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ANALYSIS OF PRINCIPALS' SCHOOL SECURITY STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN GWAGWALADADA AREA COUNCIL, ABUJA, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This study analysed principals' school security strategies for students' academic performance in private secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja, Nigeria. Three objectives were achieved, three research questions answered and three hypotheses were tested. The study employed a survey research design. The population for this study was 512 comprising 95 teachers and 417 senior secondary two students of 13 private secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja. The sample size of 224 was drawn from the population of 417 students using Taro Yamane formula. The instrument used for the study was two structured questionnaires title 'Principals' School Security Strategies for Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (PSSSCSAPQ). Mean was used to answer the research questions. Independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed that video surveillance systems; advanced access control and locking systems; panic bottoms, alarms, and integrated systems; environmental sensors for proactive safety; communication devices for coordination; and flexible classroom devices for safety and learning as modern security strategies for curbing security challenges in secondary schools. The findings also revealed that good school security strategies creating a safe and conducive learning environment; students feel secured and concentrate more on studies and show active participation in class. Finally, the study found that the extent of adoption of modern security strategies by secondary school principals in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja is low. The study concluded that adoption of security strategies by secondary school in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja is low. It was recommended that secondary school principals should adopt and ensure high utilization of security strategies in their various schools.

Keywords: Principals, Security, Academic Performance and Secondary Schools

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Introduction

The importance of a conducive teaching and learning environment in education cannot be overstated. A conducive learning environment creates a better and engaging learning situation that give students the foundation they need for a better future. An atmosphere that is safe, encouraging, and inclusive is a conducive learning environment because it helps all students learn effectively. It ensures a holistic development of students. Learning in a suitable environment not only helps students but also develops their skills. An idea learning environment helps students to develop good qualities such as confidence, initiative, creativity, responsibility, and love. By taking into account the physical, emotional, and intellectual needs of students, this kind of setting fosters an atmosphere where students feel safe, inspired, and valued. A conducive teaching and learning environment in a secondary school is usually controlled by the principal.

The principal is a leader of secondary school, who holds a significant responsibility in ensuring an intellectually stimulating environment for both teachers, students and facilities. Principals are responsible for the overall administration and management of the school. The principal's vision, leadership skills, and dedication creates a positive learning experience that prepares students for success in their academic and personal lives (Orunbon, 2024). The administrative and managerial aspects of a school principal's role are to oversee the day-to-day operations of the school, including budgeting, scheduling, and resource allocation. School principals also play a crucial role in shaping the educational experience of students; promoting academic excellence; setting the tone for the entire school community, establishing high expectations for both students and staff; enforcing discipline policies; and collaboration with the school staff, parents, and community stakeholders to create a positive and inclusive school climate. One of the utmost roles of secondary school principal is the maintenance of security.

Security is the state of freedom from all sorts of harm and injury (Onyekwere and Ukaigwe, 2023). Abubakar and Bashar (2024) posited that security is the state of being free from danger or threats; it is the activity involved in protecting an individual or a country from attack, danger, fear, and anxiety Ike in Abubakar and Bashar (2024)) asserted that the security entails a stable, relatively predictable environment in which an individual or a group can pursue its goal without disruption or harm, and without fear of disturbance or injury. Security strategy is the establishment and maintenance of protective measures that ensure a state of inviolability from hostile act or influences. This includes measures that are reinforced to keep the school, and the environment free from harmful and dangerous activities (Ukamaka, 2024). Finn, Schichtel-Greenwood, Tamulonis and Servoss (2020) opined that security strategies are the actions taken by the administrators to promote safety among members of the school community. According to Thank God (2018), security can be defined as a condition of freedom from all forms of damage and injury. It means that human resources in the workplace enjoy a certain level of comfort while at work. Finn et al., (2020) stressed that security strategies used by schools include restriction of access to the school building (that is, visitor sign in and locking school doors); use of cameras to monitor activities at the school such as disruptive and violent behaviour on the part of students and invaders. Abubakar and Bashar (2024) stressed that the implementation of school security strategies enhances the achievement school goals; enhance the quality of the work environment; helps to curb threats; prevents the infiltration of weapons and other unlawful equipment to reduced crime rate and violence in schools; and can eventually reduce insurance claims, law suits, riots etc. and this saves cost. The effectiveness of security strategies employed in school is could affect students' academic performance.

Academic performance refers to the average marks obtained by an individual in final examination (Fam and Yaacob, 2016). Academic performance is the knowledge gained by the student which is usually assessed by marks by a teacher and educational goals which are set to be achieved by students over a specific period of time (Kumar, Agarwal and Agarwal, 2021).Díaz-Morales and Escribano (2015) noted that the attainment of high academic performance by students is to be understood as the result of a combination of psychological, social, and economic factors, which further lead to the proper multifaceted growth of students. Osiki as cited in Kumar, Agarwal and Agarwal (2021) submitted that academic performance of students is imperative to anyone who has a concern with education. The author added that academic performance is usually understood as the nucleus, around which a whole lot of significant components of education system revolve, which is why the academic performance of students. Since a sound academic performance is considered as a pre-requisite for securing good jobs, Narad and Abdullah (2016) maintained that a better career and subsequently a quality life, significance of the students' academic performance is important. Academic Performance of students plays a significant role in the economic as well as the social development of any country. According to Ali in Kumar, Agarwal and Agarwal ((2021), the better the students perform academically, the better are the prospects of the development of a good manpower, who would contribute to the economic and social development of a society. Akinleke (2017) stressed that students who performing better are mostly expected to contribute to the growth, development and sustainability of the society.

Many related studies have been conducted on this area. Security strategies are comprehensive plans that outline how a school principal will protect its assets, information, teachers and students from threats. (Ukamaka, 2024) maintained that security strategies by principals are video surveillance, cameras, physical access controls, radio and alarm systems, adopted the use of computer assisted programmes as security management practice in secondary schools. Security strategies are comprehensive plans that outline how a school principal will protect its assets, information, teachers and students from threats. (Ukamaka, 2024) maintained that security strategies by principals are video surveillance, cameras, physical access controls, radio and alarm systems, adopted the use of computer assisted programmes as security management practice in secondary schools. Anyaogu and Alagbaoso (2022) found that safety and security measures were adopted by principals for staff and student management of public secondary schools in Imo State. A study by Obiekwe and Uwaezuoke (2023) indicated that physical and human security measures were adopted by principals while technological security measures were not adopted by principals. Onuorah, Eziamaka and Ofojebe (2020) found that principals utilized technological security management practices for curbing security threats in secondary schools at a very low extent. Also, Ukamaka (2024) found that the extent to which principals apply staff training, use of video surveillance cameras, physical access control, radio and alarm systems and computer assisted programmes as security management practice is to a low extent. Ramzan, Taira, Zaaidi and Naseem (2024) found a positive effect of security measures on teachers' motivation and performance, which in turn had a direct impact on student learning.

Despite the importance attached to high academic performance of students during their studies and after graduation, it has been observed that there are security threats to students in their various schools in the FCT Abuja. According to Adikwu (2024), Abuja has not been exempted from the security threats that are pervasive throughout the nation. Various forms of insecurity include attacks by bandits and insurgents, terrorism and other violent criminal activities have emerged to significantly pose barriers to effective teaching and learning processes. Observation also showed that teachers also exhibit negative attitude to work. The elements of insecurity and negative attitudes of teachers to work are capable of affecting the

academic performance of secondary school students. It is against this background that the study is designed to examine the principals' school security strategies as correlate for students' academic performance in the Secondary Schools in FCT Abuja, Nigeria.

Objectives

1. Identify the modern strategies used for curbing security challenges schools in FCT Abuja
2. Examine the influence of principal's security strategies on the academic performance of secondary school studentsin FCT Abuja
3. Determine the extent of adoption of modern security strategies by secondary school principals in the FCT Abuja

Research Questions

1. What are the modern strategies used for curbing security challenges in secondary schools in FCT Abuja?
2. What is the influence of principal's security strategies on the academic performance of secondary school students in FCT Abuja?
3. To what the extent do secondary school principals adopt modern security strategies in the FCT Abuja?

Hypotheses

$H0_1$: There is no significant difference in the mean responses ofteachers and students on the modern strategies used for curbing security challengessecondary schools

$H0_2$: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students influence of principal's security strategies on the academic performance of secondary school students in FCT Abuja

$H0_3$: There is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the extent of adoption of modern security strategies in the FCT Abuja

Methodology

This study employed a survey research design. This design is suitable because the researcher collected and described the characteristics or facts about the population under study. The survey design also offers research subjects the opportunity to express their opinions based on their experiences and the researcher could collect data from small sample drawn from the population in order to draw inferences. Population for this study was 512 comprising 95 teachers and 417 senior secondary two students of 13 private secondary schools in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja. The sample size of 224 was drawn from the population of 417 students using Taro Yamane formula. The instrument used for the study was two structured questionnaires title 'Principals' School Security Strategies as Correlate for Students' Academic Performance Questionnaire (PSSSCSAPQ). The questionnaire had restricted response options of always (A), often (O), Rarely (R), never (N), strongly agree (SA), agree (A) disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively.The instruments were validated by three experts from the department of Science and Environmental Education, University of Abuja. Mean was used to answer the research questions. Independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Mean Responses of Teachers and Students on Modern Security Strategies(N = 224)

S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{x}_1$	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_1	SD_2	Decision
1	Modern video surveillance systems	3.54	3.21	0.93	1.24	Agree
2	Advanced access control and locking systems	3.35	3.12	1.05	1.30	Agree
3	Panic bottoms, alarms, and integrated systems	3.48	3.33	0.85	1.09	Agree
4	Environmental sensors for proactive safety	2.85	2.82	1.01	1.15	Agree
5	Communication devices for coordination	2.54	2.59	1.12	1.22	Agree
5	Communication devices for coordination	2.74	2.74	1.00	1.14	Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.08**	**2.97**	**0.99**	**1.19**	

$\bar{x}_1$= Mean of teachers, $\bar{x}_2$= Mean of students, SD_1= Standard deviation teachers, SD_2= standard deviation of students
Source: Field Survey, 2025

The result in Table 1 shows that all the 6 items had their teachers' mean values ranged from 2.54 to 3.54 with a gran mean value of 3.08 while the mean values of students on the 6 items ranged from 2.59 to 3.33 with a grand mean value of 2.97 respectively. These were above the benchmark of 2.50. This indicates that the respondents agreed that the 6 items are the modern security strategies used by schools.

Table 2: Mean Responses of Teachers and Students on Influence of Principal's Security strategies on the Academic Performance of Secondary School Students (N = 224)

S/N	Item Statement	$\bar{x}_1$	$\bar{x}_2$	SD_1	SD_2	Decision
1	Good school security strategies creating a safe and conducive learning environment	3.49	3.46	0.84	1.07	Agree
2	Students feel secured and concentrate more on studies	3.54	3.58	0.86	1.02	Agree
3	Teachers focus more on their studies	3.68	3.53	0.70	0.93	Agree
4	Students show active participation in class	3.21	3.32	1.05	1.18	Agree
5	Inadequate security can disrupt learning	3.45	3.53	0.73	0.76	Agree
6	Good security strategies reduce stress and anxiety among students	3.24	3.49	1.04	1.02	Agree
7	Good security strategies impact students' well-being	3.48	3.48	0.84	0.99	Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.44**	**3.49**	**0.86**	**0.99**	

$\bar{x}_1$= Mean of teachers, $\bar{x}_2$= Mean of students, SD_1= Standard deviation teachers, SD_2= standard deviation of students
Source: Field Survey, 2025

The result in Table 2 shows that all the 7 items had their teachers' mean values ranged from 3.21 to 3.68 with a gran mean value of 3.44 while the mean values of students on the 7 items ranged from 3.32 to 3.49 with a grand mean value of 3.49 respectively. These were above the benchmark of 2.50. This means thatsecurity strategies influence academic performance of secondary schools students.

Table 3: Mean Responses of Teachers and Students on the Level of Adoption of Security strategies by Secondary School Principals (N = 224)

S/N	Item Statement	X1	X2	SD1	SD2	Decision
1	Modern video surveillance systems	2.33	2.25	0.07	1.21	Low
2	Advanced access control and locking systems	2.28	2.29	1.00	0.90	Low
3	Panic bottoms, alarms, and integrated systems	2.44	2.42	1.01	1.22	Low
4	Environmental sensors for proactive safety	2.37	2.31	1.40	0.02	Low
5	Communication devices for coordination	2.29	2.23	0.11	1.65	Low
6	Flexible classroom devices for safety and learning	2.13	2.11	0.23	0.10	Low
	Grand Mean	**2.31**	**2.27**	**0.64**	**0.85**	

$\bar{x}_1$= Mean of teachers, $\bar{x}_2$= Mean of students, SD_1= Standard deviation teachers, SD_2= standard deviation of students
Source: Field Survey, 2025

The result in Table 3 shows that all the 6 items had their teachers' mean values ranged from 2.13 to 3.68 with a gran mean value of 3.44 while the mean values of students on the 7 items ranged from 2.11 to 2.42 with a grand mean value of 2.27 respectively. These were below the benchmark of 2.50. This implies that the extent of adoption security strategies by secondary schools principals in Gwagwalada Area Council of the FTC Abuja is low.

Table 4: t-test Result on the Modern Security Strategies in Secondary Schools

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.179	.141	1.071	222	.285	.11605	.10834	-.09747	.32956
Equal variances not assumed			1.097	217.232	.274	.11605	.10576	-.09240	.32449

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Result presented in Table 4 shows a t-value of 0.285 at 0.05 level of significance. The result is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the on the modern strategies used for curbing security challenges secondary schools is accepted. This means thatthere are modern strategies for curbing security challenges secondary schools.

Table 5: t-test Result on the Influence of Security Strategies in Secondary Schoolson Academic Performance of Secondary School Students

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	.458	.499	-.638	222	.524	-.04895	.07676	-.20022	.10233
Equal variances not assumed			-.640	205.561	.523	-.04895	.07646	-.19969	.10180

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Result presented in Table 5 shows a t-value of 0.524 at 0.05 level of significance. The result is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the influence of principal's security strategies on the academic performance of secondary school students in FCT Abujais accepted. This implies that principal's security strategies influence academic performance of secondary school students in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja.

Table 6: t-test Result on the Extent of Adoption of Security Strategies by Secondary Schools

	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
								95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	2.709	.101	-1.295	222	.197	-.10919	.08433	-.27539	.05701
Equal variances not assumed			-1.321	215.449	.188	-.10919	.08264	-.27208	.05370

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Result presented in Table 6 shows a t-value of 0.197 at 0.05 level of significance. The result is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the extent of adoption of modern security strategies in the FCT Abuja is accepted. This indicates that the two groups of respondents significantly differ in their responses on the extent of adoption of modern security strategies by secondary school principals in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja is low.

Discussion of Findings

Findings on the types of modern strategies used for curbing security challenges secondary schools revealed that modern video surveillance systems; advanced access control and locking systems; panic bottoms, alarms, and integrated systems; environmental sensors for proactive safety; communication devices for coordination; and flexible classroom devices for safety and learning. Test of hypothesis one also revealed no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the on the modern strategies used for curbing security challenges secondary schools. The findings agree with Ukamaka (2024) found that the extent to which principals apply staff training, use of video surveillance cameras, physical access control, radio and alarm systems and computer assisted programmes as security management practices.

The findings on the influence of principal's security strategies on the academic performance of secondary school students revealed that good school security strategies creating a safe and conducive learning environment; students feel secured and concentrate more on studies and show active participation in class. Test of hypothesis two revealed no significant difference in the mean responses of teachers and students on the influence of principal's security strategies on the academic performance of secondary school students. the findings affirms a report by Ramzan, Taira, Zaaidi and Naseem (2024) which found a positive effect of security measures on teachers' motivation and performance, which in turn had a direct impact on student learning.

The finding revealed that the extent of adoption of modern security strategies by secondary school principals in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja is low. The findings agrees with Onuorah, Eziamaka and Ofojebe (2020) who found that principals utilized technological security management practices for curbing security threats in secondary schools at a very low extent. It was also revealed that male and female principals in rural and urban public secondary schools did not differ in their opinion on the extent they apply technological security management practices in public secondary schools

Conclusion

In every school setting, a conducive environment foster smooth running of teaching and learning activities. This stud has established that modern strategies are available for curbing security challenges in all schools. The study found that security strategies influence students' academic performance. The study concludes that adoption of security strategies by secondary school in Gwagwalada Area Council of FCT Abuja is low.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The principals of secondary schools in the FCT Abuja should establish modern strategies that assure security of school environment
2. Since security is one of the influential factor for enhancing students' academic performance, principals should ensure that adequate security measures are made available
3. Secondary school principals should adopt and ensure high utilization of security strategies in their various schools.

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