

Unsecure School Environment and School Phobic Behavior

Professor Abubakar Hamman Tukur
Department Of Education Unuversity Of Maiduguri Borno State

Khadijatu muhammad
Muhammad Goni College Of Legal And Islamic Studies Maiduguri Borno State

Abstract

This study determines the level of student's school phobic behavior as a result of insecurity of school environment. The study was guided by one research question and one null hypothesis. The population of the study was all the secondary schools in Maiduguri, Borno state numbering about the same of the study was senior secondary students in Maiduguri metropolis. Data was collected by the use of school refusal scale developed by Kneary and Sliverman (1993). The data collected were analyzed by the use of descriptive statistic of determine the level of students school phobic behavior as well as ascertain the difference of students school phobic behavior across gender. The result indicated that the SRS students' scores were normally distributed and that there was no significant difference between male and female school phobic behavior. Some research commendations were suggested.

Keywords: insecurity, environment, phobic behavior, school

1. Introduction

In recent time, insecurity challenges have been affecting Nigeria which has been recurrent in different parts of the country. The horrors of over 234 girls kidnapped from their hostels in Chibok, Borno state cannot be quantified by words. Every day gone confirms the worst fears of every school age individuals. Nigerian children, especially those in the north east, are being forced to choose between a life resigned to ignorance and living (Obohopo & Arenjeka, 2014). Lack of secured school environment may bring about school phobia on students, and these may affect school attendance.

Ordinarily, the north has had poor indices with regard to education and retention in school. Yamta (1991) Opined that school phobic anxiety could result from fear or dislike of school environment, either physical, social or both, and dislike for being away from parents. According to Kearney (2007) students who are suffering from school phobia show exaggerated anxiety and physical symptoms when they go to school. They have temper tantrum over going to school or become depressed. Kearney (2006) stressed that the persistence of phobia is a risk factor for psychiatric illness. It is therefore clear that the effect of school phobia on a child is interrelation of series of psychological difficulties; it starts with changing the emotional state of the child, to his isolation from others or loneliness, to academic deterioration and finally to his physical development.

The impact of insecurity according to Obahopo and Arenyeka (2004) has regressed to five steps back words after having one step forward. Insecurity of school environment do not only impede education when it keeps children at home, shuts down school and prevent government and None Governmental Organization (NGOs) from opening new schools in the north, it also exacerbates other emotional factors that keep children away from staying in school. Thopkins, (2006) defined school phobia as an irrational fear for attending school. Furthermore, Gambo (1983) explained, that if a child or adolescent fears the consequences of being physically or mentally traumatized he develops school phobia.

Recent studies on insecurity suggested that isolated high profile shooting at school or teachers leading to the death of students predispose students to school phobia (Thopkins, 2006) furthermore, opined that fear of personal harm, crime and violence might heighten the sense of insecurity and vulnerability among students. They are constantly experiencing fears of attack by bomb explosion and abduction (Abdullahi and Tehenba, 2014), and because of this they refuse to attend school.

Nigeria, according to smith, (2009) has 10 million out of school children, the highest number in the world (followed by Pakistan), while about 60% of these children are girls who live in the northern part of the country. Yet, in addition to insurgency numerous children currently have no access to school particularly in the north-east. The United Nation Children Fund (UNICEF) has noted that schools have been closed for security reason and where schools in the affected areas still function children are often afraid to attend. Similarly, Bwala (2012) opined that over 85% of students in Borno state do not go to school due to insecurity in the state, while in comparatively safe areas in the north east, schools are often over crowded, understaffed and with insufficient teaching materials.

Lack of security in school environment has affected emotional well-being of the students. A child who is emotionally disturbed hardly learns and reaps the benefit of learning and be successful as those who are not. Before the advent of insurgency, Nigeria had been a relatively peaceful country. The climate of unsecured school

environment is new, students were not used to such atrocities:- as rape, abduction, killings and bomb explosion. Zulu and Izubara (2008) stressed that fears of unsecured school environment affect school enrolment, dropout rate and poor academic performance. This study determined the extent to which secondary school students exhibit school phobic behavior and the differences of school phobic behavior according to gender.

2. Methodology

The study was a descriptive survey, the population consisted of all the private secondary school students in Maiduguri Borno state; Nigeria. Private secondary school students were used as the subjects of the study, because public schools students were not readily available, due to insecurity problems that resulted in the closure of public schools. The sample of the study comprised senior secondary school students of Elkanemi College of Islamic Theology Maiduguri, Borno state. Ninety students consisting of 38 female and 52 male were used. The instrument used for data collection was School Refusal Assessment Scale (S R A S) developed by Kearny and Silverman (1993) with some modifications. The original scale contained 16 items. Based on the principle of content relevance (Anastasi & Urbina, 2008) the items were modified.

The SRAS-R is an instrument designed by Kearney and silver man to assess the motivating condition in children with school refusal. The SRAS is based on clinical and research evidence that children refuse or have difficulty in attending school for a number of different reasons. The test has been widely used by many researchers (Thomkins, 2006) therefore, it is reliable. The researcher modified the scale. Each question is rated on scale of 0-3 from never to always. After the scale was administered to children and mean computed and ranked, the highest scoring

Condition was considered in maintaining of variable school phobic behavior. The term school phobia was used because it is frequently used and understood more than school refusal

3. Results

The results of the study were presented on the basis of research questions and hypothesis raised for the study
 Research question one: What is the school phobic behavior of students in Elkanemi College of Islamic Theology, Maiduguri? The answer to this research question is presented in tables 1& 2

Table 1. Distribution of responses on students' phobic behavior

Valid	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	123	1	.7	.7
	124	1	.7	1.4
	126	6	4.0	5.5
	127	6	4.0	9.6
	128	11	7.4	17.1
	129	14	9.4	26.7
	130	17	11.4	38.4
	131	12	8.1	46.6
	132	17	11.4	58.2
	133	11	7.4	65.8
	134	17	11.4	77.4
	135	9	6.0	83.6
	136	10	6.7	90.4
	137	5	3.4	93.8
	138	6	4.0	97.9
	139	1	.7	98.6
	140	1	.7	99.3
	141	1	.7	100.0
Total	146	98.0		
Missing System	3	2.0		
Total	149	100.0		

Bar Chart Of Students Responses In School phobic behavior

Table2: Indicates students' responses in School Phobic Behavior

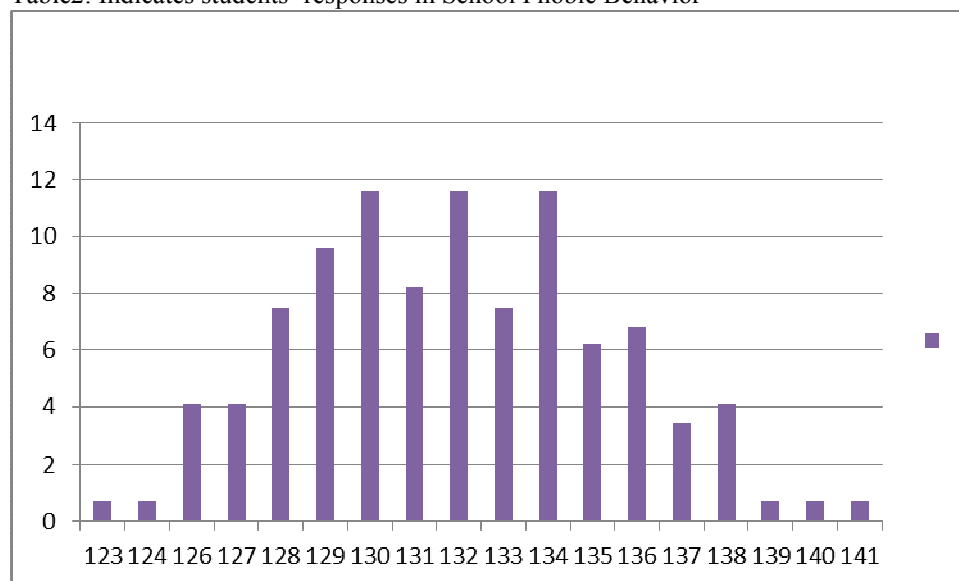


Table 1 and 2 indicates the sample responses of students' school phobic behavior. The tables showed that students' scores on SRAS were normally distributed; indicating that insecurity of school environment has no impact on phobia.

Table 3, H01: There is no significant difference between male and female secondary school students on their exhibition of phobic behavior.

Source of variation	N	df	Mean	Sd	t-cal	t-crit	Decision
Male	53	88	1.32	3.44	-.730	.467	Not significant
Female	38		1.04	3.53			

From the above table, it can be observed that gender difference in school phobic behavior of secondary school students resulted in the calculated t- value of -.730 as against t-critical of .467. The Ho1 which stated that, there is no significant difference between male and female students in their display of school phobic behavior is accepted. This means that students display the same behavior in terms of school phobia.

3. Discussion

This study was carried out to determine the impact of the recurrent insecurity challenges on students' school phobia. This was based on the assumption that frequent insurgency activities like bomb blast ,shooting, killing and abduction of students in the school environment could trigger or influence students to exhibit school phobia .It also examined the differences between male and female students in school phobic behavior. The findings revealed that unsecure school environment did not particularly contribute to school phobia. The finding of this study did not agree with Thomkins (2006) and Magede et al (2008) in that there was no school phobic behavior observed with the students. The reason could be that students were used to the situation, therefore insecurity of school environment no longer poses threat on them.

With regards to hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female students in school phobic behavior. Data on table 3 shows that t-calculated (-.730) is lower than t-critical. (.467). Thus the hypothesis is accepted, this means that there is no significant difference in school phobic behavior of Elkanemi secondary school students. This finding disagree with Gambo (1983) who asserted that if a child or adolescent, especially a girl child, fears the consequences of being physically or mentally traumatized she develops school phobia. The finding may suggest that those fears were day to day issues and, has become part of students.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

Conclusion drawn from this study indicated that insecurity of school environment may not impact school phobia on secondary school students and that there was no significant difference in school phobic behavior with regards to gender. It was recommended that authorities should provide security personnel not only in churches and mosques during crisis but also to schools. Teachers should try and see that students are protected from aversive experiences.

REFERENCES

- Abdullahi, U and Terhemba G A (2014) Effect of insecurity on primary school attendance in Damaturu metropolis. Yobe state Nigeria.
- Anastasi, A. and Urbina, S. (2008). Psychological testing 7th edition. Upper saddle River. New Jersey: prentice Hall.
- Bwala, T. (2012). The guardian development network. <http://www.guardian.co.uk>. Retrieved on 21st June 2013
- Gambo, Y. K (1983). Education polices and students interest in selected educational institution in Borno state (Unpublished Master Degree Dissertation. Department of education University of Maiduguri.
- Kearney, C. A(2006). Dealing with school refusal behavior. A primer for family physian E-journal of family practices retrieved from <http://www.jfponline.com>
- Kearney, C. A(2007). Forms and functions of school refusal behavior in youth. An empirical analysis of absenteeism severity. Journal of child psychology and psychiatric 48(11)8-61
- Kearne, C. A and Silverman, W. K (1988). Measuring the function of School Refusal Assessment Scale (SRAS) paper presented at the advancement of behavior. Therapy New York.
- Mudege, N. N., Zulu, E> M., and Izugbara, (2008). How insecurity impact on school attendance and school dropout among Urban Slum Children in Nairobi. International journal of conflict and violence:Vol 2(1) 2008 pp. 00-112.
- Obahopo, B., and Arenyeka, L (2014). Qhy the fight for girl-child education in the north must continue. Retrived from <http://www.vanguardngr.com> 2014/05/fight-girl-child education- now must continue.
- UNICEF: the impact of conflict on women and girls in west and central Africa and UNCEF response. Retrieved August 2015 from www.unicef.org
- Thopkin, D.E (2000) school violence: Gangs and a culture of fear. Annals of the American Academy of political and social science 567(1):54.