



THE USE OF COMMUNITY BASED SECURITY MEASURES IN ENSURING SCHOOL SAFETY

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ABSTRACT

This paper discussed the role of community-based security measures on the safety of public senior secondary schools in Kwara State, Nigeria. the paper evaluates the roles of various educational stakeholders including parents, host communities, principals, teachers, and school management boards in fostering a secure school environment. The paper identifies challenges such as inadequate communication, insufficiently trained personnel, suboptimal school locations, and limited financial resources that hinder effective school safety measures. Suggestion includes enhanced funding, collaborative efforts between stakeholders and government entities, integration of safety management into school curricula, regular safety training, and the deployment of safety equipment. The paper concludes that synergistic collaboration among educational stakeholders and government agencies is crucial for ensuring safety in public secondary schools, thereby enhancing the cost-effectiveness and knowledge contribution of academic services. Preventive measures suggested encompass constructing high fences, installing Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV) cameras at strategic points, bolstering school security, and establishing escape routes to mitigate potential invasions.

Keywords: Community, Security, Community-Based Security, Community-Based Security Measures, School Safety

Introduction

Security describes as the protection of people, assets and information from various threats, such as physical security and cyber security. Security clarifies as the feeling of being safe from harm, fear, anxiety, oppression, danger, and poverty, emphasizing the protection and preservation of core values. Mubita (2021) Similarly, Van-Jaarsveld (2011) described schools as institutions where individuals learn, develop, and receive education to prepare for their futures. The school is an organization that needs to have planned safety rules and regulations to protect its components so that the culture of learning and teaching is enhanced.

Schools therefore need to also take seriously, the affective domain which is meant to reshape the attitudinal disposition of individuals and make all to be morally upright.



(Mubita, 2021). Both public and private schools are facing a significant safety and security dilemma. School boards meet with teachers and parents to listen to their children's problems and offer solutions. As the nation recognizes the gravity of the issue and how it affects children's future, state and federal governments should act to strengthen school safety and law enforcement. School security measures are one of the most widespread formal control mechanisms in schools nationwide, although there is little research that has examined their effect on student behaviour (Gardella, 2022). Although school security measures are typically used to detect and deter violent behaviours or drug or weapon-related activities in school, they may have a more widespread influence on student behaviour namely, formal control mechanisms may reinforce informal social control mechanisms.

To buttress the above statement, Olaifa et, al (2024), opined that school security measures is an effective way of managing the insecurity in secondary schools if properly coordinated by the stakeholders. This measure involves the use of human factors as a means of controlling and safeguarding a school. This can be in the form of employing guards or security officers that will be moving around the school premises inspecting and observing the activities taking place and the locations where incidents can occur on the premises to identify any attack. It also involves training and equipping academic and non-academic staff and students in security matters to ensure that they are security conscious for appropriate response to attacks in public senior secondary schools. Over the last decade, the consistent occurrence of insecurity, loss of life, kidnap and brings school security to the top of issues that need to be holistically studied and researched as to how to manage the situation from its current negative stride.

UNICEF (2021) while commenting on the rate of insecurity in secondary schools in Nigeria, noted that in the year 2021, there have been 20 attacks on schools in Nigeria, with 1,436 children abducted and 16 children dead in School, some female and male students feel threatened as a result of rampant incidences of sexual abuse, rape, homosexual, bullying in schools and society. The case of bullying of a youngster, Sylvester Oromoni which happened in Dozen College, Lagos, which led to his death, the case of 10 years old girl of Christ-land College who was gang raped by her colleagues at their trip to Dubai, the case of homosexual reported at Deeper Life Secondary School in Oyu, Akwa Ibom state, just to mention a few (Guardian, 2021; Daily Post, 2022; Daily Trust, 2020). Safety and security measures are the means and roles of ensuring that administrators, teachers, students, parents, visitors and facilities in educational institutions are free from danger, threats, and destruction.

Cletu and Usman, (2024) also, reported that school security are measure or means of preventing crisis and reacting to violations of existing rules that prohibit unruly behaviors which are likely to cause security and safety risks. School safety depends far less on the poverty and crime surrounding the school preemies than on the academic achievement of its students and the relationship with adults in building. School safety most basic sense to ensuring everyone feels secure and valued. It encompasses everything from bullying prevention to mental health, and physical security. Community-based



security measures in Kwara State public senior secondary school is the efforts of the local or host community in ensuring the safety and security of schools within the zone. Specifically, local community policing usage in most public senior secondary schools.

These measures typically involve collaboration between the school authorities, students, parents, local government, law enforcement agencies and school stakeholders. The goal is to create a safe environment conducive to learning, free from violence, crime, or external threats. Emergency drills are a crucial part of any school safety plan. They help students and staff understand what to do in case of an emergency, whether it's a fire, earthquake, or intruder. Community members can play a vital role in these drills by volunteering as observers or participants. This not only enhances the realism of the drills but also fosters a sense of unity and preparedness. A sense of belonging is essential for students' emotional well-being and academic success. When students feel connected to their school and community, they are more likely to engage positively and report concerns.

Concept of Community based security Measures

Community-based security measures are integral to ensuring the safety and security of public senior secondary schools, particularly in regions like Kwara State, Nigeria. These measures involve collaborative efforts among school authorities, students, parents, local governments, and law enforcement agencies to create a safe learning environment free from violence, crime, or external threats. Emergency drills are a crucial component of school safety plans, helping students and staff understand appropriate responses to various emergencies, such as fires, earthquakes, or intruders. Community members can enhance these drills by participating as observers or participants, thereby fostering unity and preparedness. A strong sense of belonging is essential for students' emotional well-being and academic success; when students feel connected to their school and community, they are more likely to engage positively and report concerns. Fostering this sense of belonging requires concerted efforts from all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, and community members.

Surveillance and security systems, such as CCTV cameras, can aid in monitoring school premises and detecting potential threats. However, balancing security with privacy is crucial. Community engagement can help strike this balance by involving parents and community members in decision-making processes, such as through community forums discussing the implementation of surveillance systems to ensure responsible and effective use. Host communities have the responsibility of ensuring that their cultural practices do not threaten the peace and safety of schools. They should also offer supervisory support by assisting instructional programs, providing resources like manpower, equipment, and finances, and developing local security plans to ensure the safety of life and property within and outside the school environment (Asaju, 2022).

The security of schools has become a growing concern due to societal changes, including terrorist attacks, gun crimes, vandalism, arson, and child exploitation. Students and teachers have the right to feel safe and secure, with appropriate security measures and



procedures in place. Community-based security encompasses grassroots initiatives, such as neighborhood watch programs and vigilant groups, which have become more prominent due to constraints faced by formal security agencies. These measures offer prompt responses and have played a crucial role in mitigating risks associated with kidnapping and similar crimes. Their effectiveness is attributed to their familiarity with local areas and social networks (Aliyu & Lawal, 2020).

In regions like the South-East, local security measures have led to a marked decrease in kidnapping incidents, highlighting the significance of local knowledge and the trust community members place in these groups a trust often absent in state security organizations (Onuoha, & Onuoha 2025). Involving community leaders and traditional rulers in security initiatives bolsters the legitimacy and acceptance of these efforts (Afolabi, 2021). In northern Nigeria, vigilante groups have become vital elements of community-based security, working closely with local police to combat kidnapping and other crimes through regular patrols and vigilant surveillance, enhanced by community members' deep knowledge of their surroundings Badmus, (2025) Physical security measures are also essential in maintaining school security.

Perimeter fencing is a critical security and aesthetic feature of any school; it prevents intruders and unwanted visitors from entering the site, helps keep staff and students safe, and contributes to the school's overall appearance. When specifying fencing for schools, considerations should include the security level and the impression it makes. Today's schools contain valuable and portable property attractive to thieves; thus, fencing and gates serve as the first line of defense and play a vital role in security. However, schools must remain attractive learning environments and are encouraged to open their facilities to the wider community at other times. Therefore, adequate security must be achieved without schools resembling prisons. Properly installed and maintained school fences can boost surveillance, improve security, and positively impact student morale and well-being (Jacksons Fencing, 2020)

School safety is a pressing concern in Nigeria, and there is a need for more information about the nature of the problem and the factors that exacerbate problems. To date, little is known about the nature of the problem across schools, the reasons safety varies in different sites, or the features of schools that lead them to have better climates. School safety, therefore, can be described as a school environment where children are safe from all types of hazards and risk (Ismail et., al 2024). In the context of this paper, school safety is the provision and maintenance of a secured learning environment for students and staff in order to facilitate effective teaching and learning. School climate according to Yuan and Chayanuvat, (2022). can play a significant role in providing a healthy, safe and positive school atmosphere. They noted that the interaction of various school and classroom climate factors can provide safe and security threats, free environment that can enable all members of the school community to teach and learn at optimum levels.

It has been found out that a positive, safe and secure educational environment enhances psychological outcomes for students and school personnel. Similarly, a negative



school climate that is full of security threats can prevent optimal learning and development. It is concluded that the aspects of school climate, including trust, respect, mutual obligation, and concern for others welfare can have powerful effects on educators and learner interpersonal relationship as well as learners' academic. According to Cornell et, al (2020) school safety refers to strategies and procedures required to plan the diverse activities of the institution. One of the school planners' important duties is to ensure that the safety programme is designed and the necessary steps are taken when situation arise which could be potentially dangerous. School Safety is the protection that the school should give to the stakeholders within the school, be it educators, learners and managers from crime and accidents, by means of well-drawn policies which should be well managed (Gbesoevi et., al 2020).

Community-Based Security Measures in Kwara State Public Senior Secondary school

There are various community-based security measures, which ensure school safety in Kwara state public senior secondary schools. For the purpose of this paper, the researcher concentrated and discussed the following community-based security measures as human security measure, physical security measures, policy and procedure security measures and technological security measures.

Human Security Measures

Human security measures in secondary schools refer to non-physical methods and training aimed at ensuring the safety and protection of students, staff, and the school community. These measures address threats such as violence, abuse, bullying, and psychological distress, focusing on human-cantered prevention and response. Neighborhood watch programs is one of the human security measures which is the effective way to promote community safety and security. Twesigye et al. (2022) opine that community-based security encompasses grassroots initiatives, such as neighborhood watch programs and vigilant groups, which have become more prominent due to the constraints faced by formal security agencies. Furthermore, community-based security measures prioritize building trust and legitimacy by encouraging officers to cultivate relationships and transparency.

This trust enables effective cooperation and collaboration, vital for crime control in neighborhoods with strained relations (Twesigye et al., 2022). Additionally, community engagement is emphasized, recognizing residents as valuable contributors to school safety efforts. In this determination, they have to be security conscious and mindful of what is happening in their environment (Adebakin & Ayanlowo, 2023). Similarly, they need to avoid moving at odd hours and picking valuable things on the road (Abubakar 2023). Students are equally expected to abide by the school rules and regulations to avoid impending danger. It is important that students report any suspicious people and movement to school authorities. Obedience also entails adherence to teacher instructions and parent's advice. Students especially day students are advised to go home



in group after school. This group movement has some protective advantages. It makes them a formidable team as type move on the roads (Shaibu & Ogbobe, 2025). Students' participation in security workshops is equally very necessary, acquisition of self-defensive techniques and being conscious when they are relating.

Physical Security Measures

physical Security Measures are important in ensuring school safety in public senior secondary schools. Security Cameras; Is also physical security measures which protect the digital information and systems from cyber threats there are the internal physical security measures which are the ones that can be found within building such as alarms, CCTV cameras, turnstiles, windows and door bars, locks, safes, vaults protective lighting and other barriers (Ike, & Ikekpeazu, 2023). Closed-circuit television (CCTV) is the technology that uses video cameras to record and transmit a signal to a specific place, on a limited set of monitors. CCTV is a system of surveillance cameras that capture the images of individuals or information related to individuals in public places for crime prevention and crime prosecution.

A well-defined perimeter with strong fences and secure gates prevents unauthorised entry. It also helps to prevent malicious intent incidents such as vandalism, theft, and unauthorised entry. Regularly check for damage and keep gates locked during school hours. Consider using fencing that is both tall and difficult to climb such as chain-link fencing with barbed wire. Controlling who enters and exits the school is vital for keeping the campus safe. A reliable door access system can prevent unauthorized access and protect students and staff. Monitored entry points use systems like sign-in or visitor badges to track and authorize visitors. Staff and students can use ID cards to access specific areas ensuring only authorized individuals can enter restricted places. Biometric scanners and remote monitoring enhanced security safety.

Policy and Procedure Security Measures

Policy and Procedure Security Measures Is the steps and practices implemented by law enforcement agencies to maintain safety, prevent crime and respond to security threats. These measures are important for protecting communities and assets from risks. One of the policing and procedure in public senior secondary school is community Engagement. community engagement is the security measures which build relationship and trust among community. Communities have a power of enhancing local security which gives numerous evidence successes across the school area. By adopting a collaborative approach that combines education, direct involvement and technology.

Additional, role of community practices collective mutual support and trust among the community and the school for the safety of the students and teachers. Olaifa, et al (2024) Examined insecurity as the state of subjected in every respect to threat, risk, bullying and harassment. Insecurity aligns security is often used in several ways. Many people would take it to mean the existence of danger. Lack of trust and inadequately guarded. It can also be seen as those measures taken to protect school violence and



improve the relationship between the school and community. Intelligence -Led policing security is the combination of strategies and procedures required to coordinate the diverse activities of public secondary school in order to achieve safety. In 2023 Nigeria police has launched the standard operation procedure (SOP) manual to achieve safer schools in Nigeria.

Inspector General of police at the police strategic forum emphasized the need to promote proactive intelligence for enhanced prevention of attacks on schools and host communities in order to guarantee seamless learning in Nigeria. Ojo stated that some students go to school with jackknives, axes and even locally made guns to threaten and bully fellow students. (Danbaba et., al 2025) These problems not only endanger students and teachers but they also prevent teachers from concentrating on teaching and students from concentrating on learning. There has also been an increased influx of cult groups into secondary schools in Nigeria including Kwara State resulting to high security threats (NCDSS,). This unfortunate situation has increased the call for adoption of security management measures which may curb the menace of insecurity and make secondary schools safe for teaching and learning.

Technology Security Measures

Technology security measures in ensuring school safety in public senior secondary school is one of the advanced safety APP which allows students and teachers to prevent and respond to security hazards. Advanced technology includes surveillances systems, Access control systems, Alarm systems, Communication tools and digital threat detection are crucial for protection students and staff. Surveillance Technology encouraging the use of community-installed surveillance cam

Roles of community- based security measures in Ensuring School Safety in Kwara State Senior Secondary School

Community-based security measures in ensuring school safety in Kwara State public senior secondary schools refers to efforts that involve the local community in ensuring the safety and security of schools within the region, particularly public senior secondary schools. These measures typically involve collaboration between the school authorities, students, parents, local government, and law enforcement agencies. The goal is to create a safe environment conducive to learning, free from violence, crime, or external threats. One of the roles of community- based security measures is to promote a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members. When local residents are involved in school safety efforts, they are more likely to take an active role in preventing security incidents and responding to emergencies. A supportive community begins in open communication.

Regular meeting between parents, teachers, and community leaders can address concerns and share ideas. for instance, parent-teacher associations (PTAs) can organize monthly meeting to discuss safety protocols and brainstorm innovative solutions. These



meeting not only keep everyone informed but also build a sense of collective responsibility.

Community role as a stakeholder in ensuring school safety, the Nigeria educational system is essential a community –based oriented and as such host community played key roles in schools such as ensuring good site for school location (where the school area is not close to a high way, where accident cases might be frequent). Many people would take it to mean a lack of safety or the existence of danger; hazard; uncertainty; lack of trust; doubtful; inadequately guarded or protected, lack of stability, etc. It can also be seen as those measures or actions taken to protect and manage school violence, reduce safety risks and liability and improve the relationship between the school and community. Safety and security measures are the means and ways of ensuring that administrators, teachers, students, parents, visitors and facilities in educational institutions are free from danger, threats, and destruction.

The Ilorin West Division of the NSCDC Kwara State Command on Tuesday, February 11, 2025, organized a one-day Security Summit with the theme: “School Safety & Emergency Response Tips: Citizens’ Security” aimed at strengthening security measures in schools and their host communities. Speaking at the event, the Divisional Officer, Ilorin West Division, CSC Muhammed K. Hamzat, stated that the summit was designed to review and strengthen grassroots security architecture, with a particular focus on safeguarding schools, students, teachers, and surrounding communities. He further noted that the program aimed to tackle rising security challenges in schools, particularly kidnapping, cultism, bullying, drug abuse and other forms of violence within the school environment. The Commandant further urged school administrators, teachers, students, and parents to actively support government policies and security measures aimed at protecting schools across the 16 local government areas of Kwara State. He reiterated that intelligence sharing, vigilance, and adherence to security protocols are essential in preventing security breaches.

Conclusion

In conclusion, community-based security measures ensure school safety in Kwara State public senior secondary schools involve collaborative efforts among various stakeholders to ensure safety and security. These measures promote a sense of ownership and responsibility among community members, leading to active roles in preventing security incidents and responding to emergencies.

Suggestions

1. There should be increase in community participation to strengthened surveillance and early warning systems in preventing security threats.
2. Schools should install video surveillance cameras both within and outside the premises to effectively monitor movement and activities. This measure will aid security agencies in tracing and investigating any crimes that may occur.



3. All schools should enhance their security systems by employing trained security personnel, preferably individuals with military backgrounds, to deter and address potential threats.
4. Parents should be encouraged to educate their children on basic safety practices, such as going home immediately after school hours and avoiding interactions with strangers.
5. Regular safety training programs should be organized for students and staff. These should include updated training on modern safety procedures as a proactive measure to maintain a secure school environment.
6. Public awareness and education should be elevated through well-structured campaigns to inform citizens about the importance of security measures and encourage their active participation in community safety efforts.
7. The Kwara State Government, through the Ministry of Education, should provide and boost physical security infrastructure and resources for public secondary schools.

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