INSECURITY AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICE DELIVERY IN NIGERIA: OKIGWE SENATORIAL ZONE EXPERIENCE (2015-2023)

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Abstract: *This paper explored the effect of insecurity on social service delivery in public secondary schools in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022). Precisely, it examined how insecurity has affected the provision of educational infrastructures, access to quality education, and the staff's income in the zone. It was guided by fragile state theory and adopted a historical research design. The sample size was 40 interviewees, derived using Hagaman and Wutich's data saturation method. Its data collection instrument was interviews. The primary data source was from a field survey, while secondary data sources included journals, books, periodicals, and the Internet. It used simple percentages to present the data and content analysis to analyse it. The findings showed that insecurity hurt educational service delivery in Okigwe Senatorial Zone between 2015 and 2022, as it significantly hindered the provision of educational infrastructure, restricted access to quality education, and reduced staff income. Hence, this study recommends that the government provide adequate school security, help displaced students enrol in new schools, and grant financial respite to displaced teachers.*

Introduction

Insecurity is a global phenomenon, subsisting as a significant irritating feature of contemporary society. The veracity of the above assertion is discernible from media, interpersonal, and group interactions and engagements. For instance, in October 2023, three major armed groups resumed clashes with the government of Myanmar, subjecting 18.6 million people to humanitarian crises (Emergency Watchlist, 2024). Besides, the Russian invasion of Ukraine,

labelled by the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR) as the fastest and greatest displacement crisis in decades, is another current global security concern (Watchlist, 2023). The same applies to Hamas's October 7, 2023, invasion of Israel, involving the death of 1200 individuals, the abduction of 200 people from Israel, and the corresponding reprisal attack by Israel in which about 56,000 Palestinians lost their lives, as claimed by the Palestinian health authority (Palestinian health

authority says the death toll from Israel-Hamas war has exceeded 56,000 in Gaza, 2025). Following the Israel-Hamas conflict were the Israel-Iran 12-day war, the Israel-Houthis, and the Israel-Hezbollah conflicts, respectively. The horrific killing of 15 worshippers in a Catholic church in Northern Burkina Faso by terrorist groups is another instance of a spate of global insecurity (Atemanke, 2024). Nigeria is not exempt from this wave of insecurity.

Presently, in Nigeria, it is no longer news that daily, the nation's media are awash with incidences and indicators of security breaches such as kidnapping for ransom or ritual, armed struggle for political independence, oil bunkering, pipeline vandalisation, communal clashes, armed robbery, students' riot, and armed struggles between union members, etc. (Ogunode et al. 2023; Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbuogu, 2019). Their occurrence is widespread, cutting across almost every nook and cranny of Nigerian society, such as in the Southeast, making Nigeria a nation sitting on a powder keg.

Okigwe Senatorial Zone (comprising six local governments: Okigwe, Onuimo, Isiala-Mbano, Ehime, Ihitte-Uboma, and Obowo) provides a snapshot of insecurity in Southeast Nigeria. The spate of insecurity currently prevalent in this zone embodies kidnapping, killing, burning of houses and schools, stealing, displacement of people from their homes and economic base, closure of some churches, etc. For instance, on December 12, 2022, there was plundering and burning of the houses of some Aku-Ihube residents on account of the abduction of a female army officer (James, 2023).

Given the above scenario, this study focuses on how insecurity affected social service delivery in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone. The stress is necessitated by the fact, as verified through the literature review, that no existing literature exists on the subject matter, creating a knowledge gap that requires scholarly attention. For instance, several existing studies have demonstrated that insecurity has negatively impacted service delivery in public secondary schools (Odey, 2019; Madu & Ojiri, 2021; Consults, 2022). However, none of the existing studies have focused on how insecurity has affected the provision of educational infrastructure, access to quality education, and staff income in the zone.

Objectives of the study

This study's general or broad objective is to ascertain the effect of insecurity on the delivery of educational services in the public secondary schools in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022). Specifically, this study is to:

i. Examines how insecurity has affected the provision of educational infrastructures in the zone.

ii. Explores how insecurity has affected access to quality education in the zone.

iii. Investigates how insecurity has affected staff's income in the zone.

2.5 Hypotheses

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This study considers the following hypotheses, presented in null form, as roadmaps:

i. Insecurity did not impede the provision of educational infrastructures in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022).

ii. Insecurity did not hinder access to quality education in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022).

iii. Insecurity did not impede staff's income in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022).

Literature review

A proper understanding of this study requires a clear understanding of the concept of security before exploring the concept of insecurity. According to Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbuogu (2019), security is a condition in which citizens are free from threats to their lives and means of sustenance, free from bodily harm, diseases, unemployment, and human rights violations, wherever they may be within a sovereign nation. According to Zubairu (2020), humans typically conceive of security as safety or protection from harm and risk. So, security means the active presence of every safeguard against damage or danger. In contrast, insecurity is characterised by a state of fear, anxiety, restlessness, and uncertainty stemming from the actions of disgruntled and greedy politicians, militants, and the Boko Haram sect (Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbuogu, 2019). Hence, insecurity means the absence of every safeguard against harm or risk. Udoh (2015) and Adams et al. (2021) identified eleven causes of insecurity in Nigeria: porous borders, the proliferation of arms and ammunition, illegal armed groups, oil bunkering, labour activists, kidnapping, militancy, fear and distrust in government, unemployment, religious fanaticism/extremism, and wrong political ambition. On their part, Ogunode et al. (2023) discussed forms of insecurity along Nigeria's six geopolitical zones.

Another term requiring explication is social service delivery. According to Nwoba (2015), social services are official services that benefit individuals, groups, or communities through governmental or non-governmental agencies, helping them cope with social problems, improve their individual and collective welfare, and attain justification outside the free-market mechanism. Likewise, Ngohengo (2022) viewed it as a group of government services that provide support and assistance to specific groups, particularly people experiencing poverty. What follows is the clarification of the concept of educational service delivery.

The National Policy on Education (2004) is among the works on educational services delivery. The policy states that educational services delivery aims to:

 i. Develop, evaluate, and advance educational programmes;

ii. Improve teaching and advance teachers' competence,

iii. Enrich children's learning experiences,

iv. Reduce education costs,

v. Encourage on-the-job education, and

vi. Develop and encourage effective use of innovative teaching aids.

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Nwaoku & Nwosu (n.d.) identified many challenges confronting educational service delivery, such as:

i. Inadequate planning and projections,

ii. Lack of adequate machinery,

iii. Lack of ability to obtain financial assistance from stakeholders,

iv. The inability of policymakers to break the educational services into workable units or phases,

v. Political appointees formulating policies without the knowledge of the administration,

vi. Non-involvement of professional associations in education in the formulation and execution of policy statements, and

vii. Inadequate planned funding system for educational service providers.

Other studies have shown that insecurity hurts social service delivery. For instance, Ojukwu (2017) studied the effect of insecurity in the school environment on the academic performance of secondary school students in Imo State and showed that school environment insecurity significantly affects the academic performance of secondary school students. Besides, the paper lists factors that constituted insecurity of the school environment, including students' gangsterism, smoking of Indian hemp, abusing other hard drugs, cult and related violent activities. Likewise, Odey (2019) investigated the relationship between insecurity and the delivery of educational services in Cross River State, finding a negative correlation between insecurity and the government's provision of educational services in the state.

Madu & Ojiri (2021) investigated the creation of a safe school environment for effective school service delivery at the secondary level of education in Imo State. The findings showed that insurgency attacks, acts of terrorism, kidnapping for ransom, cult activities, robbery by unknown gunmen, attacks by ritual killers, and Fulani herder menace are the security challenges that necessitate an adequate, safe school environment for effective school service delivery at the secondary education level. In a related development, Adams et al. (2021) examined the effects of insecurity on the Nigerian secondary school system. They discovered that insecurity hurts Nigerian secondary schools, posing a long-term threat to the quality of the labour force and human capital necessary for a sustainable economy.

Ukozor et al. (2022) researched the implications of insecurity on the administration of educational institutions in Southeastern Nigeria. The findings show that insecurity leads to an unstable academic calendar, disruption of programme implementation, learning programmes, suspension of examinations, brain drain, reduction in the number of teachers, low investment in education, suspension of extracurricular activities, and reduction in education financing.

Obilo et al (2022) studied curriculum delivery and security challenges in tertiary education in Southeast Nigeria from a counselling

perspective. The findings showed that security challenges against effective and efficient curriculum delivery in tertiary education in the Southeast include political repression, corruption, physical violence, persistent poverty, etc. It also portrayed the effect of security challenges, including loss of lives and humanity, closure of schools, risks, molestation, etc.

Consults (2022) studied the relationship between insecurity and education service delivery in secondary schools in Mogadishu, Somalia. The findings showed a high level of insecurity in the zone and a low level of educational service delivery. Hence, it revealed a negative relationship between insecurity and educational service delivery. The paper called for a reduction in clan-based politics, education funding, and improved education policy. Similarly, Eduok et al. (2023) examined various forms of insecurity and their impact on curriculum delivery in basic education, finding that insecurity hurts curriculum delivery in this context.

Wanjara & Ogembo (2024) researched the nature, causes, and effects of insecurity on educational delivery in public schools in the North Eastern and North Rift of Kenya. The findings showed that livestock rustling and terrorist attacks from Al-Shabaab are major causes of insecurity. It also indicated that mass exodus of teachers, low school attendance, and school closures are effects of insecurity.

Remarkably, none of the studies mentioned above or similar ones investigated insecurity and social service delivery in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone. It implies that a knowledge gap exists regarding how insecurity affects social service delivery in the zone, subsequently validating the necessity for this study.

2.2 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework for this study is the fragile state theory, which dates back to the early 2000s. Fragile state theory is a product of discussions among international organisations, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It holds that the central failure of the state to play the role necessary to meet citizens' basic needs and expectations weakens and exposes the citizenry along with five clusters of fragility indicators: violence, lack of access to justice for all, ineffective, unaccountable, and exclusive institutions; economic exclusion and instability; and inability to prevent and adjust to socioeconomic and environmental shocks and disasters (Mcloughlin & Idris, 2016).

2.2.2 Basic tenets of fragile state theory

The fragile state theory embodies the following assumptions:

- The survival of any state depends on its capacity, structure, and authority.

- Insecurity constitutes its primary indicator.

- Its capacity for service delivery determines its dynamism.

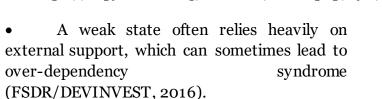- A weak aspect of a state can lead to the weakening of other weak elements.

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- A weak state often relies heavily on external support, which can sometimes lead to over-dependency syndrome (FSDR/DEVINVEST, 2016).

However, Nay (2013) critiqued the concept of fragile and failed states, considering it to be a confusing, inherently superficial, and unstable policy-oriented label. Despite the criticisms, the theory applies to this study, as it offers a strong insight into the interplay between insecurity and the failure of educational service delivery in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022).

Research methodology

This study employed a qualitative survey research design, with a study population of 32,312, comprising the staff of the post-primary education board, as well as staff and students of public secondary schools in the zone. The sample size was 40 interviewees, derived using Hagaman & Wutich's (2017) data saturation method. The study's primary data source was a field survey, while its secondary sources were books, journals, and the Internet. The data collection instrument was interviews. Finally, the study used simple percentages to present its data and content analysis to analyse them.

Data Presentation, Findings, and Discussion

This section presents the data and discusses the findings in relation to the three research hypotheses. Thus, it suffices to examine them per hypothesis.

3.1.1 Hypothesis one: Insecurity did not impede the provision of educational infrastructures in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022)

Infrastructure refers to the primary structures and facilities, such as buildings, transportation, water, energy sources, and administrative systems, that ensure the efficient operation of a country or organisation, such as a school (Maiyeri et al., 2022). Providing educational infrastructure is one of the key services that the government delivers to the education sector. Educational infrastructure is critical to effective teaching and learning. Maiyeri et al. (2022) stressed that it is the basis for quality education. Likewise, Barrett (2019) emphasised that numerous non-experimental studies suggest that investments in quality school infrastructure are strongly linked to improved learning outcomes, even after controlling for students' socioeconomic backgrounds and other relevant covariates. Hence, designing educational infrastructure towards effective teaching and learning is crucial. Unfortunately, as Obeza (2023) noted, inadequate educational infrastructure and a lack of learning materials, stemming from poor funding, are among the challenges facing the education sector in Nigeria. Ogunode et al. (2021) noted that educational infrastructure is also plagued by insecurity.

Therefore, this study sought to know from the staff and students of public secondary schools and staff of the Post-Primary Education Board in the zone whether insecurity affected educational
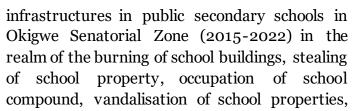
infrastructures in public secondary schools in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022) in the realm of the burning of school buildings, stealing of school property, occupation of school compound, vandalisation of school properties, preventing maintenance of school buildings, preventing renovation of destroyed buildings, and preventing building of new structure. Table 1 below presents the statistical results of their responses to the above variables.

Table 1: Impact of insecurity on the provision of educational infrastructures in the zone

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Burning of six secondary school buildings	8	20
2	Stealing school property	6	15
3	Vandalisation of school properties	5	12.5
4	Occupation of the school compound	6	15
5	Preventing maintenance of school buildings	5	12.5
6	Preventing the renovation of destroyed buildings	4	10
7	Preventing the building of new structures	6	15
	TOTAL	**40**	**100**

Source: Field survey

Table 1 above shows that 8(20%) interviewees admitted that insecurity led to the burning of six secondary school buildings: Umuowaibu Secondary Technical School, Umulolo Boys and Girls School, Ihube Community Secondary School, Aku Community Secondary, Agbaobu Community Secondary, and Umuowaibu Secondary Technical School. Likewise, 6(15%) interviewees agreed that it resulted in stealing school property. Additionally, 5 (12.5%) interviewees reported that insecurity led to the occupation or seizure of school compounds by perpetrators of insecurity in the zone, while 5 (12.5%) affirmed that it prevented the maintenance of school buildings in the zone. At the same time, 4 (10%) interviewees insisted that insecurity prevented government efforts to renovate destroyed buildings, while 6 (15%) said that it prevented them from building new structures.

Therefore, the findings from the above data presentation enable the researcher to address the first research hypothesis, thus: Insecurity impeded the provision of educational infrastructures in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022), given that it has led to the burning and vandalisation of some public secondary schools, and prevented the building of new ones. Offering a reason for the vandalism, R1 notes, "Many public secondary schools in my area have no security personnel guiding them. Their school property is only at the mercy of thieves, who have stolen almost all the school laboratory

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equipment, computers, classroom seats, internet facilities, and school plants" (personal communication, June 25, 2025). In a related development, R3 observes: "Given the security situation in my school, our school management decided to safeguard some of the school properties in private homes" (personal communication, June 20, 2025). It implies that the menace of insecurity on school infrastructures is further exacerbated by the absence of security personnel, who should be part of the school's staff. Hence, their absence provides thieves with the desired haven for executing their heinous activities in schools.

The above findings imply a rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of its alternative. Thus, insecurity has adversely affected the provision of educational infrastructure in the zone, as development is often the first thing to suffer when peace eludes a place. Insecurity also hindered efforts to rebuild the ruined structures, as the presence of government forces in the affected communities evoked and provoked further devastation. Confirming this, R2 notes: "Given the tension between government and the perpetrators of insecurity, the government has not revealed a plan to rebuild damaged infrastructure" (personal communication, July 18, 2025). It means that there is no proximate prospect of rebuilding the ruined or damaged school infrastructures due to the fear that perpetrators of the insecurity may destroy them again, and even kill the government contractors.

The findings corroborate Odey's (2019) portrayal of a negative relationship between insecurity and the government's provision of educational services. Likewise, it validates Ogunode et al. (2021), who affirmed that insecurity destroys educational infrastructures. Besides, the findings confirm the fragile state theory, which holds that state's failures to play essential roles towards citizens' primary needs and expectations weakens and exposes them along with five clusters of fragility indicators: violence, lack of access to justice for all, ineffective, unaccountable, and exclusive institutions; economic exclusion and instability; and inability to prevent and adjust to socioeconomic and environmental shocks and disasters (Mcloughlin & Idris, 2016).

3.1.2 Hypothesis two: Insecurity did not hinder access to quality education in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022).

The fundamental goal of every government's educational involvement is to ensure quality education through effective teaching and learning. According to Coombs (1985), traditionally, the quality of education is concerned with student learning achievements in relation to the traditional curriculum and standards. He also described it as referring to the importance of what is taught and learned, as well as its appropriateness to the present and future learning needs of the learners in question, given their particular circumstances and prospects. Besides, he noted that it concerns noteworthy alterations in the educational system or subsystem, like its inputs, objectives, curriculum, educational technologies, and socioeconomic, cultural, and political environment. Hassan & Wekesa (2017) noted that

educational quality should truly address what is learned and how it is learned, meaning that learners should acquire the right knowledge and do so effectively.

The Federal Government of Nigeria established the Universal Basic Education Programme in 1999 as an education reform initiative to provide greater access to and improve the quality of basic education throughout Nigeria (Dipeolu & Alli-Balogun, 2024). The Federal Government also established the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) to support tertiary institutions in their development of educational infrastructure and research. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM, 2014) observed that the need for quality education in Nigeria necessitates the inclusion of education in the concurrent list, with local, state, and federal authorities controlling primary, secondary, and tertiary institutions, respectively. Despite the above specifications, IOM (2014) emphasised that one expects the federal government to support state and local governments in providing counterpart funding to enhance the country's educational quality.

However, there are many challenges to actualising good access, equity, and quality education in Nigeria (IOM, 2014). They include a lack of teachers and insecurity (IOM, 2014; Ukozor et al., 2022). Ogunode et al. (2021) portrayed the impact of insecurity in school administration in Nigeria to encompass loss of workforce in educational institutions, poor quality of education, increase in educational spending, destruction of infrastructural facilities, brain-drain, closure of academic institutions, educational wastages, discouragement of educational pursuit by children, encouragement of foreign education, and internal displacement of learners.

Hence, this study sought to ascertain from the staff and students of public secondary schools and the Post-Primary Education Board staff in the zone whether insecurity affected the quality of education in public secondary schools in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022). Specifically, it explores whether insecurity led to the closure of some public schools, altered academic programmes, led to lateness to school, discouraged prep, prevented students from engaging in science practicals, prevented access to study materials in schools, failed to cover their academic syllabus, led to difficulty concentrating in class, poor supervision, and led to ineffective teaching and learning. Table 2 below presents the statistical results of their responses to the above variables.

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Table 2: Impact of insecurity on the provision of quality education in the zone

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Closure of six public schools	4	10
2	Altered academic programmes	3	7.5
3	Withdrawal of children from school	3	7.5
4	Lateness at school	4	10
5	Discouraged prep attendance	2	5
6	Non-access to science practicals	4	10
7	Non-access to study materials in schools	3	7.5
8	Failure to cover their academic syllabus	4	10
9	Difficulty concentrating in class	3	7.5
10	Poor school supervision	**5**	12.5
11	Ineffective teaching and learning	**5**	12.5
	TOTAL	**40**	**100**

Source: Field survey

Table 2 above shows that 4 (10%) of the interviewees admitted that insecurity led to the closure of six schools in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022), the schools that were burnt down. Three (7.5%) stated that it altered academic programmes in the zone, while 3 (7.5%) affirmed that it led to the withdrawal of some children from the affected schools in the zone. Commenting on the above, R7 observes: "This withdrawal from the affected schools has depopulated some public secondary schools in the zone" (personal communication, August 26, 2025).

Also, Table 2 above indicates that 4 (10%) agreed that insecurity resulted in teachers' and students' lateness to school, while 2 (5%) admitted it discouraged students from attending prep after school. Likewise, 4 (10%) held that it prevented some schools from engaging in science practicals due to the vandalism of their laboratories, while 3 (7.5%) maintained that many teachers and students could no longer access study materials in school due to the vandalism of school libraries. For instance, given vandalism resulting from insecurity, students in the affected schools are limited to the theoretical aspects of their learning, as they can no longer access practical classes in physics, chemistry, biology, agricultural sciences, and computer studies. Besides, they no longer use internet-facilitated aspects of their learning.

Additionally, Table 2 above reveals that 4 (10%) insisted that teachers and students could no longer cover their academic syllabus due to alterations in the school programmes, given that
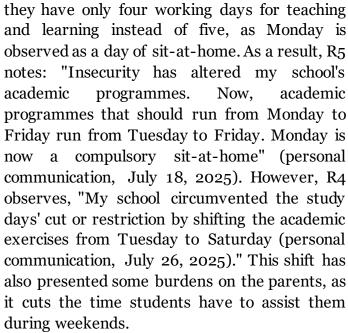
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they have only four working days for teaching and learning instead of five, as Monday is observed as a day of sit-at-home. As a result, R5 notes: "Insecurity has altered my school's academic programmes. Now, academic programmes that should run from Monday to Friday run from Tuesday to Friday. Monday is now a compulsory sit-at-home" (personal communication, July 18, 2025). However, R4 observes, "My school circumvented the study days' cut or restriction by shifting the academic exercises from Tuesday to Saturday (personal communication, July 26, 2025)." This shift has also presented some burdens on the parents, as it cuts the time students have to assist them during weekends.

Besides, Table 2 above shows 3(7.5%) sustained that teachers and students have difficulty concentrating in class, given the sporadic exchange of gunshots between security forces and presumably unknown gunmen along Enugu Portharcourt Express, etc. Five (12.5%) reported poor supervision from the staff of the Post-Primary Education Board in the zone, arising from fear of perpetrators of insecurity. Finally, 5(12.5%) argued that the security situation resulted in ineffective teaching and learning in the zone.

Hence, the findings above helped the research to address the second research hypothesis, thus: Insecurity hindered access to quality education in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022), as it led to:

- The closure of six public schools,
- Alteration of academic programmes,
- The withdrawal of children from school,
- Lateness at school,
- Non-prep attendance,
- Non-access to science practicals,
- Non-access to study materials in schools,
- Failure to cover their academic syllabus,
- Difficulty concentrating in class,
- Poor school supervision and
- Ineffective teaching and learning.

The above findings imply that the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted. Such is the case, given that it is impossible to have access to quality education in a situation where school structures are completely burnt and closed down, teachers rationalised, principals reposted, and students displaced and scattered. Access to quality education requires a secure and peaceful environment. Therefore, insecurity had a measurable effect on the accessibility of quality education in the zone.

The findings verify Ogunode et al. (2021), who strongly noted that insecurity results in poor quality education and the internal displacement of learners. The findings also verify Jacob et al. (2021), who strongly noted that insecurity results in the internal displacement of learners, making accessibility to quality education challenging. Furthermore, the findings support the fragile state theory, which demonstrates how poor governance in a state can lead to insecurity.

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3.1.3 Hypothesis three: Insecurity did not impede staff's income in the Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022)

Income represents a person's financial earnings from a given job or transaction. The money comes to a person from engaging in a business transaction or occupation. The income that staff or workers receive as a salary plays a crucial role in their subsequent input into the system. It could be a source of motivation or discouragement to the worker concerned. When the pay is low, staff or workers look for a second job to supplement their income and make ends meet. García & Weiss (2019) noted that this is why teachers are involved in moonlighting. Besides, it could lead to teacher turnover. Subsequently, Hadush & Katheriyar (2023) underscored that teacher turnover intention and its effect could be decreased by improving hygiene factors, such as income and working conditions. García & Weiss (2020) outlined specific proposals for addressing the teacher shortage, which include raising teacher pay to make the teaching profession attractive by:

• Improving teacher base pay across the board,

• Enacting higher increases to teacher base pay in high-poverty schools,

• Adequately funding pension benefits and eliminating obstacles to accessing them,

• Considering programmes that reduce the main financial loads that are obstacles to entering and remaining in the teaching profession.

• Admitting and taking measures to address other financial problems that arise when teachers in under-resourced schools must assume safety net roles.

Likewise, Nwaoku & Nwosu (n.d.) called for an adequately planned funding system for educational service providers, which is not limited to tutorial staff but also includes non-tutorial staff.

Apart from low pay, other challenges affect educational service providers, such as insecurity. Thus, it is crucial to inquire from the staff and students of public secondary schools and the Post-Primary Education Board staff in the zone if insecurity affected the staff's income in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022). This section aimed to determine whether insecurity had displaced them from their economic base, subjected them to individual displaced person camps, and presented relocation and income-related challenges, as well as transport-related difficulties, making it difficult for them to pay family medical bills, their children's school fees, and to feed their families. Table 3 below presents the statistical results of their responses to the above variables.

Impact of insecurity on the staff income in the zone

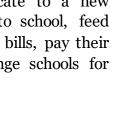| S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Displaced staff from their economic base	6	15
2	Rendered them internally displaced persons	5	12.5
3	Lacked the money to relocate to a new posting	4	10
4	Lacked the money to transport themselves to school	6	15
5	Lacked the money to feed their family	7	17.5
6	Inability to pay family medical bills	3	7.5
7	Inability to pay their children's school fees	5	12.5
8	Lack of money to change schools for their children	4	10
	TOTAL	**40**	**100**

Source: Field survey

Table 3 above indicates that 6(15%) interviewees admitted that insecurity displaced staff of public secondary schools in Okigwe Senatorial Zone from their economic base (2015-2022). Five (12.5%) sustained that it rendered them internally displaced persons who relied on others' financial support for sustenance. Four (10%) held that it impoverished them to the extent that they lacked the money to relocate to a new posting, while 6 (15%) agreed that they lacked the money to transport themselves to school due to the insecurity. Seven (17.5%) reported that they lacked money to feed their families due to insecurity, while 3 (7.5%) observed that they could not pay their family's medical bills. Additionally, 5 (12.5%) reported that they could not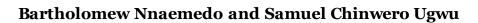 afford their children's school fees, while 4 (10%) stated that they lacked the funds to change schools for their children.

Hence, the findings above helped the researcher to address the third research hypothesis, thus: Insecurity impeded public secondary school staff's income in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022), as it made some of them:

• Be displaced from their economic base, rendering them internally displaced persons,

• Lack the funds to relocate to a new posting, transport themselves to school, feed their family, pay family medical bills, pay their children's school fees, and change schools for their children.

The above findings imply a rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of its alternative. The veracity of the above proposition rests on the fact that insecurity in the zone has displaced affected

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victims from their homes, schools, and diverse social and economic support systems, making it impossible to maintain income stability in such an insecure environment. For instance, one of the interviewees notes: "I find it difficult to go to my new duty posts given the distance involved and its financial implications" (personal communication, September 24 2025). Another interview observes: "The most annoying is that the government has not shown any commitment toward alleviating the plight of the affected staff and students" (personal communication, September 24, 2025).

The findings corroborate Amakiri (2023), who sees a negative correlation between insecurity and social and economic life, arguing that the former (insecurity) negatively affects the latter (social and economic life). Furthermore, the findings support the fragile state theory, which identifies insecurity as its primary indicator, accompanied by attendant financial impoverishment.

Summary

The findings showed that insecurity adversely affected educational service delivery in Okigwe Senatorial Zone (2015-2022). Specifically, insecurity:

Greatly impeded the provision of educational infrastructure in the zone.

Hindered access to quality education in the zone.

Greatly impeded staff income in the zone.

4.2 Conclusion

This study examined the impact of insecurity on social service delivery in public secondary schools in Okigwe Senatorial Zone between 2015 and 2023. Based on the fragile state theory and utilising interviews as a data collection instrument, this study has demonstrated that insecurity has hindered the provision of educational infrastructure, access to quality education, and staff income in the zone.

Although limitations, such as lack of funds, inaccessibility of some areas for interview conduction, and response bias, subsist, this study contributes to a better understanding of the phenomenon of insecurity, not only on social service delivery in public secondary schools, but on economic, political, health, and cultural life of the zone in particular and of the national in general. By doing so, it highlights in particular how insecurity is antithetical to education, creating an inclement atmosphere around children and challenging the teaching and learning process. By extension, this study further creates a clearer image of insecurity as a contemporary, unfortunate, and exasperating global phenomenon, drawing attention to its diverse manifestations, such as kidnapping, banditry, oil bunkering, assassination, thuggery, vandalism of properties, and displacement of people from their homes, to name but a few. Hence, it provides the government and other policymakers with material on the impact of insecurity on social service delivery in public secondary schools.

Furthermore, this study highlights that addressing the issue of insecurity extends beyond tackling its indicators. It stressed that

addressing its underlying triggers is central. Thus, this study reveals that any effective and efficient security measure should address the situation from its root (*sanatio in radice*) by tackling the social and political factors underlying insecurity. In the case of the Southeast geopolitical zone, the measures should necessarily include addressing the issue of marginalisation of the zone, the release of Nnamdi Kanu, provision of adequate security personnel to schools, engaging in community policing, embarking on dialogue with the concerned parties, and involving all stakeholders in education in the security matter.

4.3 Recommendations

Hence, apart from healing the issue from the root (*sanatio in radice*) through the resolution of marginalisation crises and the subsequent release of Nnamdi Kanu, this study further recommends that:

i. The government should provide adequate security in schools, encourage community policing, and involve all education stakeholders to enhance the provision and preservation of educational infrastructures. Additionally, the government should ensure that places considered safe havens for perpetrators of insecurity undergo rapid rural development to prevent their continuous presence there.

ii. The government should help displaced students enrol in new schools, offering them opportunities for sustained access to quality education. Besides, it should provide specialised training for teachers and staff to handle education in insecure environments.

iii. The government should grant financial aid to displaced teachers to enable them to relocate to their new settings.

4.4 Limitations of the study

This study has certain constraints. First, given the security situation of the area studied, the researcher could not access some places, especially the communities where schools were burnt down and closed. Hence, the researcher relied on data from interviewees. Second, the research encountered challenges using interviews as a data collection instrument, given that some interviewees were not cooperative due to fear. These respondents preferred the questionnaire to achieve anonymity.

However, these researchers bypassed the impasse above by utilising the services of three research assistants who had been well-briefed by them and were familiar with the area, helping them obtain the necessary data. Likewise, they circumvented the second stalemate by assuring the interviewees of the absolute confidentiality of the data they provided, resulting in the use of identification numbers in this study, designated with the alphabet R, standing for respondent or an interviewee. It is crucial to indicate that future researchers should use interviews and copies of the questionnaire for data collection.

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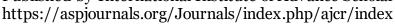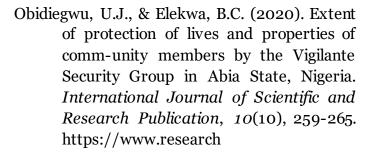
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