AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

EXTENT OF PRINCIPALS' UTILIZATION OF ADMINISTRATIVE STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING INSECURITY IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN IHIALA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

Chukwudi Justin Anyadioha
justinanyadioha@gmail.com
Department of Social Science Education
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

Ikechukwu Giveson Okafor
okafornelson98@gmail.com
Department of Social Science Education
University of Nigeria, Nsukka

ABSTRACT

The study examined the extent of principals' utilization of school-community relation and communication network administrative strategies for managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala Local Government Area. Two research purposes guided the study. This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The population of this study comprised of 441 teachers in the 12 public secondary schools in Ihiala LGA, Anambra State. Six secondary schools were randomly sampled, with a sample size of 204 respondents which comprise the total enumeration of teachers in the sampled secondary schools. The instrument used for the collection of data was a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was face validated by three experts Faculty of Education, University of Nigeria. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach Alpha which yielded overall reliability coefficient of 0.89. The instrument for data collection was administered directly to the sampled respondents in their respective schools by the researchers with 187 questionnaires returned valid. The data collected for this study was analyzed and presented using mean and standard deviation. The study found that the extent to which principals utilize school community relation administrative strategy in managing insecurity secondary schools in Ihiala LGA is low. However, the study also found that the extent to which principals utilize communication network strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA is high. The study recommended that principals should build strong relationship with community leaders to help navigate insecurity on students.

Keywords: Administrative Strategies, Principals, Insecurity

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

Introduction

Insecurity poses a serious risk to Nigeria's stability and progress. The rising insecurity is almost becoming an aspect of Nigeria's identity, as not a day passes without threats related to it. Even more concerning is the apparent hesitation of the Nigerian government to address this issue for reasons that remain unclear, despite the promises made by various administrations. Nigeria currently faces security challenges across all six geopolitical regions, especially in the North-East, North-Central, South-South (Zubairu, 2020), and South-East regions. Inhabitants of these areas now find it necessary to remain vigilant, while the government responsible for safeguarding lives and properties seems bewildered by the safety of its citizens (Obarisiagbon & Akintoye, 2019). In the South-East, the escalating insecurity is marked by the enforcement of a sit-at-home directive by the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB), a separatist organization seeking the release of their leader, Mazi Nnamdi Kanu, along with the separation of the Eastern region. The sit-at-home order results in a complete cessation of all activities, including educational institutions, every Monday and on other designated days by the group. This often leaves the South-East appearing deserted and abandoned on the days when the order is enforced. Even though the directive has been revoked, the practice of sitting at home continues due to prevalent fear (Anyadiegwu & Nzekwu, 2022). Those trying to conduct business have faced assaults, causing many to remain indoors out of fear. This situation heavily impacts educational institutions, which are also compelled to close due to the sit-at-home order. In Ihiala Local Government Area, a group termed Unknown Gunmen, which claims to act as self-determined activists, allegedly operates under the guise of enforcing IPOB's sit-at-home order, putting several communities in Ihiala Locality under intense pressure. With random shootings, killings, arson incidents, kidnappings, and various other crimes, these communities are grappling with a high level of insecurity, obstructing social activities, including education. Students in these areas have spent more days away from school than they have in class. Even more concerning is the effect of these security threats on students sitting for external examinations in these communities, resulting in poor performance in those assessments. School principals in these areas should adopt effective measures to manage insecurity and guarantee the safety of both students and staff.

The principal acts as the administrative leader of the secondary school, managing activities and programs alongside available resources to ensure productivity and favorable outcomes. As the head of the secondary school, the principal is responsible for administrative tasks that enhance the overall efficiency of the institution (Nwabueze, 2016). Administration involves influencing the actions of an organized group to achieve specific objectives. In this case, school administration relates to the organized and strategic management of a school's resources, policies, and programs to achieve

educational goals and objectives while also safeguarding staff and students within the institution. Within the field of school administration, the administrator employs various management techniques to effectively manage school resources in the pursuit of desirable results. As noted by Amanchukwu and Ololube (2015), administrative strategies comprise systematically devised activities or procedures intended to manage and utilize resources to meet established goals. According to Adebiyi, Adebiyi, Daramola, and Seyi-Oderinde (2019), some administrative strategies implemented by secondary school principals include instructional supervision, decision-making, school-community relations, delegation and monitoring of responsibilities, financial management, interpersonal relationships, and communication networks to address both internal and external security challenges. Some of these strategies also significantly contribute to mitigating security issues surrounding the school. However, this study specifically focuses on how principals utilize school-community relations and communication networks to manage insecurity issues in Ihiala LGA.

The connection between educational institutions and their surrounding communities is an administrative approach focused on building meaningful relationships to promote mutual development and accomplish common goals (Amopho, 2020). This relationship involves fostering positive interactions among school staff, students, educators, and administrators, as well as engaging members from both the local and broader community, including local leaders, organizations, businesses, parents, and other educational stakeholders. Community involvement in enhancing school safety could entail offering volunteer support for initiatives such as constructing access roads to the school, providing free security teams to oversee both the community and schools, building school fences or dormitories, and hiring part-time teachers for subjects facing critical shortages. This strategy benefits not only the school but also the wider community.

Moreover, the importance of leveraging communication networks as another key administrative strategy in addressing insecurity in schools lies in its capacity to facilitate timely information exchange with stakeholders (including educators, students, parents, and security personnel), mitigate and manage security threats, cultivate a culture focused on safety, and ensure swift and effective responses to security concerns, thereby safeguarding a secure learning environment. Nakpodia (2010) emphasized that discipline, law, and order are maintained through the communication process. Principals use various methods to establish communication networks, such as writing and receiving reports from stakeholders to keep the school updated on urgent security issues and solutions, using safety manuals, correspondence, staff meetings, and suggestion boxes, among others (Okigbo & Nsiegbunam, 2000). Furthermore, Nwogbo,

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

Nwankwo, and Nwachukwu (2019) highlighted that communication strategies employed by principals to improve teacher effectiveness include holding staff meetings, making good use of suggestion boxes, maintaining an open-door policy, and allowing teachers to express their views on relevant matters. However, it is still uncertain how much principals are engaging with security agencies within Ihiala LGA, considering the security challenges facing the area. Reports indicate that students have been unable to attend external examinations and have skipped classes due to criminal activities that pose a threat to the communities in the LGA. This situation highlights the necessity of the current study to determine if principals are effectively communicating with education stakeholders and necessary security agencies.

Numerous interconnected studies have been carried out concerning methods for addressing insecurity. Adekunle and Adeyemi (2017) discovered that strong leadership and management from school principals are crucial for the formation and execution of safety and security strategies, procedures, and programs within educational institutions. Ajayi and Adesope (2021) stated that the effective maintenance of school security involves several measures, such as securing sufficient funding for safety and security, increasing the number of security personnel in schools, creating a national registry of school security staff, developing standard visitor screening processes, establishing a national policy on school safety and security, providing ongoing safety and security training for school staff, and engaging parents in safety and security efforts. Adegboye (2022) indicated that successful security management is strongly connected to active participation from both school administrators and the local community. Adewole and Aluko (2019) noted that schools with trained security personnel are more likely to prevent violence and ensure students' overall safety. Kropp & Wells (2019) found that cooperation between security staff, school leaders, teachers, and parents enhance the understanding of the specific security requirements and concerns of the school, resulting in more customized and effective security strategies. Involving the community in security planning also nurtures a sense of collective responsibility, essential for sustaining a safe school atmosphere. Johnson (2019) emphasized that successful school safety plans require collaboration with local law enforcement, mental health experts, and community organizations. Oguejiofor (2021) reported a strong positive correlation between principals' administrative communication networks and teachers' performance in secondary schools in Enugu State. Obiekwe and Uwaezuoke (2023) found that principals adopted physical and human security measures, while technological security approaches remained unutilized in Anambra State. Moreover, Ibrahim and Mahmoud (2016) support the positive relationship between communication styles characterized by supportiveness, precision, expressiveness, and kindness, in relation to school

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

performance. Ogunlade (2021) revealed that numerous schools lack sufficient security infrastructure and that administrative strategies for enhancing safety and security in secondary schools are often poorly implemented. Additionally, Abonyi (2004) observed that in Enugu State, there are instances of individuals encroaching on school lands, which significantly hampers good relations between schools and their communities.

Despite a good amount of research on approaches to school security management across various parts of Nigeria and other regions, a comprehensive review of the literature shows a substantial lack of contextual implementation, particularly in areas experiencing severe and persistent security threats like the Ihiala Local Government Area in Anambra State. Much of the existing literature, including works by Adekunle and Adeyemi (2017), Adegboye (2022), and Johnson (2019), emphasizes broad and ideal strategies such as policy formulation, collaboration among stakeholders, and enhancements in infrastructure. These studies typically assume a level of stability in the environment that may not exist in highly unstable areas like Ihiala, where frequent gunfire, murders, abductions, and widespread fear have profoundly disrupted daily life and educational activities. Although researchers like Kropp and Wells (2019) and Amopho (2020) have highlighted the significance of school-community relationships and communication networks as effective administrative strategies, they have neglected the disintegration of community structures and trust due to rampant violence.

Moreover, while Oguejiofor (2021) and Ibrahim and Mahmoud (2016) explored the influence of communication on academic performance, they did not specifically assess its use as a means to tackle emergency security scenarios. Likewise, the study by Obiekwe and Uwaezuoke (2023) investigated the types of security measures adopted by school principals in Anambra State but did not provide a nuanced analysis to reflect the specific circumstances of areas like Ihiala LGA, where insecurity is prevalent and closely linked to socio-political turmoil and fear. Furthermore, the current literature has not directly examined how principals in these high-risk regions apply administrative strategies, particularly in terms of school-community relations and communication networks, within actual school settings amidst prolonged unrest. Consequently, there is a significant knowledge deficit regarding how school principals in Ihiala LGA carry out their administrative responsibilities in such hazardous and unpredictable environments. This study is crucial as it seeks to fill this void by investigating the degree to which principals leverage school-community relations and communication networks to address insecurity in secondary schools located in Ihiala LGA. The following research questions guided this investigation:

1. To what extent does principals utilize school community relation strategy in

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA?

2. To what extent does principals utilize communication network strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA

Methods

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. Descriptive survey design aims at explaining the characteristics of a given population. This research design is the most appropriate for this study because it described the principals' school community and communication network administrative strategies for managing insecurity in secondary schools. This study was conducted in public secondary schools in Ihiala Local Government Area Anambra State. The reason for choice of Ihiala Local Government Area, Anambra State as the geographical scope of this study is because communities in the LGA has been under siege since the declaration of IPOB sit at home in 2021. The surging security crisis has deterred academic activities in various parts of the local government; hence, principals need to adopt the right administrative strategy in various schools in the LGA. The population of this study was 441 teachers in the 12 public secondary schools Ihiala LGA, Anambra State (PPSMB, Anambra State, 2024). Six secondary schools were randomly sampled, with a sample size of 204 respondents which comprise the total enumeration of teachers in the sampled secondary schools. The instrument used for the collection of data was a structured questionnaire which was face validated by three experts. To ascertain the reliability of the instrument, the researchers administered 20 copies of the instrument to 20 respondents in Ekwusigo Local government Area, Anambra state. Ekwusigo LGA was used for the trial testing because it shares boundary with Ihiala LGA and both LGA shares certain characteristics in common. The data collected from trial testing were analyzed using Cronbach Alpha which yielded overall reliability coefficient of 0.89. The instrument for data collection was administered directly to the sampled respondents in their respective schools by the researchers with 187 questionnaires returned valid. The data collected for this study was analyzed and presented using mean and standard deviation.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does principals utilize school community relation strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA?

Table 1: Mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on the extent to which principals utilize school community relation strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	SD	Dec
1	Principals utilize community vigilante squad to manage insecurity	1.76	0.38	LE
2	Community provides school fence on the request of principals	2.09	0.42	LE
3	Community provide dormitory for students on the request of the principal	1.98	0.47	LE

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

4	Principals involve PTA in decisions concerning security	2.59	0.24	HE
5	Principals collaborate with traditional rulers to manage insecurity	1.51	0.48	LE
6	Principals collaborate with youth leaders in the community to manage insecurity	1.79	0.67	LE
7	Principals allow parents to volunteer their skills to support various school security initiatives	1.71	0.67	LE
8	Community provides residential houses for staff	1.75	0.34	LE
	Overall	**1.89**	**0.45**	**LE**

Table 1 shows the extent to which principals utilize school community relation strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA. The overall mean of 1.89 indicates that the extent to which principals utilize school community relation strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA is low.

Research Question 2: To what extent does principals utilize communication network strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA?

Table 2: Mean ratings and standard deviations of the respondents on the extent to which principals utilize communication network strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA

S/N	Item Statements	Mean	SD	Dec
9	Principals utilize regular meetings with school security personnel to discuss safety protocols	2.89	0.71	HE
10	Principals utilize social media platforms to disseminate safety information to students, parents, and staff	2.78	0.45	HE
11	Principals create a crisis communication plan to ensure timely response to security incidents	2.07	1.02	LE
12	Principals foster partnerships with local law enforcement agencies to enhance security measures	2.02	1.24	LE
13	Principals distribute safety manuals to students to manage insecurity	2.98	0.48	HE
14	Principals provide regular security updates to the school community to promote a sense of safety and security	2.28	0.65	LE
15	Principals notify students about security issues that may warrant school closure	3.01	0.61	HE
16	Principals maintain a collaborative relationship with parents to keep them informed about school security measures	2.67	0.56	HE
	Overall	**2.58**	**0.72**	**HE**

Table 2 shows the extent to which principals utilize communication network strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA. The overall mean of 2.58 indicates that the extent to which principals utilize communication network strategy in managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA is high.

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

Discussion

The results suggest that the degree to which principals implement school-community relation administrative strategies for managing insecurity in secondary schools in Ihiala LGA is minimal. This is due to the constant threat of sporadic gunfire, killings, abductions, fear, and lawlessness, which may cause principals to hesitate or fail in effectively applying school-community relation strategies. Community members might also be living in fear, making them unwilling or unable to actively engage in school safety initiatives, such as providing vigilante support, constructing school facilities, or volunteering their time and skills. The severity of insecurity, coupled with weak or fearful local governance and an unstable environment, complicates principals' abilities to collaborate meaningfully with traditional rulers, youth leaders, or PTAs. Similarly, this insecurity might deter parents from participating in voluntary school safety programs or from contributing to the provision of staff housing and dormitories. This finding resonates with Abonyi's (2004) observation of inadequate school-community relations in Enugu State, where individual encroachment into school properties posed a significant challenge. Moreover, Ogunlade's (2021) conclusion that administrative strategies for enhancing safety and security in secondary schools were frequently poorly executed reinforces the idea that school-community relation administrative strategies may not be effectively applied. These studies highlight the challenges faced when trying to implement successful school-community relations in insecure environments.

The research indicated that principals in Ihiala LGA highly utilize communication network strategies to address insecurity, which includes regular meetings with security personnel, updates via social media, distribution of safety manuals, and informing students about security matters. This successful deployment of communication networks reflects a commitment to maintaining safety and security within schools, allowing principals to react quickly to potential threats and uphold a secure learning environment. This finding aligns with Oguejiofor's (2021) report indicating a strong positive predictive relationship between principals' administrative communication networks and teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Enugu State. This implies that effective communication networks can positively influence school operations, including security management. Furthermore, Ibrahim and Mahmoud's (2016) research underscore the significance of effective communication styles in improving school performance, which may also enhance insecurity management. Thus, it suggests that principals who implement effective communication strategies can potentially enhance various aspects of school management, including the management of insecurity.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study reveal the varying levels at which secondary

AJEMATES
African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies
VOL.15 (2), May-August, 2025 https://ajemates.org

school principals in Ihiala Local Government Area utilize different administrative strategies to tackle insecurity. While the use of school-community relation strategies is significantly low due to pervasive insecurity and fear, as well as reduced community involvement, the communication network strategy is widely adopted and serves as a crucial tool for internal coordination, proactive alerting, and responsive management within the schools. Principals demonstrate a stronger tendency to depend on organized communication methods to navigate the unstable security environment and maintain operational continuity in their schools.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommended that:

1. Principals should build strong relationship with community leaders to help navigate insecurity on students.
2. School administrators should collaborate with security agencies like the police and military to ensure prompt response to emergency situations since relationships with the community people is threatened by insecurity.

REFERENCES

Abonyi, O. W. (2004). The scramble for the partition of school lands in Enugu State. *The Educator*, *3*(3), 23–34.

Adebiyi, D. O., Adebiyi, T. F., Daramola, A. O., & Seyi-Oderinde, D. R. (2019). The behaviours and roles of school principals in tackling security challenges in Nigeria: A context-responsive leadership perspective. https://api.semanticscholar.org/CorpusID:211392876

Adegboye, D. Y. (2022). Security challenges and economy of the nation. *Journal of Educational Development*, *3*(1), 23–38.

Adekunle, A. O., & Adeyemi, J. O. (2017). School safety and security in Nigeria: What roles for principals? *Journal of Education and Practice*, *8*(21), 31–39.

Adewole, A. S., & Aluko, O. (2019). *Issues and solutions of school insecurity: A functional approach.* Longman Press.

Ajayi, M. O., & Adesope, O. F. (2021). Safety and security in Nigerian schools: Challenges and the way forward. *International Journal of Educational Development*, *83*, 102366. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102366

Amanchukwu, R. N., & Olulube, N. P. (2015). Managing school plant for effective service delivery in public secondary schools in Rivers State of Nigeria. *Human Resource Management Research*, *5*(4), 95–102.

Amopho, G. E. (2020). School community relation for effective school management. *International Journal*

of Scientific Research in Education, *13*(4), 785–804.

Anyadiegwu, J. C., & Nzekwu, I. (2022). The impact of insecurity and IPOB sit-at-home order on teaching and learning in secondary schools in Southeast Nigeria. *World Educators Forum*, *13*(1).

Ibrahim, A., & Mahmoud, S. (2016). Principals' communication styles and school performance in Al Ain government schools, UAE. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education*, *6*(1), 29–46.

Johnson, C. L. (2019). *Understanding safety and security plans in educational administration.* Cob Publishing Express.

Kropp, P., & Wells, A. (2019). Community involvement in school security planning: A collaborative approach. *Journal of School Security*, *9*(3), 78–92.

Nakpodia, E. D. (2010). The influence of communication on administration of secondary schools in Delta State Nigeria. *International NGO Journal*, *5*(8), 194–198.

Nwabueze, A. I. (2016). Career plateau management for productivity in schools. In S. O. Oluwuo & J. D. Asodike (Eds.), *Managing schools for productivity: Emerging perspectives*. Pearl Publishers International Limited.

Nwogbo, V. N., Nwankwo, I. N., & Nwachukwu, E. A. (2019). Principals' communication strategies for teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools in Anambra State. *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies (JETERAPS)*, *10*(3), 175–181.

Obarisiagbon, E. I., & Akintoye, E. O. (2019). Insecurity crisis in Nigeria: The law enforcement agents a panacea? *Journal of Sociology and Social Work*, *7*(1), 44–51.

Obiekwe, K. K., & Uwaezuoke, M. I. (2023). Security measures adopted by principals in the management of safety in secondary schools in Anambra State. *African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies*, *8*(2), 157–166.

Oguejiofor, C. N. (2021). Principals' administrative practices as predictors of teachers' job performance in secondary schools in Enugu State. *Unizik Journal of Educational Research and Policy Studies*, *15*(2), 172–184.

Ogunlade, T. (2021). Crisis preparedness in educational institutions: A principals' guide in Nigeria. *Journal of School Safety*, *12*(4), 112–128.

Osegbue, G. C. (2025). Early childhood education in Nigeria: challenges and prospects. *Unizik Journal of Educational Laws and Leadership Studies*, *2*(1).

Osegbue, G. C. (2025). Crisis intervention and response in educational institutions: developing and

implementing plans in developing countries. *African Journal of Educational Management, Teaching and Entrepreneurship Studies*, *15*(1).

Okigbo, A., & Nsiegbunam, C. (2000). *Modern public administration: Principles and practice.* John Best Enterprises Nigeria Ltd.

Zubairu, N. (2020). Rising insecurity in Nigeria: Causes and solution. *Journal of Studies in Social Sciences*, *19*(4), 1–11.