moral Values: With a mean score of 2.76. These findings indicate that respondents in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State, perceive bad governance, frustration, and lack of self-confidence as the primary causes of insecurity in senior schools, while fear of examination failure, poor basic amenities, and loss of moral values are considered less significant. Table 4 indicates that 220 respondents participated in this study. The three main causes of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State were: "bad governance (mismanagement, lack of accountability and transparency)", "Frustration can lead a person into dangerous actions", and "Lack of self-confidence can lead persons into acts that can endanger other people's lives" which had a means of 3.59 1<sup>st</sup>, 3.41 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3.40 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. The three least causes of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State were that: "Insecurity can arise from fear of examination

failure by student"; "Poor basic amenities"; and "The reality of the loss of moral value" with mean scores of 2.81 8<sup>th</sup>; 2.78 9<sup>th</sup>; and 2.76 10<sup>th</sup> respectively. *What are the solutions to insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State?*

Items on solutions to insecurity in senior secondary school	No. of Respondents	Mean	Ranking
Having crisis response team development for emergencies	220	3.57	1 <sup>st</sup>
Building a network of parents and community volunteers in the school compound for easy communication.	220	3.48	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Having a model school safety plan	220	3.35	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Establishing security audits for checking damaged facilities that need repair.	220	3.32	4 <sup>th</sup>
Building school safety expectations into school programmes	220	3.26	5 <sup>th</sup>
Having constant school site surveys	220	3.03	6 <sup>th</sup>
Providing ID card scanner for checking fake ID cards.	220	3.00	7 <sup>th</sup>
Training programmes for educators on school safety and crisis response.	220	3.36	8 <sup>th</sup>
Having security communication device (Two-way-radio)	220	2.69	9 <sup>th</sup>
Improving emergency equipment in schools.	220	2.40	10 <sup>th</sup>

The table above showed that, there were 220 participants in the study. The three main solutions to insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi, Taraba State were that: "having crisis response team development for emergencies"; "building a network of parents and community volunteers in the school compound for easy communication"; and "having a model school safety plan" which ranked 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> respectively. The three least solutions to of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi that: "Training programmes for educators on school safety and crisis response"; "having security communication device (Two-way-radio)"; and "Improving emergency equipment in schools" with ranking of 8<sup>th</sup>; 9<sup>th</sup>; and 10<sup>th</sup> respectively.

*Hypothesis One: The study found no statistically significant difference in the way males and females assess the level of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State.*

Table 6. t-test on difference in the assessment of insecurity in Ibi, among males and females

Gender	No	Mean	Std.	Df	Cal.t-Value	p-value	Decision
Male	107	47.93	7.91	218	.22	.83	$H_{01}$ NS
Female	113	48.17	7.87				

$\rho > 0.05$

The results showed a calculated t-value of 0.22 and a p-value of 0.83, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05 ( $0.83 > 0.05$ ). Since the p-value exceeds the 0.05 significance level, the null hypothesis was not rejected. This finding suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in the assessment of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi, Taraba State, based on gender. In other words, the respondents' gender, whether male or female, does not significantly influence their perception of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi, Taraba State.

*Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the assessment of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State, on the basis of status (principals, Vice principals, HOD's, and prefects).*

Table 7. One-way ANOVA showing a difference in the assessment of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State, on the basis of status (principals, vice principals, HOD's, and prefects)

Variance source	Square Sums	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remarks
Between Groups	109.85	3	36.62	.59	.62	NS
Within Groups	13467.49	216	62.35			
Total	13577.35	219				

$\rho > 0.05$

Table 7 presents an F-value of 0.59 and a calculated significance value of 0.62 at an alpha level of 0.05. Since the significance value of 0.62 exceeds the 0.05 alpha level, Hypothesis Two is not rejected. This finding suggests that there is no statistically significant difference in the assessment of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State, based on status. In other words, the respondents' status did not significantly influence their perception of insecurity in senior secondary schools in Ibi, Taraba State.

## Discussion

The study examined insecurity among senior secondary school in Ibi Local Government Area,

Taraba State. The first finding of the study revealed that the level of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi, Taraba was high. Meaning, insecurity is not much in senior schools in Ibi local government. The second finding indicates that the three main causes of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi, Taraba were: bad governance/mismanagement, lack of accountability and transparency; according to Nwakpa (2018) frustration can bring about dangerous behaviours; and low self-esteem can as well make persons to act and endanger other's lives. This corroborates Ojukwu (2017) who reported that bad gangs or peer influence fosters or encourages drug abuse, cult and other violent activities which were among factors that amounted to insecurity among schools in Imo State. This finding negates the study of Okafor (2012) which states that many youths take to crime because of lack of infrastructure.

The third finding revealed three main solutions to insecurity in senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State as: having crisis response team development for emergencies; building a network of parents and community volunteers in the school compound for easy communication; and having a model school safety plan. This finding agrees to Alimba, (2018), Beland, (2005) and Okorie, (2011) who reported finance as a requirement needed to finance laboratories for effective teaching and learning of educational programmes which can boost or improve but which if not attended to can lead to protest by students.

The fourth finding unveiled significant difference in the assessment of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi Local Government Area, Taraba State, based on gender, validating Ojukwu & Nwanama (2015) and Ike & Dan (2015) whom identified significant difference the male and female teachers' assessment of insecurity management situations in public secondary schools in North Central Zone of Nigeria. The last finding showed there was similarity in the assessment of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi, Taraba State, on the based-on status, confirming to Mohammed et'al (2016) and Ike & Dan (2015) who discovered there is no significant difference the in the mean ratings of teachers and principals on the assessment of insecurity management situations in senior schools in North Central Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

Generally, world and Nigeria in recent past is alarming calls for concern among stakeholders in all spheres of life and the field of education. Accordingly, causes of insecurity in senior schools; "Bad governance"; "Frustration can lead a person into dangerous actions"; and "Lack of self-confidence can lead persons into acts that can

endanger other people's lives". It was discovered that insecurity in schools distracts proper and or effective educational or academic achievement and the general effectiveness of the schooling and also important school activities which invariably might affect the effectiveness of the school. The study therefore recommends that, since the level of insecurity in senior schools in Ibi, Taraba was high, therefore, the level of insecurity should be kept to barest minimum; there should be transparency in financing the schools. Also, adequate and or sufficient funds that needed to protect the school environment should be provided; since most of the meted-on schools in Ibi, Taraba and several other schools in Nigeria are caused by increased poverty and illiteracy, public enlightenment campaigns and awareness need to be given to the populace.

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