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EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATIVE APPROACHES FOR MANAGING SAFETY AND SECURITY IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ENUGU STATE

By

Jude, Azubuike Anyanwu, Ph.D
Department of Educational Management and Policy,
Nnamdi Azikiwe Univeristy, Awka
Ja.anyanwu@unizik.edu.ng +2348037526376

Peter, Uzochkwu., Obilor, Ph.D
Department of Educational Management and Policy
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Gladys, O. Chime, PhD
Department of Educational Management and Policy
Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Abstract
The study adopted survey research design to examine administrative approaches for improving safety and security management in public secondary schools in Enugu state. Two research questions guided the study and the population of the study is 295 principals of public secondary schools in Enugu State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 150 principals for the study. The researcher developed instrument titled Administrative Approaches for Improving Safety and Security Management in Secondary School Questionnaire (AAISSMSSQ) was used for data collection. It contained 20 items designed in two clusters on a 4-point scale. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The instrument's reliability was determined using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient which yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.80. Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions. The findings of the study showed that technology security systems approaches have not been deployed in the management of safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu state while physical securities infrastructure have been deployed for improving safety and security management in secondary schools in Enugu State. Based on the findings, it was concluded that there is need to integrate both technology and physical securities infrastructure in the management of safety and security in secondary schools in Enugu State. The study recommended that government should be proactive in the review and implementation of technology security systems in schools and also Schools Administrators should make adequate provisions of the basic security systems in their schools to ensure an improved safety and security of both students and staff.

Key words: Administrative, Approach, Safety, Security, Management, Secondary School

Introduction

School safety and security are first and foremost elements for achieving inestimable educational goals. This is the case because every other element depends on how safe and secure the school environment is. As a matter of fact safety and security have become of paramount concern in the modern educational landscape owning to the insecurity nature of the country. Since the advent of insurgency and banditry around the country by non-state actors leading to series of abductions of students, many schools are re-strategizing about the safety and security of their schools.

Away from this are the internal issues of safety among the students themselves where they bully and threaten one another. Researches and experiences have shown that in recent years, there has been a significant rise in school-related violence globally. This violence most of times are in form of physical altercations, bullying, vandalism, threat and, in extreme cases, shootings and killings. We can recall a disturbing online post of a group of students maltreating a fellow student in of one the secondary schools in the state which show cased a clear sense of an unsafe school. To this, the

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2019) reported that in the United States alone, a significant percentage of students in grades 9-12 have experienced some form of violence or bullying at school. Bullying manifests in a repeated aggressive behavior intended to harm or dominate others. In bullying, students inflict harm, suppress and intimidate others and instil fear thereby causing the vulnerable student a sense of severe shook or trauma leading to a feeling of unsafe and insecure in the school. These forms of aggression can severely impact students' mental health and academic performance. Therefore psychological aspect of school safety is an integral part of the safety protocol. This is because any student experiencing fear or trauma cannot fully be engaged the school.

Furthermore, School safety and security are the approaches, protocols, measures, policies, and practices designed to protect the material and immaterial elements of the school from potential and impending harm, as well as to create a conducive learning environment. School safety involves the overall protective architectural built into the school to combat violence, bullying, theft, and exposure to weapons and threats within and without. Security, on the other hand, includes the systems and protocols put in place to prevent and respond to threats and dangers. School safety includes emotional and psychological well-being of all stakeholders in the school. A safe school environment fosters a sense of belonging and support among students, which is crucial for their academic and social development. This safe environment is cultivated through positive relationships, devoid of discrimination and segregations, where equity, fair play, justice and rules and regulations are the guiding principles. It is a truism that when students feel safe, they are more likely to engage in learning and exhibit lower levels of anxiety and stress. Therefore, to ensure a restoration of safety in the school, it requires a whole-school approach that includes clear policies, staff training, student education, involvement of parents and the community agencies.

Safety and security management is one of the primary responsibilities of a school administrator. According to Day (2019), effective school leadership is crucial in fostering a safe school climate. School administrators do this by developing security plans and implementing policies and procedures such as emergency preparedness, response protocols, and communication strategies that mitigate risks and promote a safe and conducive school environment. Cornell and Mayer (2020) emphasizes the importance of a comprehensive and holistic approach to school safety, to include integrating physical security, mental health support, and a positive school climate. Johnson (2019) points out that effective school safety plans involve collaboration with local law enforcement, mental health professionals, and community organizations. This collaborative approach ensures that schools are not isolated in their efforts and but can access broader resources and expertise. Therefore, mental health support services are integral part of the comprehensive school safety plans. These include access to counsellors, psychologists, and social workers who help address the emotional and psychological needs of students, thereby contributing to a safer school environment. Therefore, training and education for both staff and students are fundamental and essential components of school safety. Every staff of the school needs to be equipped with skills to identify and address potential threats as to foster a supportive school environment. Students, also, should be educated on safety practices and protocols of identifying and reporting activities of suspicious persons around the school. The National School Safety Center (NSSC, 2022) asserts that ongoing training helps create a culture of vigilance and preparedness, which is essential for preventing and managing incidents effectively. Safe and secure school environment is foundational for students to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Therefore, continuous efforts by school Administrators to enhance these aspects are essential for the well-being of all school stakeholders.

Administrative approaches for improving safety and security secondary schools involve personnel/physical infrastructure and technology. According to Trump (2021), these measures can include surveillance cameras, controlled access points, metal detectors, and security personnel. These tools aim to deter potential threats and allow for quick responses in case of emergencies. However, reliance on security hardware alone is insufficient, it requires a comprehensive approach that integrates physical security and technological security system deployment to tackle insecurity and ensure safety in school.

Technological Security System Deployment Approach

This is the application surveillance technological devices in the management of safety and security of an environment. Surveillance system deployment is the strategic installation and use of

surveillance technologies such as cameras, sensors, and monitoring software to observe, collect data, to track activities around an environment in order to ensure security and safety. Norris and Armstrong (2019) describe surveillance system deployment as the systematic application of technologies and processes aimed at observing, recording, and analyzing behavior and movements, primarily for purposes of social control, crime prevention, and regulatory enforcement. These descriptions emphasize the use of advanced and modern technology for monitoring and securing people and properties in both public and private places. According to Turner (2019), one of the primary advantages of these systems is their ability to deter criminal activities. The presence of visible cameras can discourage potential offenders from engaging in vandalism or theft, as the risk of being recorded and identified acts as a deterrent. Again Mazerolle (2019), highlight that surveillance can lead to a reduction in crime rates within monitored areas. But beyond deterrence, surveillance systems also enhance the ability to respond to incidents promptly. Real-time monitoring allows for immediate intervention on a noticed suspicious behavior. Piza (2019), opine that quick responses to security threats, such as unauthorized access or physical altercations, can prevent escalation and ensure a timely resolution. This capability can be crucial in schools and other formal organizations, where prompt actions are required to ensure a safer environment.

The deployment of surveillance systems in secondary schools has become an essential aspect of modern school safety and security management. The impact of these systems on enhancing school security can be profound, influencing both the perception of safety among students and staff and the practical measures taken to protect the school environment.

Surveillance systems, which typically include cameras, monitoring software, and access control systems, offer a range of benefits that contribute to a safer school environment. The integration of surveillance systems into school safety protocols also improves the overall security infrastructure. These systems enable detailed record-keeping, providing valuable evidence for investigations following security incidents. According to Wong (2015), this evidence can be instrumental in resolving disputes, identifying perpetrators, and implementing preventive measures. Moreover, the availability of recorded footage can aid in the analysis of security breaches and help in refining safety strategies.

The deployment of surveillance systems has implications for the relationship between students, staff, and the school administration. As we know, surveillance systems which are designed to enhance safety can also raise concerns on privacy. According to Norris and Armstrong (2019), the perception of constant monitoring can affect the trust and comfort levels of students and staff. Therefore there must be a balance between surveillance and privacy considerations so that this does not lead to an environment of undue scrutiny or anxiety. For an effective deployment of surveillance systems strategic planning is required. As noted by Ratcliffe (2019), strategic placement of cameras and integration with other security measures, such as alarms and access control systems, can maximize the effectiveness of the surveillance network. Furthermore, it is necessary to involve the staff, students and parents and indeed all other stakeholders in the planning process, this can help to address all concerns and ensure that the systems meet the specific needs of the school community.

The effectiveness of surveillance systems is contingent on proper maintenance and management. Regular checks and updates to the systems are necessary to ensure their optimal functionality. According to Gill and Sprigs (2005), maintenance issues, such as malfunctioning cameras or out-dated software, can undermine the effectiveness of surveillance systems and potentially compromise school security. The deployment strategy of surveillance systems in secondary schools has a significant impact on school safety and security management. The ability to deter crime, respond to incidents, and provide valuable evidence enhances the overall security environment.

Physical Securities Infrastructural Deployment Approach

This is the deployment of physical and personnel security facilities to provide safe and secure environment for students, teachers and other staff. Personnel management of the security infrastructure is the most critical in the system. Security guard deployment as "the strategic allocation and positioning of trained individuals to monitor, deter, and respond to potential security threats, ensuring the protection of assets, people, and information within a designated area. It is the organized placement of security staff based on an assessment of risk and operational needs, aimed at maintaining

safety, preventing unauthorized access, and addressing emergencies through coordinated and effective action.

The deployment of security personnel plays a crucial role in enhancing safety and security management in secondary schools. Effective strategies can significantly impact the overall safety environment, influencing both the perception of safety among students and the actual level of security within the school premises. A well-designed security personnel deployment strategy encompasses various aspects, including the strategic placement of security officers, the perimeter fencing and gate, security checks with attendance register, guidance counselling, psycho-social support system and the development of protocols for handling security incidents. The deployment strategy should be tailored to address the unique needs of the school environment, considering factors such as the size of the school, the local crime rate, and the specific security concerns of the institution. The strategic placement of security personnel within schools can greatly help in the prevention and management of security incidents. For instance, effective deployment can reduce the incidence of violence and vandalism by providing a visible security presence, which deters potential offenders (Eck & Madensen, 2023). This presence also reassures students and staff, contributing to a safer and more conducive learning environment.

The integration of physical securities infrastructural with security personnel deployment strategies can enhance overall school security. Cameras and other monitoring systems, when used in conjunction with trained security personnel, can improve the ability to detect and respond to security threats promptly (Wilson, 2022). The synergy between human oversight and technological support creates a robust security framework, capable of addressing a wide range of potential security issues. The development of clear protocols and procedures for handling security incidents is another critical component of an effective security personnel deployment strategy. Such protocols ensure that security personnel are well-prepared to manage emergencies, from minor disturbances to major crises (Green, 2022). Comprehensive training and regular drills for security staff, coupled with well-established communication channels, contribute to a swift and effective response to security incidents. The involvement of the broader school community in security planning can enhance the effectiveness of deployment strategies. Therefore, the collaboration between security personnel, school administrators, teachers, and parents helps in understanding the specific security needs and concerns of the school, leading to more tailored and effective security measures (Kropp & Wells, 2019). Engaging the community in security planning also fosters a sense of shared responsibility, which is vital for maintaining a secure school environment.

However, in many secondary schools in Enugu state today, there are safety and security challenges arising from the activities of students, non-state actors and local communities. Addressing these challenges requires a flexible approaches and ongoing evaluation of the security strategy to ensure insecurity is curtailed to the barest minimum to foster a safer environment for students and staff in the schools.

Statement of the problem

Every school organization thrives in a safe and secured environment where students and staff are free to express themselves for a conducive teaching and learning to occur. The Secondary Education Management Board of the Enugu state ensures that the security plan and protocols of the schools are put in place. By approving and providing standard security architecture for all secondary schools in the state. Security management meetings, workshops and seminars have been organized in the state to ensure that principals understood their duties in terms of safety and security in their schools. In many secondary schools in the state, safe school protocols and security talks have been organized to equip students to be security conscious in terms of identifying, reporting and maintaining of security issues. However, there are increasing incidents of violence, vandalism, bullying, altercations and other security breaches in public secondary schools which threaten the safety and well-being of students and staff. These have become very worrisome situations and have keep many people wondering if there are administrative approaches which principals have adopted for improving safety and security in secondary schools in Enugu state. It seems that there are no measures to address security issues in the schools. It is against this backdrop that this study is being carried out to find out the administrative approaches for improving school safety and security management in public secondary schools in Enugu state.

Purpose of the study:
The purpose of the study is to ascertain the effective administrative approaches for managing safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu state.
Specifically, the study sought to find out

1. The technological system deployment approaches for managing safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu State.
2. The physical securities infrastructural deployment approaches for managing safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu State.

Research Questions:
The following research questions guided the study,

1. What are the technological system deployment approaches for managing safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu State
2. Are there physical securities infrastructural deployment approaches for managing safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu State

Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a population of 295 principals in public secondary school in Enugu State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select 150 principals which is 50% of the population for the study. The researcher developed instrument titled Effective Administrative Approaches for Managing Safety and Security in Public Secondary Schools Questionnaire (EAAMSSPSSQ) which contained 20 items designed in two clusters on a 4-point scale of Strongly Agreed –SA (4), Agreed –D (3), Strongly Disagreed-SD (2) Disagreed-D (1). This was used as the instrument for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts, two from the Department of Educational Management and Policy and one from Measurement and Evaluation in the Department of Educational Foundations, all in the Faculty of Education, Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka. The instrument's reliability was determined by a pilot test carried out in Anambra state secondary schools. The instrument was administered to 30 principals of secondary schools. The data obtained were analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha coefficient which yielded an alpha coefficient of 0.80. The questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the aid of four research assistants. Out of the 150 copies administered 145 were retrieved and used for data analysis showing a 98% return rate. The data collected for the study were analyzed using a mean and standard deviation. The mean was used to answer the research questions while the standard deviation was used to ascertain the homogeneity of the respondent's rating. Any item whose mean score is above the mean benchmark of 2.50 was regarded as agreed while a mean score below the mean benchmark of 2.50 were considered as disagreed.

Results

Research Question 1

What are the technological system deployment approaches for managing safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu State

Table 1: Mean rating and Standard deviation scores of the technological system deployment approaches for managing safety and security management in public secondary schools in Enugu State

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
1	CCTV are mounted around the school compound	2.27	1.12	Disagreed
2	Burglar alarm systems are mounted in my school	1.03	0.93	Disagreed
3	Door access control systems are used in my school	2.05	1.11	Disagreed
4	There are fire alarm systems in my school	1.70	1.05	Disagreed
5	There are smoke detectors systems in the school	1.57	1.16	Disagreed

6	Vehicle plate number reader are installed at the school entrance	1.27	1.21	Disagreed
7	Desk panic buttons are installed at the security booth	2.05	1.17	Disagreed
8	Video management systems are used in the school	2.02	1.12	Disagreed
9	Intruder detection systems are amounted in the school	1.55	1.18	Disagreed
10	Metal detectors are used for screening at the school entrance	2.67	1.12	Agreed
	Grand Mean	**1.82**	**1.11**	**Disagreed**

Results presented in table1 showed that the mean scores of the respondents for all the items are below the mean decision level indicating disagreement to those approaches as security systems deployed in the school except in item 10 that it was indicated as agreed. The grand mean score of 1.82 is below the mean decision level which showed that technological security approaches have not been deployed for improving safety and security management in public secondary schools in Enugu State. Again the pooled standard deviation scores of 1.11 indicated a convergence of their responses implying that their responses are homogenous.

Research Question 2:
Are there physical securities infrastructural deployment approaches for managing safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu State

Table 2: Mean rating and Standard deviation scores of physical security infrastructural deployment approaches for managing safety and security public secondary schools in Enugu State

S/N	Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
11	My school has all round perimeter fence and iron gate	2.60	1.17	Agreed
12	My school employed uniformed security team	2.43	1.22	Disagreed
13	My school has secure playground for physical exercise	3.32	1.03	Agreed
14	Intercom system is utilized in the school.	2.38	1.10	Disagreed
15	Burglary proofs are mounted on the doors and windows	2.57	1.21	Agreed
16	Community vigilante supports the school security plan	2.50	1.25	Agreed
17	My school has a well-equipped first aid box	2.65	1.12	Agreed
18	In my school class attendance Register is marked twice daily	2.57	1.08	Agreed
19	There are adequate lighting system in the school at night	2.52	1.20	Agreed
20	Fire extinguishers are mounted strategically in the school	2.05	1.14	Disagreed
	Grand Mean	**2.56**	**1.15**	**Agreed**

Results presented in table 2 showed that the mean scores of the respondents for items 12, 14 and 20 are below the mean decision level indicating disagreement to those approaches as security approaches deployed in the school. However, in all the others items the respondents indicated agreement, meaning those issues are part of the approaches that have been deployed in their school to improve safety and security. Then with a grand mean score of 2.56 which is above the mean decision level which showed that physical infrastructural securities approaches have been adopted for improving safety and security management in public secondary schools in Enugu State. Again the pooled standard deviation scores of 1.15 indicate a convergence of their responses implying that their responses are homogenous.

Discussion:

The finding indicated that technological security systems have not been deployed for improving safety and security in public secondary schools in Enugu state. This finding is not in agreement with the study of Zara (2024) who opines that today's school security solutions leverage a combination of advanced surveillance technology, strategic funding and robust physical safeguards to build comprehensive protection for everyone on campus. Continuing, she said that according to 2023

State Security report, nearly 100% of the schools use at least one camera to maintain security. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) show that nearly 77.9% of primary schools, 91.5% of middle schools and 93. 6% of high schools use security cameras. This disagreement could be because of the geographical location and the variation in the level of development there in. Technology and Surveillance systems are crucial in deterring criminal activities and providing real-time monitoring of the school premises. The absence of surveillance cameras or monitoring systems increases the risk of security breaches, vandalism, and other forms of misconduct that may go unnoticed. Supporting this Eze and Igbokwe (2019), assert that schools that have installed surveillance systems report lower rates of theft, bullying, and unauthorized access to the premises. It is important to indicate that surveillance footage provides valuable evidence in the event of incidents, aiding in resolving disputes and addressing security threats. Again Idoko and Dasuma (2014) uphold that some technologies that can be provided in schools and outside the schools to deter intruders and promote safe school include CCTV cameras, padlocks, installation of alarms. Also Haruna and Liman (2015) agreed that installing CCTV in schools is a viable instrument to protecting and managing crimes. It is very important to state that surveillance and technological security system is very much important at this modern and digital era to be ahead of the most security challenges inherent in the school system. Many schools today that have deployed these technological security systems have overcome some kind of security threats in and around their school because with the presence of the security cameras activities are captured and recorded in real time and could help in the tracing the perpetrators.

Another finding of the study indicated that physical infrastructural securities approaches have been deployed for improving safety and security management in public secondary schools in Enugu State. This finding is support by Adewole and Aluko (2019) who observed that schools with trained security personnel have a higher likelihood of preventing violence and ensuring the overall safety of students. Also the findings of Adegboye (2022) revealed that effective security management was closely tied to active involvement from school administrators and community members. On the contrary, the findings of Ogunlade (2021) showed that many schools lacked adequate security infrastructure and that administrative strategy were often poorly executed for improving safety and security in secondary schools. To foster robust security architecture in the school requires a comprehensive training and regular drills for security staff, coupled with well-established communication channels, swift and effective response to security incidents. The involvement of the broader school community in security planning can enhance the effectiveness of deployment strategies. Kropp & Wells, (2019) observed that collaboration between security personnels, school administrators, teachers, and parents helps in understanding the specific security needs and concerns of the school, leading to more tailored and effective security measures. Engaging the community in security planning also fosters a sense of shared responsibility, which is vital for maintaining a secure school environment. Also Johnson (2019) points out that effective school safety plans involve collaboration with local law enforcement, mental health professionals, and community organizations. This collaborative approach ensures that schools are not isolated in their efforts and can access broader resources and expertise. Finally, Furlong, Morrison, and Pavelski (2020) argue that reliance on security hardware alone is insufficient. They advocate for comprehensive approaches that integrate physical security with efforts to build positive school climates and address the root causes of violence and misconduct in schools.

Conclusion

School safety and security are multifaceted concepts involving physical protection, psychological well-being of all member of the school community. School safety and security have become paramount concerns in the modern educational landscape. The increasing incidents of violence, bullying, vandalism abduction of students and other forms of delinquency in public secondary schools have necessitated administrative approaches to enhance school safety and security management. Effective approaches require an integration of technological and physical security measures, positive school climate initiatives, and comprehensive policies. Therefore, continuous efforts to enhance these approaches are essential for the well-being of all school stakeholders. The role of school administrators is critical in ensuring safety and security by the deployment of both technological and physical securities infrastructure

Recommendation

Based on the research findings and conclusions of this study, it is recommended that the State Government should review security polices in secondary schools and approve the implementation and deployment of surveillance technology security systems in all secondary schools in the State.

Schools Administrators should create a school climate that is peaceful, safe and secure for students and staff by providing the basic psycho-physical security infrastructure in their schools. This will provide the needed first hand safety and security in the school and support the academic development of the students.

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