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Safety Management for Service Delivery in Rivers State Secondary Schools

Asodike, Juliana. D.[α] & Nwabueze, Akachukwu[σ]

Abstract- This study investigated safety management for service delivery in secondary schools in Rivers State. Three research questions and three hypotheses guided the study. The study was guided by Theory of Foundation for Safety Management. The study adopted a descriptive survey design comprising all the 247 government senior secondary schools in the state with 6,890 principals and teachers. A sample size of 2,100 respondents was drawn using stratified random sampling technique representing 30.5% of the population. This included 110 principals and 1,990 teaching staff. The instrument used was questionnaire titled "Safety Management of Secondary Schools' Questionnaire (SMSSQ)" developed by the researchers. The questionnaire was validated and the reliability calculated with Pearson's Product Moment Correlation yielded an index of 0.81. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions. The findings revealed among others that the techniques needed for safety management of secondary schools include: establishment of clear safety objectives, transparency in the management of safety, senior management's commitment to improve safety in schools, accountability of safety management system for educational service delivery, establishment of defined methods needed to meet safety goals in schools, building upon the existing procedures to create new knowledge on safety management, and continuous process of improvement in the safety level among staff. Based on the findings, it was recommended that secondary school management should adopt the safety management objectives to protect the health and safety of staff and students. School managers should establish defined methods needed to meet the health and safety goals in secondary schools.

Keywords: management of safety, service delivery, secondary schools.

I. Introduction

A visit to most public schools from primary to tertiary institutions in Nigeria show unkempt environment associated with filth and dirt, which affect the health conditions of staff and students. Unlike most private schools, public schools are often unkempt having poor sanitary and waste disposal systems. Such environment is responsible for school related diseases like diarrhea, dysentery, cholera, injury and so on.

School safety could be defined as a situation in which the teachers and learners feel at home, develop confidence, maintain a positive state of mind, and do not show any signs of withdrawal from the school, but work towards the achievement of their personal goals. Schools have to develop an active safety strategies that focus on overall school climate as well as emergency preparedness, and management of the school system. School safety encompasses prevention/mitigation, early intervention (which is part of ongoing school safety), immediate response/intervention and long-term recovery. Safety management have to involve active participation of principals, school mental health professionals, school security personnel, appropriate community stakeholders (such as representatives from local law enforcement and emergency personnel), and other school staff to help sustain efforts over time for service delivery.

Safety management indicates how best to prevent, eliminate or reduce the damage which may be caused by any particular hazard using the resources available. However, the schools are supposed to be among the safest places for our children to be without victimizations occurring. It is the duty of school management to ensure that relevant act on establishing safety policies is implemented to achieve desired results. Armstrong (2009) states that health and safety policies and programmes are concerned with protecting employees and other people affected by what the institution produces. Safety in schools involves the protection and management of administrators, teachers, students and other visitors in an institution for service delivery.

Successful safety management in schools is necessary and essential educational investment for service delivery. Research increasingly shows that there is a clear link between the safety of schools and educational service delivery such as: safety management system which determines environmental quality in schools; quality of the school environment which shapes attitudes of students, teachers and staff; and safety management influences teaching and learning behaviour positively (Nwabueze, 2016). Proper safety management of secondary schools enhances education service delivery and production of students for national development.

II. Theoretical Framework

The theory guiding this study is the Theory of Foundation for Safety Management propounded by Heinrch Domino in 1931. He presented a set of theory known as the axioms of industrial safety stating that the

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occurrence of an injury invariably results from a complicated sequence of factors (accidents). He linked the accident sequence to a row of dominions knocking each other down in a row. The sequence is injury caused by an accident due to an unsafe act and or mechanical or physical hazard due to the fault of the person caused by their ancestry and social environment. This theory provided the foundation for accident preventive measure aimed at preventing unsafe acts or unsafe conditions in secondary schools. Heinrch's work is the basis for the theory of behavior-based safety which holds that as 95% of all work-place accidents are caused by unsafe acts; While Heinrch's figure is that 88% of all workplace accidents, injuries and illness are caused by man's failure. Therefore, there is need for proper safety management in secondary schools to promote service delivery. This is done through proper introduction of safety practices in secondary schools in Rivers State. When this is done, it will help to limit the injuries and health problems among staff (teaching and non teaching staff), students and visitors. Safety in educational institutions will promote educational service delivery.

III. Safety Management in Schools

Safety is a state of being protected, uninjured, out of danger, secured, not involving risk. All safety directed to the child is to keep him/her alive and secured. In a school environment, every student is entitled to safety from harm, safety from abuse (e.g. rape), safety from disease, safety from malnutrition, safety from hazardous activities, safety from substance abuse and safety from road accidents. A safe school is a place where students can receive a high quality education without the threat of violence (Idoko, 2013). A number of schools are developing plans and strategies to implement safe school environment for quality productivity (Oragwu & Nwabueze, 2014). These plans work best when they are generated not only by school staff, but also by parents and representatives from community groups and agencies. School insecurity can lead to a disruptive and threatening environment, physical injury, and emotional stress, all of which can be obstacles to student achievement (Isiugo-Abanihe & Labo-Popoola, 2004). Educators have responded to the perceived threat of school violence by implementing programs designed to prevent, deter, and respond to the potential for violence in schools (Adebayo, 2001). In addition, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-110), emphasizes the importance of safe learning environments by requiring schools to have a safety plan in place and fund programmes and practices intended to prevent and reduce violence in schools.

Safety is described as a condition which provides a suitable arrangement for protecting participants against hazards (Ugwueze & Anyanwu (1998). Safety can also be seen as the freedom from danger, hazards and unnecessary risks. Aluko, (2012) sees safety is deliberate plans and organisation of environment, man and materials to reduce or eliminate danger, injury and risks. Lack of safety is created by unsafe conditions, behaviour, disasters or emergencies, which a school needs to be prepared for in order to maintain safety in schools (Kipngeno & Kyalo, 2009). The duo stress further that it is the responsibility of school administrators to ensure that the school environment is conducive for learning, and this can be achieved by establishing clear rules and policies.

IV. Statement of the Problem

A cursory look at the schools in the State shows that the level of safety activities is declining. In some schools, classrooms have no doors, windows and burglary proof while the roofs have leakages. Some of the classroom floors are very rough, with broken desks and seats. With no electricity supply, light and fans installed are constantly vandalized. Some of the school compounds have no fence and the laboratories spaces are not enough to accommodate students for practical applications. The libraries have no good seats and tables and some are also poorly ventilated. It is the expectation of staff, students and parents that government shows interest in making sure that the environment of the school system is safe for effective teaching and learning. These scenarios have made school security and safety for quality teaching delivery become an issue in the nation. The secondary school system seems not to be functioning efficiently as expected when compared with the inputs injected and outputs received. This study therefore seeks to investigate the safety management in Rivers State secondary schools for improve the educational service delivery.

V. AIM/Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study is to investigate the safety management in Rivers State secondary schools for improve the educational service delivery. Specifically, the objectives of the study are to:

1. find out various ways of managing safety in Rivers State secondary schools;
2. determine the strategies for ensuring school safety for education service delivery in Rivers State secondary schools; and
3. ascertain the extent to which safety management of schools can improve the education service delivery in Rivers State secondary schools;

VI. Research Questions

1. What are the various ways of managing safety in Rivers State secondary schools?

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2. What are the strategies for ensuring school safety for education service delivery in Rivers State secondary schools?
3. To what extent can safety management of schools improve the education service delivery in Rivers State secondary schools?

VII. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design comprising all the 247 government senior secondary schools in the state with 6,890 principals and teachers. A sample size of 2,100 respondents was drawn using stratified random sampling technique representing 30.5% of the population. This included 110 principals and 1,990 teaching staff. The instrument used was questionnaire titled "Safety Management of Secondary Schools' Questionnaire (SMSSQ)" developed by the researchers. The questionnaire was validated and the reliability was tested test retest method, calculated with Pearson's product moment correlation. This yielded a reliability index of 0.81. Mean scores and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions.

VIII. Results

a) Research Questions

1. *Research Question One:* What are the various ways of managing safety in Rivers State secondary schools?

Table 1: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Principals and Teachers on the various ways of Managing Safety in Rivers State Secondary Schools.

S/N	Various ways of managing safety include:	Principals		Teachers		Mean Set	Remarks
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD	$\bar{x}_2$	SD		
1	Establishment of clear safety objectives	3.11	0.37	3.01	0.23	3.06	Agreed
2	Transparency in the management of safety	3.02	0.38	2.98	0.25	3.00	Agreed
3	Senior management's commitment to improve safety	3.22	0.34	3.10	0.20	3.16	Agreed
4	Accountability of safety management system	2.96	0.42	3.06	0.22	3.01	Agreed
5	Establishment of defined methods needed to meet safety goals	3.08	0.37	3.02	0.23	3.05	Agreed
6	Building upon the existing procedures to create new knowledge on safety management	2.88	0.50	2.92	0.28	2.90	Agreed
7	Continuous process of improvement in the safety level among staff	3.02	0.38	2.92	0.28	2.97	Agreed
	Aggregate Mean	3.04	0.39	3.00	0.24	3.02	Agreed

Data in table 1 presented the mean scores and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the various ways of safety management of schools for service delivery in Rivers State Secondary School. The respondents agreed on the items (1-7) in the table with mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.5. The aggregate mean score of 3.02 in the table showed that the respondents agreed on all the items in the table. Therefore, the various ways of managing safety in secondary schools in Rivers State include: establishment of clear safety objectives, transparency in the management of safety, senior management's commitment to improve safety, accountability of safety management system, establishment of defined methods needed to meet safety goals, building upon the existing procedures to create new knowledge on safety management, and continuous process of improvement in the safety level among staff.

Research Question Two: What are the strategies for ensuring school safety for education service delivery in Rivers State secondary schools?

Table 2: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Principals and Teachers on the Strategies for Ensuring School Safety for Service Delivery in Rivers State Secondary Schools

S/N	Strategies for ensuring school safety for education service delivery include:	Principals		Teachers		Mean Set	Remarks
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD	$\bar{x}_2$	SD		
8	Provision of activities that create a positive safety culture within all levels of the workforce	1.27	1.01	1.17	1.09	1.22	Disagreed
9	Providing safety management training for staff and students to create positive school environment	3.18	0.35	3.14	0.19	3.16	Agreed
10	Advocating a positive safety culture in schools	3.32	0.24	3.18	0.18	3.25	Agreed
11	Strengthening a positive safety culture for positive involvement of staff and students in school development	3.16	0.35	3.04	0.23	3.10	Agreed

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12	Creating safety awareness in schools to enhance positive environment for teaching and learning	3.13	0.36	3.21	0.17	3.17	Agreed
13	Creating safety communication at all levels of the school system	3.38	0.20	3.22	0.17	3.30	Agreed
14	Creating safety preparedness among staff and students for instructional effectiveness	3.12	0.36	3.02	0.23	3.07	Agreed
15	Ensuring that everyone has a role in promoting safety in the school environment for effective instructional competitiveness	3.42	0.19	3.28	0.15	3.35	Agreed
	Aggregate Mean	3.00	0.38	2.91	0.30	2.96	Agreed

Data in table 2 presented the mean scores and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the strategies for ensuring school safety for education service delivery. The respondents agreed on items 9-15 in the table with mean scores above the mean criterion of 2.5, and disagreed on item 8 with mean score of 1.22, which is below the mean criterion of 2.5. The aggregate mean score of 2.96 in the table showed that the respondents agreed on the items in the table. Therefore, the strategies for ensuring school safety for education service delivery include: provision of activities that create a positive safety culture within all levels of the workforce, provision of safety management training for staff and students to create positive school environment, advocating a positive safety culture in schools, strengthening a positive safety culture for positive involvement of staff and students in school development, creating safety awareness in schools to enhance positive environment for teaching and learning, creating safety communication at all levels of the school system, creating safety preparedness among staff and students for instructional effectiveness, and ensuring that everyone has a role in managing safety in the school environment for education service delivery.

Research Question Three: To what extent can safety management of schools improve the education service delivery in Rivers State secondary schools?

Table 3: Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of Principals and Teachers on the Extent to which Safety Management of Schools can Improves the Education Service Delivery in Rivers State Secondary Schools

S/N	The extent to which safety management of schools improves the educational service delivery include:	Principals		Teachers		Mean Set	Remarks
		$\bar{x}_1$	SD	$\bar{x}_2$	SD		
16	Evaluating the continued effectiveness of implemented safety control strategies	3.17	0.35	3.13	0.19	3.15	High extent
17	Supporting the identification of new hazards	2.77	0.57	2.81	0.37	2.79	Mod extent
18	Providing confidence that school output meet safety requirements	3.14	0.36	3.06	0.22	3.10	High extent
19	Ensuring compliance with safety requirements	3.06	0.38	3.02	0.23	3.04	High extent
20	Acquisition of information needed for continuous improvement on safety management	3.29	0.29	3.17	0.18	3.23	High extent
21	Employee reporting safety matters to the management on time	3.10	0.37	3.06	0.22	3.08	High Extent
22	Providing insight regarding opportunities for improving safety in schools	3.04	0.39	3.00	0.24	3.02	High extent
23	Providing insight regarding methods for minimizing risks can improve educational service delivery	3.09	0.37	3.01	0.24	3.05	High extent
	Aggregate Mean	3.08	0.39	3.03	0.24	3.06	High Extent

Data in table 3 presented the mean scores and standard deviation of principals and teachers on the extent to which safety management of schools improves the education service delivery. The aggregate mean score of 3.06 in the table showed that all the safety management items (16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, & 23)to a high extent improve the educational service delivery except item 17 with moderate extent value of 2.79. Therefore, the extent to which safety management of schools improves the education service delivery include: evaluating the continued effectiveness of implemented safety control strategies, supporting the identification of new hazards, providing confidence that school output meet safety requirements, ensuring compliance with safety requirements, acquisition of information needed for continuous improvement on safety management, employee reporting safety matters to the management on time, providing insight regarding opportunities for improving safety in schools, and providing insight regarding methods for minimizing risks can improve educational service delivery.

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IX. Discussion

a) Various Ways of Managing Safety in Schools

The findings of this study revealed that the various ways safety management in Rivers State secondary schools to include : establishment of clear safety objectives, transparency in the management of safety, senior management's commitment to improve safety, accountability of safety management system, establishment of defined methods needed to meet safety goals, building upon the existing procedures to create new knowledge on safety management, and continuous process of improvement in the safety level among staff. With appropriate adoption of these ways safety management for education service is assured. These ways would help to promote good working/learning environment, safety of teachers and students, and appropriate security checks/management of the school facilities. The findings agreed with that of Oragwu and Nwabueze (2016) which state that safety management is a systematic approach to improve the safety of an organization or institution through the establishment of clear safety objectives and being transparent in the management of safety and that it is a business-like approach to safety that has a systematic, explicit and comprehensive process for managing safety risks.

Both principals and teachers agreed on the stated ways of managing safety in the school system as they would contribute maximally in the achievement of educational set goals and objectives on safety. Safety management in schools indicates how best to prevent, eliminate or reduce the damage which may be caused by any particular hazard using or misusing the resources available in the system. However, school as place of training is supposed to be among the safest environments for students to be without victimizations injuries occurring. It is the duty of school management to ensure that relevant act on establishing safety policies is implemented to achieve desired results.

b) Strategies for Ensuring School Safety

The findings of this study revealed that the strategies for ensuring school safety for education service delivery include: provision of activities that create a positive safety culture within all levels of the workforce, provision of safety management training for staff and students to create positive school environment, advocating a positive safety culture in schools, strengthening a positive safety culture for positive involvement of staff and students in school development, creating safety awareness in schools to enhance positive environment for teaching and learning, creating safety communication at all levels of the school system, creating safety preparedness among staff and students for instructional effectiveness, and ensuring that everyone has a role in promoting safety in the school environment for effective instructional competitiveness. These strategies can work best when they are generated not only by school staff, but also by parents and representatives from community groups and agencies. The findings agreed with Nwabueze (2016) when he explains that there is a clear link between the safety of schools and education service delivery such as: safety management system which determines environmental quality in schools; quality of the school environment which shapes attitudes of students, teachers and staff; and safety management of schools which influences teaching and learning behaviour positively. The respondents agreed that safety management strategies as presented in this study would help in the administration of secondary schools for education delivery system.

c) Safety Management of Schools and Education Service Delivery

The findings of the study also revealed that the extent to which safety management of schools improves the education service delivery include: evaluating the continued effectiveness of implemented safety control strategies, supporting the identification of new hazards, providing confidence that school output meet safety requirements, ensuring compliance with safety requirements, acquisition of information needed for continuous improvement on safety management, employee reporting safety matters to the management on time, providing insight regarding opportunities for improving safety in schools, and providing insight regarding methods for minimizing risks can improve educational service delivery. This implies that safety management of schools enhances teaching, learning and research among staff and students. It provides insight on the various opportunities needed for safety management and enhanced productivity. Armstrong (2009) states that safety policies and programmes are concerned with protecting school administrators, teaching and non-teaching staff and students the institution towards the achievement of educational set goals and objectives.

Principals are of the opinion that proper management of safety in secondary schools makes the students concentrate on their academic activities for achievement of good academic records. Successful management of school safety is a necessary and essential educational investment and service delivery.

X. Conclusion

The need for the establishment of proper of ways managing safety in schools cannot be overstressed if educational goals and objectives are to achieved in this present dispensation where the issues of safety has been the subject of discussion in most fora globally. All hands must be on deck to ensure that

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provision of safety in our educational institutions is given the attention it requires. Our children and staff in the system deserve to be protected both in the classroom and during the schools' outdoor activities. Therefore, it is paramount that provision of series of activities that can create positive safety culture within all levels of the workforce, safety management training for staff and students to create positive school environment, as well as advocating a positive safety culture in schools for education service delivery should become part of school safety awareness programmes. Emphatically, Asodike (2012) notes that, the school service environment contribute to quality teaching and learning, which invariably tantamount to productive citizens of the education industry.

XI. Recommendations

1. Educational managers and administrators should establish clear safety objectives and make provision for transparency in the management of safety in secondary schools to enhance the quality of service delivery and students' productivity.
2. Educational administrators and teachers should ensure serious management's commitment to improve safety in schools and establish defined methods needed to meet the safety goals of secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Secondary school administrators should build upon the existing procedures to create new knowledge on safety management and continuous process of improvement on the safety level among staff. With appropriate adoption of these ways to safety management, quality improvement in the education system is assured. These ways would help to promote good working/learning environment, safety of teachers and students, and appropriate security checks/management of the school facilities.
4. School administrators should evaluate the continued effectiveness of implemented safety control strategies to ensure compliance with safety requirements and provide insight regarding the methods for minimizing risks for enhanced education service delivery.
5. Educational administrators should provide activities that can create a positive safety culture within all levels of the workforce as well as provide safety management training for staff and students to create positive school environment.
6. Educational administrators and teachers should create positive safety awareness, safety communication at all levels of the school system as well as safety preparedness among staff and students in schools to enhance positive environment for teaching and learning.
7. School administrators should ensure that everyone has a role in ensuring safety in the school environment for education service delivery.

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