
SECURITY CONSCIOUSNESS AMONG STUDENTS IN
HIGHER INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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¹Babatunde Adeniyi Adeyemi & ²Gbenga Olotu

¹Institute of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University,
Ile-Ife, Osun State, Nigeria

²Department of Social Studies, Adeyemi College of Education,
Ondo, Ondo State Nigeria

Abstract

The study examined the stakeholders' perceived security consciousness among the students in higher institutions in Nigeria. It determined the level of security consciousness among students in the study area. It examined the best practices to fostering security consciousness among students in the study area and finally examined the difference in the stakeholders' perceived needs to fostering security consciousness among the students in the study area. The study employed survey research design. The study sample was obtained from five randomly selected higher institutes in Southwestern Nigeria comprising of 200 students, 100 teaching staffs and 100 non-teaching staffs. An instrument was developed, validated and used for data collection. Three research questions were asked and answered and a hypothesis was tested and verified. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, simple percentages and one way ANOVA. The results among others showed that 66% of the students had low security consciousness. Also, there was a significant difference

in the stakeholders' perception of the need for fostering security consciousness among students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria ($F= 6.648$ $p < 0.05$). The study concluded that security consciousness is a must ingredient in the University Community for a healthy and peaceful co-existence.

Keywords: Security, Consciousness, Students, Higher Institutions.

Introduction

It is no longer news that Nigeria is plagued with series of security challenges. Some of these include socio-economic vices that are prominent among the youth and students in tertiary institutions. Insecurity challenges such as drug abuse, human trafficking, raping, kidnapping, internet fraud, ritual killing, cultism, terrorism and many others have become epidemic that is eating deep to the fabric of every segment of the society. These challenges pose no little threats to the safety of life, property and the very corporate existence of the nation.

According to Oni (2016), security can be described as stability and continuity of livelihood (stable and steady income), predictability of daily life (knowing what to expect), protection from crime (feeling safe), and freedom from psychological harm (safety or protection from emotional stress which results from the assurance of knowing that one is wanted, accepted, loved and protected in one's community or neighbourhood and by people around. It focuses on the emotional and psychological sense of belonging to a social group which can offer one protection]. This description structured the concept of security into four dimensions. However, these dimensions can be weaved together to give a composite definition of security as the protection against all forms of harm whether physical, economic or psychological.

The safety of Nigeria entails the safety of all components of the country including all institutions such as the police, governmental agencies, worship centres, embassies, educational centres and even the classrooms have continuously been threatened by the state of insecurity of the nation.

From the beginning, the importance of security was enunciated in the Nigerian constitution of 1999 section 14(2) (b) which states interlaid the security and welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of the government. But has the government been able to secure the lives and properties of the people?

The unprecedented level of insecurity in Nigeria has made national security threat to be a major issue for the government and has prompted a huge allocation of the national budget to security. To ameliorate the incidence of crime, the federal government has embarked on criminalization of terrorism by passing the Cleen (2012), installation of computer-based Closed Circuit Television Camera (CCTV) in some parts of the country, enhancement of surveillance as well as investigation of criminal related offences, heightening of physical security measure around the country aimed at differing or disrupting potential attacks, strengthening of security agencies through the provision of security facilities and the development and broadcast of security tips in mass media (Azazi, 2011). Despite these efforts, the level of insecurity in the country is still high.

In the Nigeria tertiary institutions, causes of insecurity among the students include: too much students' involvement in the administration of the universities, lack of security awareness education, unbridled human traffic on campus, lack of sufficient financial support, non-professionalization of the security department, the open gaps, student-student dishonesty, student-lecturers relationship, election into faculty-based associations, student union politics, infrastructural amenities, religion, cultism, peer group and family background.

Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the global peace index (GPI, 2012), signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country. Adagba, Ugwu and Eme (2012), Uhunmwangho and Aluforo (2011) are of the view that the efforts of government have not yielded enough positive results. Oni (2006) in his opinion conceived that security in higher institution system connotes the protection of tangible and intangible assets of the institution from all forms of danger. By tangible assets, he refers to physical structures, the books in the libraries, the electronic gadgets in the departments, all the

stakeholders and players, the regular and occasional visitors to the institutions. Intangible assets, he submitted to include intellectual property, research data, classified information, integrity, peace of mind, order and above all, the image. In other words, since school is composed of both human and material resources. The human resources are the teaching and non-teaching staff, students, parents and other stakeholders that are directly or indirectly connected with the school. The connection depends on the nature of services rendered to the system. The material resources involve facilities such as school building, records, including money as well as programmes in the school. These resources are expected to be protected from threat, harm and danger for the assurance of their longevity and performance of the system.

According to Lombaard and Kole (2008), security measure assesses the vulnerability of risk and to introduce techniques and measures at schools, in order to create a stable, fairly predictable environment in which individual may move freely. Security measures are approaches that can be adopted to protect and manage school violence, reduce security risks, and ensure that the school environment is safe for learning (Laura, 2014). These measures are functional and operational methods that make schools free from crimes, threats and risks. It enhances the conduciveness of school to make teaching and learning process more effective. No wonder, Dansuki (2013) puts it succinctly by defining security as the absence of insecurity as a result of actions of law enforcement agencies. He further stressed that security was understood to be the job of the defense force of the national frontiers and of the police inside the country. Such perception sums up security to be equal to a system of law and order maintenance. However, he emphasized that the dynamics of our society has since altered that configuration of security to now include consideration for societal generated crises such as riots, demonstrations, secret cult-related criminal acts, terrorism, drug trafficking, intra and inter-ethnic strife, religious intolerance, advanced fee fraud, antigovernment campaigns, armed robberies, hijack, kidnapping and a host of others that threaten live and properties and indeed the peace and tranquility of man and society. This now portrays

security currently as everybody's business, and a business in which everybody has a role to play and a stake to protect. Nigeria is confronted with a lot of socio vices which are inimical to the growth and development of the country as a nation. Some of these socio vices are prominent among the youths specifically the students of higher institutions of learning. These socio vices include drug abuse, human trafficking, raping, kidnapping, internet fraud and many others. Observation has revealed that law enforcement agencies have not been able to curtail these acts. There is therefore the need on the part of individuals to be security conscious in order not to be a victim; hence this study.

Objectives of the Study

The study investigated security consciousness among students in higher institutions in Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine stakeholders' perceived need for fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria
2. determine the level of security consciousness among students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria
3. examine the best practices to fostering security consciousness among students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria
4. examine the difference in the stakeholders' perceived need for fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. How do stakeholders perceive the need for fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria?
2. What is the level of security consciousness among students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria?
3. What are the best practices to fostering security consciousness among students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria?

Hypothesis

H₀1: There is no significant difference in the stakeholders' perception of the need for fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria.

Methodology

The survey research design was used for this study. The population consisted of students, teaching staffs and non-teaching staffs of universities in Nigeria with sample size of 400 respondents. The study sample was obtained from five randomly selected higher institutions of learning in Southwestern Nigeria out of several tertiary institutions in Nigeria using multistage sampling procedure. Out of six geopolitical zones in Nigeria, southwestern zone was selected using simple random sampling technique. From southwestern zone, five states were selected using simple random sampling technique. From each state, one federal university was selected. The universities considered were Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, University of Ibadan, Federal University of Technology, Akure, Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta and University of Lagos, Lagos. In each university, 40 students were purposively selected and picked at random making a total of 200 students. 20 teaching-staffs who have spent at least three sessions in the tertiary institutions were purposively selected making a total of 100 teaching staffs. From the five selected tertiary institutions, 20 non-teaching staffs were randomly selected making a total of 100 non-teaching staff.

An instrument used for this study was: Security Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ). The instrument was divided into four sections: Section A seeks for demographic information of the respondents, i.e. Students, Teaching Staffs and Non-Teaching Staffs. Section B contains 15-items scale that seeks the Stakeholders Perception of fostering Security Consciousness. Item responses were on four-point Likert scale with Strongly Agree (SA) (4 points), Agree (A) (3 points), Disagree (D) (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD) (1 point). The scores were collated, the minimum score was 15 and the maximum score was 60. Section C contains

12-items scale that seeks the level of Security Consciousness among Students. Item responses were on four-point Likert scale with Strongly Agree (SA) (4 points), Agree (A) (3 points), Disagree (D) (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD) (1 point). The scores were collated, the minimum score was 12 and the maximum score was 48. Only students responded to section C. Section D contains 6-items scale that seeks the best practices to foster security consciousness among students in higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. Item responses were on four-point Likert scale with Strongly Agree (SA) (4 points), Agree (A) (3 points), Disagree (D) (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (SD) (1 point). The scores were collated, the minimum score was 4 and the maximum score was 16.

The content validity of the instrument used in this study was ascertained through experts in Test and Measurement for proper modification after which it was corrected and distributed. The reliability of the instrument was gotten by administering the instrument on a different sample outside the scope of the study, but share similar characteristics with the study zone. The reliability coefficient was determined using Cronbach Alpha and the value was 0.80. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, simple percentages and One-way ANOVA.

Results

Research Question 1: How do stakeholders perceived need for fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria?

To answer this research question, stakeholders' responses to sections A and B of SCQ based on the items in the questionnaire as rated by the investigators was used. The individual respective scores were summed up to build their measure of perception. The mean and standard scores of the group score were 47.24 and 9.108 respectively. Stakeholders' whose scores were less than the group mean score were considered as having negative perception while those with and above the group mean score were considered as having positive perception. The result is presented in Table 1:

Table 1: Stakeholders' Perception on fostering Security Consciousness

Stakeholders	Perception Categories		
	Negative %	Positive %	Total
Students	75(52.8)	125(48.4)	200
Teaching staffs	34(23.9)	66(25.6)	100
Non-teaching staffs	33(23.2)	67(26.0)	100
Total	142(34.5)	258(64.5)	400

Table 2 shows that the students, teaching staffs and non-teaching staffs of the sampled stakeholders had a positive perception with a percentage of 48.4%, 25.6% and 26.0% respectively on fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institution of learning .while 52.8%, 23.9% and 23.2% of students, teachers and non-teaching staffs respectively had a negative perception on fostering security consciousness among students. This result concludes that the majority (64.5%) of the stakeholders' had a positive perception on fostering security consciousness among students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What is the level of security consciousness among students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria?

To answer this question, students' responses to sections A and C of SCQ were scored based on the items in the questionnaire as rated by the investigator. The individual respective scores were summed up to build their level of security consciousness. The mean and standard score of the group score were 23.68 and 10.22 respectively. Scores below the group mean score were considered as having a low level of security consciousness. Scores within the mean score and one standard deviation above the mean score (i.e. 23.68-33.9) were considered as moderate level of security consciousness while those with scores of 34 and above were considered as high level of security consciousness. Only students responded to section C. The result is presented in table 2.

Table 2: Students' Level of Security Consciousness

Security Consciousness Level	Frequency	Percent (%)
High	41	20.5
Moderate	27	13.5
Low	132	66.0
Total	200	100.0

Table 2 shows that 66.0% of the students had low security consciousness. Also, 13.5% of the students have low security consciousness while 20.05% of the students were found to have high security consciousness. There is an indication from this result that more than 50% of the students that participated in the study demonstrated low security consciousness.

Research Question 3: What are the best practices to fostering security consciousness among students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria?

The respondents were asked on a five point Likert scale where 4 is Strongly agree, 3 agree, 2 disagree and 1 strongly disagree the best practices to fostering security consciousness among students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria. Respondents responded to sections A and D of SCQ.

Table 3: Practices to fostering Security Consciousness among Students

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Instill the concept that security belongs to everyone and not only for VIP'S	400	1	4	3.39	.787
Bring about awareness through the use of television, radio, social media platformsetc.	400	1	4	3.03	1.130
Reward and Recognize those people that do the right thing for security purpose	400	1	4	3.34	.886
Build Security Community with the aim to tackle Insecurity and social vices	400	1	4	3.22	.909
Security Policies should be put into place and implemented	400	1	4	3.25	1.011
Allow for feed-back from people about Insecurity challenges	400	1	4	3.32	.743
Valid N (list wise)	400				

From the above table, stakeholders strongly agreed that it is necessary to instill the concept that security belongs to everyone and not for "VIPS" only with a mean score of 3.39 and a standard deviation of 0.787, Stakeholders strongly agreed that awareness should be brought through the use of television, radio, social media platforms, pamphlet etc. with a mean score of 3.03 and a standard deviation of 1.13, stakeholders also agreed that there should be recognition and reward for those people that do the right thing for security purpose with a mean score of 3.34 and a standard deviation of 0.886, stakeholders strongly agreed that security community should be built with the aim to tackle insecurity and social vices with a mean score of 3.22 and standard deviation of 0.909, stakeholders strongly agreed that security policies should be put into place and implemented with a mean score of 3.25 and standard deviation of 1.011 and stakeholders further strongly agreed that

feed-back should be allowed from people about insecurity challenge with a mean score of 3.32 and standard deviation of 0.743. From the findings above this clearly indicated that these are the best practices to foster security consciousness among students.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the stakeholders' perception of need for fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria.

Table 4: ANOVA Showing the Significant Difference in the Stakeholders' Perception of need for fostering Security Consciousness among Students

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1072.503	2	536.251	6.648	.001
Within Groups	32023.935	397	80.665		
Total	33096.437	399			

Results in Table 4 reveal that the df (2, 397) and F-value yielded 6.648 which is significant at 0.05 alpha level. Hence, the null hypothesis is therefore rejected since the P value .001 is less than 0.05. This means that there is significant difference in the stakeholders' perception of the need for fostering security consciousness among the students in higher institution of learning.

Discussion

The results concluded that the majority (64%) of the stakeholders' had a positive perception on fostering security consciousness among students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria. These findings are consistent with the study of Al-Qudah (2013) which showed a variety in the inclusion of intellectual, psychological and social and economic security concepts in the textbooks of national and civic education. This result is also consistent with the Al-Omari (2013)'s study which focused on the importance of including all security

concepts in the textbooks of sociology for the third secondary grade in Saudi Arabia.

The research question two concluded that more than 50% of the students that participated in the study demonstrated low security consciousness. This finding is in consonance with the study conducted by Azazi, 2011. He stated that despite the efforts of security consciousness by the government and stakeholders, the level of insecurity in the country higher institutions is still high. In addition, Nigeria has consistently ranked low in the Global Peace Index (GPI, 2012), signifying a worsened state of insecurity in the country institutions and that security awareness is low among stakeholders and the community

The findings concluded that the best practices to fostering security consciousness among students in higher institution of learning in Nigeria include: to instill the concept that security belongs to everyone and not foe VIP, that awareness should be brought through the use of television, radio, social media platforms, pamphlets etc. it also stressed that there should recognition and reward for those people that do the right thing for security purpose, the findings also concluded that security community should be built with the aim to tackle insecurity and social vices, that security policies should be put into place and implemented and lastly, feedback should be allowed from people about insecurity challenge.

The finding is in tandem with the study conducted by (United Nations, 2010), the study posited that the needed to guarantee the protection of life and property of citizens are educators, parents and students. Therefore, all hands must be on deck to guarantee the safety of life and property of Nigerians. Gone are the days when citizens would fold their hands and expected the government to do everything for them. For everyone to be safe and secured, security has become the business of all citizens. The finding is also in agreement with the findings by (Jaarsveld, 2011 and Green, 1999). Jaarsveld, 2011 captions this fact when he states that the aim of using security technologies is to reduce the opportunities to commit crimes or violence, to increase the likelihood that someone will get caught and to be able to collect evidence of some of the acts of violence being committed, thus making it easier to prosecute.

Green, 1999 also postulated that the provision of security technologies such as CCTV surveillance system, protective lighting, alarm, security gate e.t.c in schools in Nigeria, especially in areas where insurgents are operating in order to deter them from easily attacking schools. The findings also agreed with the study by Lombaard and Kole (2008), they postulated that the purposes of physical security measures are to: deter an intruder from entering the premises, detect the attempted entry or presence if an intruder succeeds in penetrating (i.e getting through) the physical security barrier or measure in place, limit the harm that can be done if an intruder manages to gain entry without being detected and detain the intruder by using silent alarm or alerting a security patrol (to respond).

The use of physical security measures in the northeast will help to monitor and prevent the illegal access of people into school including terrorists. Schools should be fenced and protected gates mounted where necessary to deter easy access to schools. After school day or closing period, classrooms and offices should be locked and burglar proof provided in places considered essential for the prevention of intruders. The study is also in consonance Beland (2005) posited that the P.T.A and community members gradually provide some of these facilities to safeguard schools and prevent insurgency from easily gaining access to schools for attacks. Equally, security lights should be provided for effective monitoring of schools especially at nights in every institutions areas of Nigeria (Rogers & Schoeman, 2010). Policy security measures help to show the direction and limitation of what should be done, how things should be done, when they should be done and where they should be done for orderliness to reign in the system. These ideas were equally postulated by Al-Edwan (2016) and Alimba (2018).

Conclusion

In conclusion, we seem to agree *ab initio* that there is a war situation, hence the “combat”. The war is that of insecurity and the war theatre is the University space. Every institutions has an inalienable right, indeed a responsibility, to protect itself, the numerous students entrusted in its care, staff and other internal

and external customers who visit the universities from all forms of dangers that assail the institutions daily as a matter of course. This is where security comes into play.

Recommendations

To achieve best practice in security connotes best staffing, best operational rules, best technological aids, best funding and best management which combined together will give best results. Hence, this study recommended that;

1. Each University should develop its own Security Policy to which all should submit, as far as security on campus is concerned.
2. Each university should endeavor to professionalize its security department by appropriate staffing and equipment.
3. The security department should organize regular security awareness programmes for all stakeholders and players alike who live or work in the university, even up to the domestic servants as they also have vital roles to play in the security of residential areas.
4. Efforts should be stepped up in the acquisition of more modern security technological aids to support the performance of the security department.
5. The governments (Federal & State), other owners of the Universities and the industries should show more economic concern in matters of campus security as the universities alone cannot possibly fund all the emerging demands this regard.

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