

# Psychological Effects of Insecurity on Students Academic Performance in Taraba State, Nigeria.

ISHAKU, RIMAMTANUNG NYIPUTEN<sup>1</sup>, AIGBE, DIYELI SEGUN<sup>2</sup>, IBOK, ANWANAUYI HENRY<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>*Department of Economics, Federal University Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.*

<sup>2</sup>*Department of Criminology and Security Studies, Caleb University, Imota, Lagos State, Nigeria.*

<sup>3</sup>*Nobel International Business School, Accra, Ghana*

**Abstract-** This study investigated the psychological effects of insecurity on students' academic performance in Taraba state, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive and survey design for analysis. Three hundred questionnaires were administered to respondents using the purposive sampling technique. The data collection instrument was a well-structured questionnaire, and the data collected was analyzed using the SPSS software. From the Chi-square result, it was revealed that post-traumatic stress disorder has a significant effect on students' academic performance in Taraba; bad thinking processes have a significant effect on students' academic performance in Taraba, and frustration has a significant effect on students' academic performance in Taraba state. The study recommended that the federal government should provide adequate security in the insurgency-ravaged areas of the country to enhance students' academic performance. The management of schools in Taraba state should be more security-conscious, among other precautions.

**Keywords:** Psychological Effect, Insecurity, Academic Performance.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Insecurity has become a household name as almost all nations have witnessed different dimensions of insecurity. In many ways, it has become more threatening today than ever before, as casualties have been on the increase. Indeed, the worldwide manifestation of insecurity has been evident in Africa, particularly in Nigeria. Concerning Nigeria, the phenomenon has found expression in the emergence of Boko Haram insurgency, kidnapping, farmer-herdsmen clashes and bandit activities just to mention but few.

To address these threats to national security and tackle the increasing waves of crime, the National Assembly passed the Anti-Terrorism Act in 2011 and the

Nigerian government has budgeted and spent a huge amount of money on security in the country, especially in the North Eastern region of the country (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 results (Adebayo, 2013).

Thus, the existence of these problems has affected the educational system negatively; hence, most of the tertiary institutions in the country, especially in the North East region of the Nigeria, are no longer safe for academic activities. The effective learning of students requires a secure environment, to achieve psychological stability. According to Dibia and Obi (2012), the academic performance of students depends largely on their psychological stability. Environmental insecurity puts Nigerian students in stressful conditions that can affect their behaviour, and impede learning. The need to overcome these security challenges for good students' academic performance becomes paramount. It is against these backgrounds that this paper seeks to investigate the psychological effect of insecurity on students' academic performance in Taraba State, Nigeria.

The paper is structured into five sections. After this introductory section, section two reviews related literature on insecurity. The methodology is discussed in the third section. Section four comprises of presentation of results and discussion of findings, and finally, section five draws conclusions based on the findings as well as recommends the way forward

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Conceptual review

Insecurity: Insecurity is concerned with feelings of uncertainty, dangers or threats to life.

According to Hassan (2014), insecurity is a negative feeling involving fear, anxiety, uncertainty and injustice, among others. Lack of control and reliance on unpredictable people leads to frustration and insecurity. Insecurity is a threat to learning. Prevailing peace or conflict within communities around the schools often has rippling effects on the teaching and learning activities of the schools.

### 2.2 Empirical Literature

Adamu (2019) investigated the psychological effect of insecurity on sustainable education development in Nigeria with specific emphasis on theoretical frameworks such as Frustration theory, Psychoanalytic theory, Ethnological theory and Social learning theory of crime. The paper also examined the sources of insecurity in Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria and its Psychological effects. Added to this, the possible strategy for promoting security in Tertiary Institutions was discussed. Based on the review, the following recommendations were made among others, the Federal Government of Nigeria should provide security in the insurgency-ravaged areas and all other parts of the country within the shortest possible period to enhance educational activities for sustainable development. The International Community should assist the Nigerian government in negotiating with the insurgents so that the situation would be brought to an end and equally be involved in educational rehabilitation. Management of higher institutions should introduce security education as a compulsory general course in the curriculum. This will help both the students and staff to be security conscious, and spot strange persons and things around them to keep the environment safe.

Brendan, (2010) opined that the reactions to Boko Haram attacks, kidnapping and bandits lead to fear and trauma among students, lecturers and non-academic staff which eventually affect the teaching and learning process negatively. Thus, this will affect students' ability to learn, and where the threat of attacks persists may lead to dropout and abandonment of academic pursuits.

In the same vein, Munoz (2009) argues that the symbolic effect of insecurity is the promulgation of fear, subordination to others and the ideological effects in the removal of the right to education and the denial of its purpose. Security challenges trigger traumatic disorders and toxic stress that affect learning negatively. Stressful conditions make students experience neurobiological changes. Insecurity engenders fear in students, making them study in an atmosphere of stress. The fear of being attacked causes a lack of concentration and focus on learning activities. Students' thinking, creative processes, memory and attention are tampered with due to insecurity (Patterson, 2008; Shuaibu 2015; Akintunde & Selzing-Musa, 2016). Fear, anxiety and frustrations do not bring out the best in students.

Dachia (2018) assessed the effects of the Boko Haram Insurgency on Western education in Yobe State, North-Eastern Nigeria. Three objectives were formulated as the study's guide:

- i. To examine the causes of Boko Haram insurgency
- ii. To establish how Boko Haram violence has affected Western schools.
- iii. To examine the effects of Boko Haram violence on standards of Western education in Yobe State, North Eastern Nigeria. The study used descriptive survey design with both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The findings of the study revealed that poverty, unemployment, the Almajiris factor and misconception of religion were the major factors that led to the development of Boko Haram to its full insurgent status. The study further established that Boko Haram has attacked schools, resulting in the indiscriminate destruction of school infrastructure and the teaching and learning materials, loss of teachers, killing and kidnapping of school children, as well as recruiting children of school age as suicide bombers and spies. The study finally discloses that there is a general decline in school attendance/enrolments, poor student performance, and the loss of trained teachers. The study also reveals how the destroyed school infrastructure and instructional materials were compounded by inadequate teachers and poor funding. These, therefore, have affected the quality and standards of Western education in Yobe State.

Ojukwu (2017) investigated the effect of insecurity of school environment on the academic performance of secondary school students in Imo state, Nigeria. The study had a total of 1,000 respondents (500 male and 500 female students). They responded to a self-structured validated questionnaire. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Means and standard deviations were calculated to answer the research questions and independent sample t-tests were used to test the hypotheses. Major findings revealed that insecurity in the school environment significantly affects the academic performance of secondary school students, while students' gangsterism, smoking of Indian hemp, abusing other hard drugs, cult, and related violent activities were some of the factors that constituted insecurity of the school environment. Those factors eventually cause boys to leave school and join trading while leading girls to drop out and settle for marriage. Asiegbu, Nwankwo, Briggs and Macs (2021) examined the activities of the Boko Haram sect in the Northeastern states of Nigeria (Adamawa, Borno and Yobe) with the main objective of identifying the effects on educational development in Nigeria. The Anomie theory guided the study. Descriptive and purposive sampling methods were used respectively to obtain the sample size of 240 respondents for this study, while 200 questionnaires were validly retrieved. The paper made use of primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were generated from the two hundred (200) retrieved questionnaires, while content analysis was used to analyse the secondary data. Data were presented in tables and analyzed using the 4-point Likert scale with a 2.50 criterion mean as the standard. The study findings, amongst others, prove that to a large extent, the activities of Boko Haram have hindered educational development in the North East, with the sect destroying over 882 classrooms and abducting a total of nine hundred and thirty-six (936) students of both secondary and tertiary institutions across the country between December 2012 and June 2021.

Achikasim and Shuaibu (2019) investigated the influence of insecurity on the emotional behaviour of secondary school students within the North-Eastern geo-political zone of Nigeria. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize data related to the research questions. The t-test and ANOVA were used to test the

formulated null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. It was found at the end of the study that insecurity has a negative influence on the students' emotional behaviour ( $M = 3.13$ ,  $S.D = 0.85$ ). It was also found that insecurity has a negative consequence on the emotional behaviour of students irrespective of gender  $t(398) = -0.903$ ,  $P = 0.367$   $< t_{tab} = 1.96$ , religion  $[F(2, 397) = 7.20$ ,  $P = 0.001$   $< F_{tab} = 1.96]$  or state of origin  $[F(5, 394) = 0.421$ ,  $P = 0.834$   $< F_{tab} = 1.96]$ .

Using inferential statistics of t- test, Ajabor and Ichazu (2021) assessed the influence of security challenges on students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State. The findings of the study indicated that security challenges affect students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Benedict, Adedoja, Tolorunleke and James (2021) examined the psychological influence of Fulani herdsmen kidnappings Trauma on students' academic motivation, and performance amidst COVID-19, among secondary school students in Kaduna state, Nigeria. The study used frequency counts and percentages. The study revealed that there was a significant difference in respondents' perception of the academic performance of secondary school students who were victims and those who were not victims of herdsmen kidnapping. Also, there was a significant difference in respondents' perception of the academic motivation of secondary school students who were victims and those who were not victims of herdsmen kidnappings.

### 2.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of this study is based on the Frustration theory of insecurity as well as the Marxian theory of conflict to explain the existing nexus between the psychological effects of insecurity and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

**2.3.1 Frustration theory of insecurity:** According to Davis (1983) frustration is a direct blockade of a person's movement toward a defined goal; it produces irritable and uneasy feelings within the individual. When it persists, the victim is aggressively pushed to seek a substitute goal. Interpreting the frustration theory of insecurity from Nigeria's perspective, it

could be put that due to frustration resulting from goal blockade, Nigerians who take to crime such as kidnapping, bandit activities and terror attacks use it as a substitute means to goal attainment because they feel highly unsecured in the prevalence economic difficulty in the country.

**2.3.2 Marxian theory of conflicts:** Marxist theory of conflict (1948) as modified by Salisu, Mohammed & Abdullahi (2015), arose out of concern over the unequal ownership and distribution of the means of production that bifurcated society into two antagonistic classes: the class of the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', the pauperised and the wealthy, the working class/proletariat and the bourgeoisie. Thus, the Marxist theory exposes the exploitative tendencies and appropriation of the supposed common wealth to the few to the detriment of the masses. According to this theory, conflict, insecurity and instability, as depicted by Boko Haram insurgency in Northern Nigeria, arise out of the life and death struggle between two dominant socio-economic classes. On the one hand, is the class of those who control the means of production and power (the bourgeoisie), and on the other, those who rely on their labor for survival (the proletariat or poor masses).

Hence, Marxist conflict theory concludes that since the relations of production based on equality, moral affection and absence of classes collapsed, class antagonism will continue to prevail in society. Marx therefore predicted that conflict in their different permutations will cease only when an ideal communist stage of social progression is attained and equality of all is actualised. According to this theory, this can only be achieved through the inevitable overthrow of the exploitative (capitalist) system in a bloody revolution (Salisu, Mohammed & Abdullahi, 2015).

### III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey design to establish the effects of information communication technology on national security and sustainability in Plateau State, Nigeria. Survey research studies involve selecting and studying samples chosen from the population to discover the relative incidence, distribution and interrelations of the variables, (Ndiyo,

2005). The survey design is relevant in studies where questionnaires are utilized for data collection.

#### 3.2 Study area

The study area is Taraba State. It is a state in North Eastern Nigeria, named after the Taraba River which traverses the southern part of the state. The capital of Taraba is Jalingo. Taraba State was created out of the former Gongola State on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1991, by the military government of General Ibrahim Babangida. Taraba State is bounded in the west by Nasarawa State and Benue State, northwest by Plateau State, north by Bauchi State and Gombe, northeast by Adamawa State, and south by the Northwest region in Cameroon. The state consists of sixteen local government areas.

The inhabitants of the state are mainly the Fulani, Jukun, Chamba, Tiv, Kuteb and Ichen, who are found predominantly in the Southern part of the state, while Wukum, Mumuye, and Kona tribes are predominantly located in the northern part of the state. The central region is mainly occupied by the Mambilla people, Chamba, Fulani and Jibawa. There are over 40 different tribes and their languages in Taraba State.

#### 3.3 Population of study

The population of the study consists of 400 students of Government day secondary school, Kpambo, Ussa Local Government Area of Taraba State, 400 students of Government Day Secondary School, Kwesati, Ussa Local Government Area of Taraba State and 400 students of Government Day Secondary school, Jamuwa Gida, Takum Local Government Area of Taraba State, making a total of 1200 students.

#### 3.4 Sample Size and Method of Sampling

##### 3.4.1 Sample Size

In this study, since the finite population is known, the Yaro Yamane formula (1967) was used in determining the sample size as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}
 n &= N/1 + (N \cdot e^2) \\
 \text{Where: } n &= \text{Sample size} \\
 N &= \text{Actual population} \\
 e &= \text{the error term} \\
 (0.05) & \\
 n &= 1200 / [1 + (1200 \\
 \times 0.05^2)] \\
 n &= 1200 / [1 + 1200 \times \\
 0.0025]
 \end{aligned}$$

n	=	1200/ (1+ 3.0)
n	=	1200/ 4.0
n	=	300
n	=	300 Sample size

### 3.4.2 Method of sampling

The researcher adopted the purposive sampling technique in selecting the sample for this study. Odu (2007) defined purposive sampling as a technique that uses judgment and deliberate efforts to obtain a representative sample by including typical areas or groups in the sample selected. This technique was adopted due to the nature and character of the variable under study.

### 3.5 Method of Data Collection

Data for the study was collected through Questionnaire. In the process of data collection, the researchers engaged research assistants and trained them on how to distribute questionnaires. After the training, researchers and their research assistants moved to the field and administered the questionnaires to the respondents which were collected immediately.

### 3.6 Method of Data Analysis

The data for this research was analyzed with the chi-square statistical technique with  $k-1$  degrees of freedom, where  $K$  means the number of categories. The justification for using this method was because the responses were represented in categorical data. Furthermore, the chi-square as a non-parametric test is used to examine whether or not two variables are related.

The basic formula for chi-square is stated thus:

$$X^2 = \sum (O_f - E_f)^2 / E_f$$

Where:

$X^2$  = Chi-square statistics

$\sum$  = Summation sign

$O_f$  = Observed frequencies

$E_f$  = Expected frequencies

The degree of freedom for chi-square is computed as

$$df = (R - 1)(C - 1)$$

Where df = degree of freedom

C = Column

R = Row

### 3.7 Sources of data

The sources of data for this study were grouped into primary and secondary sources.

- Primary sources: This included firsthand information obtained from respondents in the course of fieldwork. The questionnaire, interview and documented studies made up the primary data for this study.
- Secondary sources: The secondary sources of data consist of library research, including E-library for reviewed works of other scholars, journals and other official information on the major variables of the study. They constitute the literature reviewed in this study

## IV. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

TABLE 4.1:  
 Percentage Summary of Respondents

Questionnaire	Responses	Total	Percentage (%)
No. returned	295	295	98.33
Not returned	5	5	1.67
Total	300	300	100

Source: Field Survey by the researcher, 2024

From table 4.1, 300 questionnaires were administered to respondents. The total number of questionnaires returned was 295 representing 98.33 per cent response rates.

### 4.2 Data analysis and interpretation

Table 4.2: Summary of Chi-square computation of the relationship between Post-traumatic stress disorder and students' academic performance.

#### Test Statistics

	Relationship between Post-traumatic stress disorder and students' academic performance in Taraba State
Chi-Square	379.485 <sup>a</sup>
Df	22

Asymp.	.000
Sig.	

Source: Researcher's computation, 2024.

Hypothesis one: There is no significant effect between Post-traumatic stress disorder and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

To test this hypothesis, the Chi-Square was used. From the result of the analysis in Table 4.2 since the chi-square calculated value of 379.485 is greater than the table value of 36.42 at 22 degree of freedom and the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 chosen significance level we therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant effect between Post-traumatic stress disorder and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

Table 4.3:Summary of Chi-square computation of the relationship between Bad thinking processes and students' academic performance

#### Test Statistics

	Relationship between Bad thinking processes and students' academic performance in Taraba State.
Chi-Square	175.847 <sup>a</sup>
Df	19
Asymp.	.000
Sig.	

Source: Researcher's computation, 2024.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant relationship between Bad thinking Processes and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

To test this hypothesis, the Chi-Square was used. From the result of the analysis in Table 4.3 since the chi-square calculated value of 175.847 is greater than the table value of 30.14 at 19 degree of freedom and the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 chosen significance level we therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant

effect between Bad thinking Processes and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

Table 4.4:Summary of Chi-square computation of the relationship between Frustration and students' academic performance.

#### Test Statistics

	Relationship between Frustration and students' academic performance in Taraba State.
Chi-Square	163.420 <sup>a</sup>
Df	21
Asymp.	.000
Sig.	

Source: Researcher's computation, 2024.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant impact between Frustration and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

To test this hypothesis, the Chi-Square was used. From the result of the analysis in Table 4.4 since the chi-square calculated value of 163.420 is greater than the table value of 33.92 at 21 degree of freedom and the p-value of 0.000 is less than 0.05 chosen significance level we therefore reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant effect between Frustration and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

#### 4.3 Discussions of Findings

This was based on the objectives of the study and the findings of other researchers.

Objective 1: To examine if Post-traumatic stress disorder has a significant effect on students' academic performance in Taraba State

From the results, Post-traumatic stress disorder, which is a psychological effect of insecurity, has a significant effect on students' academic performance in Taraba State. This finding conforms to the findings of Brendan (2010) and Benedict et al. (2021) whose studies indicated that post-traumatic stress disorder significantly affects the academic performance of

students. This outcome may be due to indiscriminate destruction of school infrastructure and the teaching and learning materials, loss of teachers, and killing and kidnapping of school children leading to stressful conditions on the part of students.

Objectives 2: To investigate if bad thinking processes has a significant effect on students' academic performance in Taraba State

From the results, Bad thinking processes, which is a psychological effect of insecurity has a significant effect on the academic performance of students in Taraba State. This finding agrees with the findings of Patterson (2008), Shuaibu (2015) and Akintunde and Selzing-Musa (2016) whose findings showed that students' thinking, creative processes, memory and attention are tampered with due to insecurity. This finding may be a result of incessant issues of insecurity leading to a lack of concentration and focus on the part of students which goes a long way to affect their academic performance negatively.

Objectives 3: To ascertain if Frustration has a significant effect on students' academic performance in Taraba State

From the results, Frustration, which is a psychological effect of insecurity, has a significant effect on the academic performance of students in Taraba State. This finding agrees with the findings of Adamu (2019) whose finding showed that fear, anxiety and frustrations from insecurity do not bring out the best in students, leading to bad academic performance.

This finding could be a result of massive killings and destruction of schools and other infrastructures by the insurgents that made the students frustrated, hence, affecting their academic performance negatively.

## V. CONCLUSION AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Conclusions

This study investigated the psychological effects of insecurity on students' academic performance in Taraba State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey design, the instrument of data collection was the questionnaire, and the data collected was analyzed using the chi-square statistical technique. From the chi-square, it is concluded that there is a significant effect between Post-traumatic

stress disorder and students' academic performance in Taraba State, there is a significant effect between bad thinking processes and students' academic performance in Taraba State, and there is a significant effect between frustration and students' academic performance in Taraba State.

Based on these research findings, the following recommendations are made:

- i. The Federal Government of Nigeria should provide security in the insurgency ravaged areas and all other parts of the country within the shortest possible period to enhance students' academic performance in those areas.
- ii. Management of schools in Taraba state should be more security conscious to promote the security of lives and properties. Thus, efforts should be made by owners of schools as well as stakeholders in education to ensure that school environments are fenced and protected to ward off intruders from the school premises so that students can have a sense of security, which will allow them to concentrate and improve on their academic performance.
- iii. The Nigerian government should collaborate with other countries around the world to put an end to insurgency.
- iv. A risk assessment should be carried out regularly for each school in the insurgent-ravaged areas in Taraba State and the entire North East region. The risk analysis should identify potential threats to the schools, their students, teachers, and members of the community, as well as the likelihood of such attacks occurring.

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