RESEARCH ARTICLE

TEACHER'S PERCEPTION ON THE INFLUENCE OF INSECURITY ON SOCIO-EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF SECONDARY SCHOOL CHILDREN IN OWERRI METROPOLIS OF IMO STATE

*Beatrice A. Achilike

Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study investigated the perception of teachers on the influence of insecurity on socio-emotional development of secondary school students in Owerri Metropolis of Imo State. The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Using simple random sampling techniques, two hundred teachers were selected as subject for the study. Three research questions guided the study. Instrument used for the study was a researcher structured questionnaire. Two test experts validated the instrument while a test re-test method which yielded a reliability coefficient result of 0.72 confirmed that the instrument was reliable. Data was analyzed using mean. Results revealed among others, that dangerous electrical installation around the school environment constitute insecurity especially in dilapidated buildings. Also teachers perceived that insecure school children do not develop trusting relationship for teachers and other adults. The study equally found that teachers perceived insecurity to be stunting students creative expression by in inhibiting their play expression. Recommendations were made to include that there should be appropriate security personnel in schools in addition to fencing every school especially those on the high way.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' perception on any school phenomenon is sacrosanct to effective decision making in the school system as they form part of major stake holders in the instructional mechanism. Teachers represent an authority figure to the child in the school. They help to make the goals and objectives of education in a particular society become a reality. Mbakwen (2001), asserts that the teacher is the key factor in the classroom, noting further that the teacher's life is spent in influencing the thoughts, feelings and behaivour of others and to some extent, the type and quality of the interaction will determine not only the effectiveness of the learning situation but the attitudes, interests, and in part, even the personality of pupils. Anyanwu (2001), posits that a good teacher is one who helps the learners develop positive self concepts, and is apt in communicating with learners and in managing classroom interactions. This implies that teachers help learners develop social skills while they coordinate and manage interactions with and among learners. Teachers are the instruments with which societies realize most of the goals of education of national integration and development. They contribute to the realization of human rights by the learners. To support this assertion, Igbuzor (2006), posits that education is a human

Corresponding author: Beatrice A. Achilike,
Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki, Nigeria.

right that should be accorded to all humans beings solely by reasons of being human. Interestingly teachers act as the bridge between this right and the learner. Inspite of the enormous job and good roles of the teachers, they are continuously bedeviled by the issues of insecurity. Insecurity threatens various facets of the nation including the school system. Insecurity is simply the absence of security it could be a psychological feeling or physical absence or presence of situations that give the child a sense of belonging devoid of every element of fear. Insecurity has become a worldwide phenomenon as terrorism and other violent crime have become the order of the day. In Nigeria, insecurity is gaining prominence in our society. The spate of bombings in the north as well as the prevalence of kidnapping and armed robbery in the south have not only affected the economic life of the nation, but also the educational sector. School children are often victims of many of the heinous crimes witnessed in the society today (Ayorinde, 2014). In October 2010, hoodlums ambushed and kidnapped school children of Abayi International School, in Aba, Abia State, Nigeria . The school children amongst whom were children as young as 2 years, stayed in the kidnappers' den for 4 days until they were rescued by the joint task force of security personals on Thursday September 30th, 2010 (The Punch, Oct 2, 2010). Similarly, it was reported that armed robbers invaded Owerri Girls Secondary School, Owerri, Imo State, on 28th day of November, 2010. The attack was carried out at night around 1.30am and for hours, the robbers successfully assaulted the

students (Nigeria Compass, Nov 30,2010). Also recently, hoodlums attacked Federal Government Girls College, Chibok in Borno State, North Eastern, Nigeria. These hoodlums have kept these girls in captive till date, inspite of government effort to secure their rescue and safe return.

These series of attacks have confirmed the fact that Nigerian schools are not immune from societal crime. The schools have been encroached by culture of violence, resulting to insecurity. Students, who once liked to read and play in groups, thereby sharing ideas and developing the socio emotional aspect of their personality no longer do so, for fear of being attacked. Prep classes that was a normal practice in schools are becoming a thing of the past, as a result of insecurity. Insecurity constitute emotional and physical threat to the effective adjustment of the child, within the school environment. It could be in form of bullying, presence of harmful objects, leaking roof, cult activities around the school environment. Dasuki (2013) and Arisi (2011) stated that Nigeria in recent times has witnessed an unprecedented level of insecurity such as communal violence, political assassination, electoral violence, youth militancy in Niger delta, oil theft, kidnapping and hostage taking, Sharia crisis, religious violence, bomb explosions that has been on the increase leading to enormous loss of live properties. On the other hand, Socio emotional development of the child implies the child's experience, expression and management of emotions and the ability to establish positive and rewarding relationships with others (Cohen et al., 2005) it is the ability to form and sustain positive relationships, experience and manage and express emotions. Researchers have done their bit in the area of the influence of insecurity on socio emotional development of the secondary school children. Nevertheless, adequate attention had not been given to how teachers perceive the phenomenon. It is on this premise that this study is being embarked upon. Therefore, the study under review is 'teachers' perception on the influence of insecurity on socio emotional development of secondary school children in Owerri Metropolis of Imo State.

Statement of Problem

Insecurity has gradually become of societal menace that threatens peaceful co-existence among people and effective adjustment in every facet of human endeavour. Invariably, insecurity may have a direct influence on the socio emotional development of the secondary school students. Some work had been done on insecurity but adequate attention had not been given to teachers perception of the canker worm. Teachers have direct interaction with student in the process of teaching and learning hence their perception need be given significant attention. Effort is therefore made in this study to provide answer to a key question on the perception of teachers on the influence of insecurity on the socio emotional development of secondary school students in Owerri Metropolis of Imo State.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study is to find out the perception of teachers on socio-emotional development of secondary school students in Owerri metropolis of Imo state Nigeria. Specific objectives include the following

a. Ascertain the various forms of insecurity exhibited on the secondary school environment.

b. Determine ways insecurity impact on the secondary school child's socio emotional development.

c. Establish some of the strategies that could be used to fore stall insecurity in the secondary school environment.

Scope of the Study

The study focused on teachers and students within Owerri metropolis of Imo State. The scope of the study is delimited to the influence of insecurity on the socio emotional development of secondary school children such as emotional trauma, stunted creative and sociable expression and others. It is also focused to find out how some of the issues surrounding socio emotional development play out on academic performance of secondary school students

Research Questions

1. What are the various forms of insecurity exhibited in the secondary school environment?
2. What ways do insecurity impact on the secondary school child's socio-emotional development?
3. What strategies could be used to fore-stall insecurity in the secondary school environment

Methodology

The area of study is Owerri metropolis of Imo State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted. Employing the random sampling technique, 150 teachers were selected from a total population of 1610 teachers in the area of study. This was made possible through simply balloting of 10 secondary schools from a total of 200 public schools in Owerri metropolis. Data collection procedure of observations, interviews, were used in drawing the sample. A researcher structured 18 item questionnaire tagged "School Insecurity Questionnaire" (SIQ) was modeled along the fairly standardized likert scale format of Strongly Agreed (S.A) Agreed (A), Strongly Disagreed (SD) and Disagreed (D). The validity of the instrument was done by two test experts from the department of measurement and evaluation and educational psychology. The collected data were analyzed using statistical mean. A mean score of 2.5 and above was regarded as acceptance point while responses having below 2.5 was regarded as rejected.

RESULTS

The results of the study were derived from the three (3) researcher questions that guided the study. Major findings were as presented as follows:

Research Question 1

Table 1 below shows that all the six items were accepted by teachers to constitute insecurity in the school environment. This was indicated by their mean score which was above the accepted mean of 2.5. More so, the mean of means is 3.0. This therefore means that dangerous electrical installation in the school, unfenced school environment nearby main road, presence of sharp objects around the school environments suspicious unknown faces, bodies of water around as well as dilapidated school buildings constitute insecurity around the school environment of the child.

Table 1. Teacher's responses on the insecurity exhibited in the child's school environment

S/N	Item focus	Mean responses	Interpretation
1	Dangerous electrical installations around school environment constitute serious insecurity especially in dilapidated school buildings.	3.0	Agree
2	Unfenced school environment nearby to major high ways constitute serious insecurity to school children.	3.0	Agree
3	Presence of sharp objects and arsenal like knives, guns, petrol and sharp metals in school environment constitute serious insecurity.	3.5	Strongly
4	presence of suspicious unknown faces in the school environment constitute insecurity	2.9	Agree
5	Presence of bodies of water like rivers, streams or lake near the school environment constitute insecurity	2.7	Agree
6	Dilapidated school buildings that leak rain are most serious security threat to school kids	2.9	Agree

Table II: Teachers' responses on the impact of insecurity on the child's socio-emotional development

S/N	Item focus	Mean responses	Interpretation
7	Insecurity prevents effective healthy socialization mechanism in the school	2.5	Agree
8	Insecurity makes children emotionally traumatized seriously	3.5	Agree
9	Insecurity stunts children creative expression by unsociably inhibiting their expressions	3.0	Strongly
10	Insecurity gives rise to the development of school bullies which precipitate truancy	3.5	Agree
11	Insecure school children do not develop trusting relationship with teachers/adults	3.5	Agree
12	Insecurity in school environment has no significant influence on children's socio/emotional development	1.9	Disagree

Mean of means = 2.98 accepted

Table III: Teachers' responses on strategies to fore stall insecurity in the school environment

S/N	Item focus	Mean of responses	Interpretation
13	There should be appropriate guards or security personnel in every school environment	3.0	Agree
14	Sharp objects and arsenals like guns, knives, naked wires, petroleum products etc should be carefully monitored and avoided in the school environment	3.0	Agree
15	Unknown suspicious faces in the school environment should be interrogated promptly	3.5	Agree
16	Every school environment near highways should be fenced	3.5	
17	School children should wear life jackets at play if their play grounds are located near bodies of water (like streams, rivers, lake etc)	2.7	
18	School buildings must be well maintained against natural forces (like rain and windstorm)	3.0	

Mean of means =3.1

Research question 2: In what ways do insecurity impact on the secondary school child's socio-emotional development?

Table II above shows that out of the six items, five items had mean scores above the accepted mean of 2.5. It therefore reveals that the items were accepted by teachers to impact on the socio-emotional development of the child. The result is further strengthened by the mean of means which is 2.98 connoting strong acceptance. This shows that insecurity in school environment has a significant influence on children's socio-emotional development

Research question 3 : What strategies could be used to fore-stall insecurity in the secondary school child's environment?

In table 3 above, shows all the items were agreed upon and therefore accepted. This was further strengthened by their mean score of 3.1 which obviously is higher than the accepted mean of 2.5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of research question one in table one above showed teachers responses on insecurity exhibited in the child's school environment to include dangerous electrical installations around the school environment . unfenced school environment close to major highways, sharp objects and arsenals like guns, knives petrol, sharp metals around the school environments as well as presence of suspicious and unknown faces and bodies of water like river, streams or lakes around the school environment. The result of research question 2 in Table 2 above showed that insecurity prevents effective healthy socialization mechanism in the school, makes

children emotionally traumatized, stunts children's creative expression by unsociably inhibiting expression thereby precipitating truancy. Furthermore, the result revealed that school children cannot develop trusting relationship with teachers or adults. The resultant effect of the above findings is that insecurity in school environment has a significant effect on children's socio emotional development. In a typical school setting, students were once known to be seen in groups to discuss, share ideas and even read in a discussion class together, but nowadays, because of fear of the unknown due to insecurity, they are hardly seen to stay, read or play in groups in order for them not to be attacked unexpectedly. Research has shown that, through interactions with peers, children explore their interest in others and learn about social behaviour. Furthermore, interaction with peers provide the context for social learning and problem solving, as well as the experience of social exchange, cooperation, turn taking and the demonstration of empathy. According to Burk (1996, 285) writes:

"We as teachers need to facilitate the development of a psychologically safe environment that promotes positive social interaction. As children interact openly with peers, they learn more about each other as individuals, and they begin building a history of interactions"

The result of research question 3 in tables above showed teachers perception on strategies to fore stall insecurity in the school environment. It included among others, that there should be appropriate guards or security personnel in every school environment. Result equally revealed that unknown and suspicious faces in the school environment should be interrogated promptly. Ayorinde (2014), categorized the

strategies for preventing school insecurity and violence into 2 broad categories viz formal strategies and informal strategies. Formal strategies are state based efforts through the activities of the police, the court and correctional institutions towards eradicating crime and violence in all aspects of society. Informal strategies are the reactions and efforts of individuals and nongovernmental groups towards preventing occurrence of crime and towards taking proactive action to rescue situations of crime directly or indirectly eg whistle blowing occurrence of crime, confronting criminals or calling for formal security help in situations of crime. Another way to prevent insecurity in school is to explore the policy of armed classroom (Ayorinde 2014). Armed classroom is a policy that legally allows school staff and students to carry gun within school premises. In this case awell trained school personnel should be armed with the responsibility of handling the gun.

Conclusion

The study examined teachers perception of the influence of insecurity on the socio emotional development of secondary school children. Findings revealed that, among other things, presence of arsenals such as guns, sharp objects, unfenced school compounds constitute insecurity in the school environment. Moreso, insecurity stunts student creative expression and inhibit socialization among student hence insecurity has a significant effect on the socio emotional development of secondary school students.

Recommendation

It is hereby recommended that:

- Staff and student of Nigerian secondary schools should not be indifferent about those things that constitute insecurity in the school environment
- Students should report promptly any strange face hovering around the school environment to the school authority and necessary action should be taken accordingly
- Government should entrench in the policy statement of education the need for every school to have a standby security personnel, that is armed
- Schools should be sited around a police post or station as that will bring about a feeling of security around the school.
- Good education should be a project for all by government as research by denga (2005) and Odu (2006) as stated by Denga and Ekoja (2008) shows that good education has the power to tame violent tendencies.

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