RESEARCH ARTICLE

INSECURITY AND EMOTIONAL STABILITY OF NON-RESIDENTIAL UNDERGRADUATES IN OGUN STATE: A STUDY OF OLABISI ONABANJO UNIVERSITY, AGO-IWOYE

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ABSTRACT

Insecurity has wrecked much mayhem in several spheres of life, education sector included. This study investigated the effect of insecurity on the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates in Ogun State, with a keen focus on Olabisi Onabanjo University. It adopted descriptive research design and self-structured questionnaire as instrument of data collection. A total of 216 respondents were sampled with simple random sampling. Mean and standard deviation were adopted to analyse the data gathered. The finding revealed that insecurity in the study area was of different nature like theft and vandalism of students' properties, sexual harassment and assault like rape, kidnapping and abduction of students, bullying and violence by cult groups, among others. Also, the study discovered that substance abuse and alcoholism, greed, get-rich-quick syndrome, peer pressure, student's unionism related violence, some host communities' traditions and cultism caused insecurity in the study area. It further revealed that insecurity led to anxiety, depression, stress, emotional distress, critical medical conditions and at times resulted into premature death of undergraduates. The study concluded that insecurity fueled stress, depression and anxiety among students and caused social isolation or behavioural changes that hindered their emotional stability. It recommended, among others, that government should create special security architecture or units to implement, reinforce and oversees robust security measures within schools and students' residential areas. Universities should prioritise launching comprehensive emotional intelligence and emotional well-being programmes.

Keywords: emotion, emotional stability, insecurity, Ogun State, undergraduate.

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1.0. INTRODUCTION

Around the world, education is the foundation for national growth. For students to study and for professionals to transfer relevant knowledge to their students, a safe and supportive atmosphere is necessary for adequate and sustainable education (Anyaoga, 2016). But in recent years, security concerns have been a recurrent topic in Nigeria, affecting all aspects of daily life. The business, health and education sectors, among others, have been quite concerned about issues that border on security. Attacks on individuals, property and institutions of learning have become commonplace throughout the nation, with varying degrees of implications on various facets of daily life (Attahiru & Aliyu, 2020).

Students' learning is impacted by an unsafe school environment since insecurity is characterised by negative feelings like dread, anxiety, uncertainty and injustice (Akintunde & Musa, 2016; Hassan, 2014). Bullying, violence, theft and vandalism, substance misuse, cultist activity, sexual harassment and assault are some of the prevalent kinds of insecurity in residential areas of higher institutions of learning nationwide (Fahad & Faraj, 2020). Several factors such as attacks between cultist groups, kidnapping and abduction for ransom and rituals, violence and industrial activities of student, frequent rises and multitude of levies, among others are the key contributors of insecurity at Nigeria's higher institutions (Ogunbunmi & Olaoye, 2024) Consequently, students that are insecure experience dread, worry, despair and other undesirable feelings. Their capacity to concentrate on their academics and participate in constructive social relationships may be hampered by feelings of vulnerability, uncertainty and powerlessness. Students' academic performance might be adversely affected by emotional strain. Students may find it difficult to focus in class, finish tasks or do well on tests if they are distracted by their feelings or worries for their safety. Students' grades and general educational results may suffer as a result. The capacity of such students to establish and preserve healthy relationships with their teachers and peers may be impacted by feelings of insecurity and emotional discomfort. They might adjust their behaviour, retreat or become socially isolated. These elements may worsen their emotional health and impede their social and emotional growth (Abubakar *et al.*, 2022; Matsayi, 2023). Thus, against this background, this study examined the effect of insecurity on the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates in Ogun State, with a keen focus on Olabisi Onabanjo University.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

Every nation in the globe works hard to ensure a safe and conducive atmosphere for educational activities and advancement to thrive. For the staff and students to succeed, this requirement must be met. However, it appears that insecurity has persisted in threatening

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Nigeria's peace and well-being. It is believed that Nigeria's educational system is in a terrible and distressing state. This is due to insecurity, which is determined to harm the educational system's material and human resources. Due to insecurity, students' school attendance and academic performance has declined (Anyanwu *et al.*, 2023). Also, students' learning is impacted when they are in an unsafe learning environment. Instability causes toxic stress and traumatic disorders, which have a detrimental impact on learning and, in the worst situations, have resulted in school closures (Chukwurah, Igwe & Okeke, 2021; Akintunde & Musa, 2016). Although, the government and education stakeholders have taken a number of steps to reduce the high level of insecurity in the country's educational institutions, there are still sporadic reports of fatalities and property damage caused by these criminals' heedless actions in the residential areas of the higher institutions of learning, most especially in Ogun State (Kayode & Uthman, 2023). Therefore, this study examined the effect of insecurity on the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates in Ogun State, studying Olabisi Onabanjo University.

1.2. Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of insecurity on the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates in Ogun State, with a focus on Olabisi Onabanjo University. The specific objectives of the study are:

i.   To investigate the nature and causes of insecurity among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

ii.   To examine the effect of insecurity on the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

1.3. Research Questions

i.   What are the natures and causes of insecurity among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University?

ii.   How does insecurity affect the emotional stability on non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University?

2.0. LITERATURE REVIEW

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There have been disagreements on the meaning of the word "insecurity" and its many connotations, but it often referred to danger, hazard, uncertainty, lack of protection and lack of safety (Ndubuisi-Okolo & Anigbuogu, 2019; Orhero, 2020). In general parlance, insecurity is expressed as the lack of protection or resistance to harm, peaceful coexistence and overall progress (Obarisiagbon & Akintoye, 2019). Moreover, it manifests as a persistent danger to human life, lands, governments, religious convictions, assets and establishments, among other things (Obi, 2015; Ezemenaka, 2021). A situation or condition in which the existence of a problem takes on a critical dimension to the extent that the survival or existence of the social system or structure is put at risk is identified as insecurity (Olamosu, 2000, as cited in Ukozor et al, 2024).

A state of insecurity occurs when citizens of a country or community are not safe from crime or violence that threatens, damages, or disrupts their ability to make a living (Umar, 2022). Anxiety is a vague or gloomy uncomfortable feeling that is experienced in expectation of some calamity, while insecurity is the state of being vulnerable to risk or anxiety. This implies that those who experience insecurity are frequently apprehensive and susceptible to dangers and threats (Afu *et al.*, 2023). However, among other things, it has been observed that the lack of a thorough and widely distributed school security policy, the nonchalant attitude of certain school administrators toward security issues, and the failure of the school security guard to carry out their duties are the main causes of insecurity in schools (Manga, 2019; Innocent, Musa & Ogunode, 2021). The country's university education system is still in danger from insecurity to the point where it frustrates students, instructors, and the government, resulting in an unstable academic calendar in educational institutions (Ismaili & Oluwaseun, 2024) On the other hand, Emotional stability is defined as a human ability or personality trait that allows a person to remain composed under pressure, to have stable and balanced emotions, to continue being productive, to make intelligent decisions and assessments, and to continue being productive even in the face of adversity. When faced with a challenging circumstance in life, an emotionally stable person does not become easily agitated, nervous, or stressed. Also, when faced with everyday situations that could be stressful or cause anxiety in an emotionally unstable person, these people attempt to maintain emotional equilibrium (Nangru & Tripathi, 2023).

The capacity of an individual to preserve emotional equilibrium in the face of stress is known as emotional stability. It is the absence of abrupt mood swings and the predictability and constancy of emotional reactivity (Firmante, 2023). The ability to regulate emotional reactions guarantees consistency and situational awareness. It should be taken into consideration since it is the ability to control emotions under duress (Kumar & Bhukar, 2013). A person who is emotionally stable

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can create a comprehensive and well-rounded perspective on life's challenges. In the words of Hampson (2019), emotional stability is essential for having excellent mental health. A learner may experience negative psychological effects if they lack emotional control. Furthermore, emotional stability has been acknowledged and studied as a personality trait that reflects the human mind (Cattell & Schuerger, 2003, as cited in Firmante, 2023). Only in a supportive and tranquil school setting can education reach its objective (Ajabor & Ichazu, 2022). However, both teachers and students will be discouraged if there is insecurity both inside and outside of the school setting. Students' academic performance may be impacted by this. Exam stress, memory loss, hostility, exam malpractice, absent-mindedness, truancy, low attendance, loss of interest in school activities, poor academic achievement, and school dropout may all be influenced by insecurity. Undergraduate students' poor academic performance is a result of academic anxiety brought on by their dread of being abducted and killed (Ipem & Azubuike, 2022). Undergraduates' academic performance was significantly impacted by insecurity since it influenced their attendance at class and their exam scores (Ochigbo, Nwanshaki & Justinalere, 2021).

In addition, due to insecurity, schools have had to close, admit fewer students and alter their academic calendar and planned activities. Students' passion for school and academic pursuits has decreased as a result of fear of bombings, murders and kidnappings. Insecurity reduces faith in school boundaries and creates an unfavourable learning environment. As a result, the quality of educational outcomes has decreased (Ajabor & Ichazu, 2022; Anyanwu *et al.*, 2023). Furthermore, it is believed that among undergraduates, insecurity contributes to a wide range of mental health issues and personality disorders, including narcissism, depression, anxiety and paranoid personality (Stinson, 2011, as cited in Afu *et al.*, 2023).

3.0. METHOD AND MATERIALS

A descriptive research design was used in the study. The non-resident undergraduate students at Olabisi Onabanjo University in Ago-Iwoye, Ogun State, Nigeria, were the subjects of this study. 216 undergraduate non-residents were specifically chosen for the study through the use of a simple method of random sampling. The instrument used for data was a self-structured questionnaire named "Insecurity and Emotional Stability Questionnaire (IESQ)". Two copies of the draft questionnaire were given to two experts for additional review and revision in order to determine the questionnaire's content and face validity. This was done in order to determine whether the instrument was appropriate in terms of language, presentation, clarity and application. Twenty copies of the questionnaire were distributed to respondents outside the study area in order to determine the instrument's reliability. The instrument's reliability

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coefficient was determined to be 0.894. The mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics to code and analyse the acquired data.

4.0. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Data Presentation and Analysis

The mean and standard deviation were used to display the data. The decision rule is that a mean score of 2.0 or more was considered to indicate agreement, while a score of less than 2.0 indicated disagreement.

Research Question I: What are the natures and causes of insecurity among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University?

Table 1: Nature and causes of insecurity among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University

S/N	Issues Raised	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1	Theft and vandalism of students' properties are common among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	3.00	0.871	Agreed
2	Sexual harassment and assault like rape often occur in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.70	0.871	Agreed
3	Kidnapping and abduction of students are prevalent in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.48	0.734	Agreed
4	Gang (cult) activities like bullying and violence are commonly witnessed in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.84	0.932	Agreed
5	Substance abuse and alcoholism promotes insecurity in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.98	0.804	Agreed
6	Greed, get-rich-quick syndrome and peer pressure contribute to rate of insecurity in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	3.09	0.850	Agreed
7	Violence associated with student's unionism add to the security problems in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.94	0.827	Agreed

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8	Weak security nature and personnel create loopholes for insecurity in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	3.00	0.789	Agreed
9	Some host communities' culture and traditions create an insecure atmosphere for undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.98	0.917	Agreed
10	Attacks and counter-attacks between cultist groups and sects promotes insecurity for undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	3.01	0.830	Agreed
	Grand Mean		**2.90**		**Agreed**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 1 presents the responses of the respondents on the nature and causes of insecurity among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. The first item has the mean of 3.00 which implies the respondents' agreement that theft and vandalism of students' properties are common among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. Second item has the mean of 2.70 which implies the respondents' agreement that sexual harassment and assault like rape often occur in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University. Third item has the mean of 2.48 which denotes the respondents' agreement that kidnapping and abduction of students are prevalent in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University. Fourth item has the mean of 2.84 which denotes the respondents' agreement that gang (cult) activities like bullying and violence are commonly witnessed in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University.

Fifth item has the mean of 2.98 which signifies the respondents' agreement that substance abuse and alcoholism promotes insecurity in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University. Sixth item has the mean of 3.09 which implies the respondents' agreement that greed, get-rich-quick syndrome and peer pressure contribute to rate of insecurity in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University. Seventh item has the mean of 2.94 which implies the respondents' agreement that violence associated with student's unionism add to the security problems in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University. Eighth item has the mean of 3.00 which denotes the respondents' agreement that weak security nature and personnel create loopholes for insecurity in students' residential areas in Olabisi Onabanjo University.

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Ninth item has the mean of 2.98 which denotes the respondents' agreement that some host communities' culture and traditions create an insecure atmosphere for undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. The tenth item has the mean of 3.01 which signifies the respondents' agreement that attacks and counter-attacks between cultist groups and sects promotes insecurity for undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. Thus, the grand mean of 2.90 and the higher level of closeness of the standard deviations of the ten items in the table connotes that all the issues raised are the nature and causes of insecurity among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

Research Question II: How does insecurity affect the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University?

Table 2: Effects of insecurity on emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University

S/N	Issues Raised	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
1	Insecurity leads to anxiety, depression, stress, panic disorder or social phobia among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	3.20	0.725	Agreed
2	Insecurity enhances emotional distress that affect students' ability to form and maintain positive relationships with their peers and teachers	216	3.05	0.785	Agreed
3	Insecurity affects Olabisi Onabanjo University students' ability to concentrate in class, complete assignments or perform well in exams	216	3.17	0.774	Agreed
4	Insecurity creates a sense of helplessness, uncertainty and vulnerability, which hinders undergraduates to focus on their studies and engage in healthy social interactions in Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.96	0.779	Agreed
5	Insecurity results to unwanted pregnancy and early child bearing among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.73	0.843	Agreed

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6	Insecurity affects the self-esteem, self-worth and self-acceptance and promote alcoholism, substance misuse and cultism among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	3.00	0.728	Agreed
7	Insecurity triggers withdrawal, socially isolation or behavioural changes that hinder social and emotional development of undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	3.08	0.708	Agreed
8	Insecurity affects the personal growth and self-improvement of undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.92	0.701	Agreed
9	Insecurity lead to many drop-outs among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.77	0.829	Agreed
10	Insecurity causes critical medical conditions and premature death among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University	216	2.83	0.780	Agreed
	Grand Mean		**2.97**		**Agreed**

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 1 presents the responses of the respondents on the effects of insecurity on emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. The first item has the mean of 3.20 which implies the respondents' agreement that insecurity leads to anxiety, depression, stress, panic disorder or social phobia among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. Second item has the mean of 3.05 which implies the respondents' agreement that insecurity enhances emotional distress that affects students' ability to form and maintain positive relationships with their peers and teachers. Third item has the mean of 3.17 which denotes the respondents' agreement that insecurity affects Olabisi Onabanjo University students' ability to concentrate in class, complete assignments or perform well in exams. Fourth item has the mean of 2.96 which denotes the respondents' agreement that insecurity creates a sense of helplessness, uncertainty and vulnerability, which hinders undergraduates to focus on their studies and engage in healthy social interactions in Olabisi Onabanjo University.

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Fifth item has the mean of 2.73 which signifies the respondents' agreement that insecurity results to unwanted pregnancy and early child bearing among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. Sixth item has the mean of 3.00 which implies the respondents' agreement that insecurity affects the self-esteem, self-worth and self-acceptance and promote alcoholism, substance misuse and cultism among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. Seventh item has the mean of 3.08 which implies the respondents' agreement that insecurity triggers withdrawal, socially isolation or behavioural changes that hinder social and emotional development of undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. Eighth item has the mean of 2.92 which denotes the respondents' agreement that insecurity affects the personal growth and self-improvement of undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

Ninth item has the mean of 2.77 which denotes the respondents' agreement that insecurity lead to many drop-outs among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. The tenth item has the mean of 2.83 which signifies the respondents' agreement that insecurity causes critical medical conditions and premature death among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. Thus, the grand mean of 2.97 and the higher level of closeness of the standard deviations of the ten items in the table revealed that insecurity negatively affects the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University.

4.2. Discussion of Findings

The data obtained on the first objective of this study, which examined the nature and causes of insecurity among non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University revealed that there are different natures of insecurity in the non-residential undergraduates. The nature of insecurity in the study area include theft and vandalism of students' properties, sexual harassment and assault like rape, kidnapping and abduction of students, gang (cult) activity like bullying and violence, among others. Also, the data revealed that substance abuse and alcoholism, greed, get-rich-quick syndrome, peer pressure, violence associated with student's unionism, weak security nature and personnel, host communities' culture and traditions as well as attacks and counter-attacks between cultist groups and sects influenced insecurity in the non-residential

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undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. These finding is in agreement with the assertions of Ogunbunmi and Olaoye (2024) in their study found out that kidnapping and abduction, student violence and industrial actions and cultist groups' attack were the major nature and determinants of insecurity in Nigeria's tertiary institutions

The data obtained on the second objective of this study, which investigated the effects of insecurity on emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University revealed that insecurity led to anxiety, depression, stress, panic disorder or social phobia and emotional distress. It also created a sense of helplessness, uncertainty and vulnerability and affected students' self-esteem, self-worth, self-acceptance and promoted alcoholism, substance misuse and cultism. It equally caused critical medical conditions, unwanted pregnancy and early child bearing, drop-outs, socially isolation or behavioural changes that hinder social and emotional stability and at times resulted into premature death among undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. These findings complement the opinion of Anyanwu, Ipem, Eluemuno and Ogunsola (2023) asserted that insecurity influence students' anxiety and emotional behaviour of students in examination taking. Furthermore, these findings complement the assertion of Matsayi (2023) that students find it difficult to concentrate on their studies if they feel unsafe or insecure, which can lower their motivation, concentration and academic performance. A vicious cycle of stress and poor performance may result from this. Mental health conditions like depression, anxiety disorders, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) might be made more likely by prolonged insecurity.

5.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

Adequate security is the key to development of all sectors, including the education sector. However, the prevalence of security crisis of different dimension in the undergraduates' residential area across Nigeria calls for concern. Thus, this study examined the effect of insecurity on the emotional stability of non-residential undergraduates in Ogun State, with a keen focus on Olabisi Onabanjo University. It revealed that insecurity came in different nature like theft and

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vandalism of students' properties, sexual harassment and assault like rape, kidnapping and abduction of students, bullying and violence by cult groups, among others. Furthermore, substance abuse and alcoholism, greed, get-rich-quick syndrome, peer pressure, student's unionism related violence, some host communities' traditions and cultism, among others are identified as the causes of insecurity in the study area. The study revealed that insecurity led to anxiety, depression, stress, emotional distress, critical medical conditions and at times resulted into premature death of undergraduates of Olabisi Onabanjo University. The study concluded that insecurity resulted into stress, depression and anxiety among students and caused social isolation or behavioural changes that hindered their emotional balance. However, based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were offered:

i.   Government should create special security architecture or units to implement, reinforce and oversees robust security measures within schools and students' residential areas. This should be supported by proactive actions, intelligence gathering, surveillance and modern security technology to alleviate students' fears and create an environment conducive to learning.

ii.   Universities should prioritise launching comprehensive emotional intelligence and emotional well-being programmes, including stress management classes, counseling services and resilience-building exercises, to equip students with necessary tools for uncertainty management and enhancing their resilience in crisis situations.

iii. Government in conjunction with school management and host communities should make concerted efforts in prioritise and address insecurity around students' residential areas of higher institutions.

iv.   Parents, media, religious leaders and other stakeholders in education and society at large should instill positive attitudes, beliefs and values against over-glorification of money, get-rich-quick and joining bad company in Nigerian youth to reduce insecurity and its attendant depression on the society.

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Competing Interest

The author had declared that no conflicting interest existed regarding this paper.

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