

Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of Civic Education Studies among Secondary School Teachers in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State

SHEU, Adaramaja Lukman¹

Email: adaramajasheu@fugusau.edu.ng

Tel: +2348061254474

SULE, Muhammad¹

Email: muhammadsule@fugusau.edu.ng

Tel: +2347030475088

Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Federal University Gusau, Zamfara State

Abstract

This study examines the impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching and assessment of civic education in secondary schools in Gusau educational zone, Zamfara state, Nigeria. The research explores how persistent security threats such as banditry, kidnappings, and school attacks affect teachers' effectiveness, student engagement, and assessment practices in Civic Education. Utilizing a survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the 156 civic education teachers in the study area. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 108 Civic Education teachers for the study. A validated structured questionnaire was used in the study. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.83 was derived to satisfy the internal consistency of the instrument. Findings indicates that insecurity significantly disrupts Civic Education teaching, leading to reduced instructional time, lower teacher motivation, and decreased student participation. Additionally, assessment and evaluation of students are negatively impacted, with delays in examinations, limited assessment diversity, and reduced teacher confidence in evaluating students. The study concludes that insecurity poses a severe threat to the quality of Civic Education, potentially weakening students' understanding of civic responsibilities and national identity. The study recommends enhanced security measures in schools, psychological support for teachers and students, and policy interventions on assessment practice for quality teaching and assessment of Civic Education despite prevailing security challenges.

Keywords: Assessment, Civic Education, Insecurity, Quality Teaching, Teachers Engagement

Introduction

Insecurity is a complex issue that encompasses vulnerability, fear, and lack of protection due to real or perceived threats. It manifests in multiple forms, including physical, economic, social, and psychological dimensions, affecting individuals and societies alike. It can be defined as the absence of stability and safety, which fosters fear, uncertainty, and vulnerability (Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpor-Robaro, 2013). In socio-economic contexts, insecurity results from a lack of resources and opportunities, leading to poverty and social instability (Omotoso, 2020). It also influences individuals' emotional well-being, often causing self-doubt and anxiety due to a perceived lack of control over personal circumstances (Vogel et al., 2020). More broadly, insecurity disrupts daily life, particularly through violence and armed conflict, leading to displacement, loss of lives, and weakened social systems, which in turn affect education, healthcare, and general well-being (Barakat & Uitto, 2019).

In recent years, Nigeria has encountered growing security challenges, particularly in the northern region, significantly affecting multiple sectors, including education. Zamfara State, with Gusau as its educational center, has been particularly impacted by these security threats. The prevailing insecurity, characterized by banditry, kidnappings, and communal conflicts, has severely disrupted the educational system. In northern Nigeria, the education sector has been deeply affected, as evidenced by numerous attacks on secondary schools over the past 15 years, including student and staff kidnappings and fatalities (Adams et al., 2021). These incidents have led to a decline in educational standards, disrupted academic activities, reduced school attendance, and inflicted psychological trauma on both students and teachers (Ogona & Anele, 2021).

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64348/zije.202519>

Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of ... Sheu, A. L. & Sule, M. (2025)
The situation in Zamfara State is particularly severe, as banditry and kidnappings have instilled fear among students and educators, leading to irregular school attendance and a decline in instructional quality. The insecurity has also posed significant challenges to student assessment, with examinations often delayed or canceled due to safety concerns. Additionally, the destruction of school infrastructure and displacement of communities have further exacerbated the challenges faced by the education sector (Ogona & Anele, 2021). Civic education, which is critical for fostering national consciousness and responsible citizenship, has also suffered due to these disruptions. The interruptions in teaching, learning and assessment of civic education have created gaps in students' understanding of civic responsibilities and societal roles.

Civic education is the process of equipping individuals with knowledge about their rights, responsibilities, and roles within society, particularly in a democratic setting. It fosters an understanding of governance, political participation, and social responsibilities, helping students develop critical thinking skills and civic engagement (Torney-Purta, 2002). This field of education not only informs students about political structures but also encourages active participation in democratic processes and community affairs (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Additionally, civic education emphasizes global citizenship while preserving democratic values (CIRCLE, 2020). It employs various instructional strategies, including discussions, debates, and participatory activities, to enhance students' understanding of government systems, democratic principles, and civic duties (Hess, 2017). By playing these roles, assessment in civic education also helps students develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for active citizenship and informed participation in democratic society.

Assessment is defined as a systematic process used to gather evidence of students' learning outcomes and performance, often to evaluate instructional effectiveness and guide future learning activities (Mertler, 2020). This process involves a range of tools and strategies, such as tests, assignments, and observations. Assessment in civic education refers to the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data to evaluate student knowledge, skills and values necessary for active citizenship. It helps educators gauge educational progress, identify areas requiring improvement, and inform instructional decisions. Assessment can be broadly classified into formative and summative types (Andrade & Cizek, 2019). Formative assessment provides ongoing feedback to enhance learning, while summative assessment evaluates students' overall performance at the end of a learning period. Both types are essential in fostering academic development. Modern perspectives emphasize assessment as an integral part of the learning process, shifting the focus from mere performance measurement to active student engagement in their educational journey (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Furthermore, contemporary assessment approaches highlight the importance of equity and inclusivity, ensuring that evaluation methods accommodate diverse learning needs and provide all students with fair opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge (Stiggins, 2017).

The growing insecurity in Zamfara State, particularly in the Gusau Educational Zone, has emerged as a major challenge for the education sector. Frequent violent attacks, kidnappings, and general instability have created an unsafe learning environment, making it difficult for teachers to perform their duties effectively. Schools frequently experience disruptions, leading to irregular teaching schedules, diminished classroom engagement, and declining instructional quality. Teachers often struggle to teach effectively due to fear and anxiety, resulting in reduced focus and motivation. Civic education, a crucial subject for promoting democratic values, national unity, and responsible citizenship, has been significantly affected. Insecurity also impacts student assessment in civic education, as repeated school closures and disruptions hinder students from taking exams and completing assignments as scheduled. Teachers face difficulties in evaluating student progress due to irregular attendance and limited instructional time. If the insecurity in Gusau Educational Zone remains unaddressed, the long-term effects could be severe, leading to a generation of students with insufficient civic knowledge and a weakened sense of national identity. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the extent of insecurity's impact on civic education and explore solutions to create a safe and conducive learning environment.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching of civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State.
2. To assess how insecurity affects the assessment and evaluation of students in civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State.

Research Questions

1. How does insecurity impact the quality of teaching civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?
2. In what ways does insecurity affect the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?

Research Methodology

A survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised all 156 civic education teachers in the 45 public secondary schools in the two local government areas (Gusau and Tsafe) that made up Gusau Educational Zone. Based on Research Advisors' (2006) recommendation, a sample size of 108 was selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. A structured questionnaire titled "Impact of Insecurity on the Quality of Teaching and Assessment of Civic Education Questionnaire (IIQTACEQ)," was used in the study. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the Department of Educational Foundations, Federal University Gusau, and pilot-tested to ensure reliability, yielding a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.83. The data collected was analyzed using the descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation.

Presentation of Results

Answering Research Question One

The research questions in this study was answered using mean scores and standard deviation.

Research Question One: How does insecurity impact the quality of teaching civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?

Table 1: Impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching civic education in secondary school in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara state

S/N	ITEMS	N	M	S.D	Ranking
1.	Insecurity has resulted in a decrease in the number of hours allocated for civic education lessons in schools.	108	3.08	.83	7 th
2.	Due to insecurity, teachers of civic education often have to cancel or reschedule classes.	108	1.83	.81	10 th
3.	Insecurity affects the availability of teaching resources, such as books and materials, for civic education in my school.	108	3.26	.87	4 th
4.	Teachers are less motivated to deliver effective civic education lessons due to the fear of insecurity.	108	3.09	.59	6 th
5.	Insecurity has caused a reduction in the quality of interaction between civic education teachers and students.	108	3.06	.70	8 th
6.	The insecurity situation in Gusau Educational Zone limits the use of fieldwork or practical activities in civic education classes.	108	3.36	.82	3 rd
7.	Teachers in my school are less likely to use innovative teaching methods for civic education due to concerns over insecurity.	108	2.03	.88	9 th
8.	Students are less engaged in civic education lessons due to the ongoing insecurity in the region.	108	3.42	.79	1 st
9.	Insecurity has led to a lack of teacher-student interaction outside the classroom in relation to civic education.	108	3.37	.66	2 nd
10.	The safety concerns related to insecurity in the region significantly hinder the ability of teachers to cover the full civic education curriculum.	108	3.12	.77	5 th
Cumulative Mean/StD		108	2.96	.77	

Decision mean = 2.500

Note: M=Mean, StD=Standard Deviation, SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree.

Table 1 reveals the impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara state. The findings of the study indicated that insecurity has reduced teaching and learning activities in civic

Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of ... Sheu, A. L. & Sule, M. (2025) education, such as caused students to less engaged in civic education lessons, reduced teacher-student interaction, limits the use of fieldwork or practical activities in civic education classes, hinder the ability of teachers to cover the full civic education curriculum etc. with mean score of 3.42, 3.37, 3.36, 3.27, 3.12, 3.09, 3.08, 3.06, 2.03 and 1.83 respectively.

Research Question Two: In what ways does insecurity affect the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?

Table 2: Effect of insecurity on the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State

S/N	ITEMS	N	M	St.D	Ranking
11.	Insecurity has led to frequent postponements of civic education assessments and exams.	108	3.15	.74	6 th
12.	Security concerns have affected the ability to conduct practical or field-based evaluations for civic education students.	108	3.14	.78	8 th
13.	Due to insecurity, teachers find it difficult to assess the full understanding of civic education among students.	108	3.33	.69	4 th
14.	Insecurity has limited the use of diverse assessment methods, such as group projects or community involvement, for civic education students.	108	3.43	.66	3 rd
15.	Insecurity has greatly reduced the quality of learner's assessment of civic education.	108	3.56	.49	1 st
16.	Insecurity has reduced the frequency of assessments and evaluations for civic education students in my school.	108	3.54	.58	2 nd
17.	The current insecurity situation has led to changes in how civic education exams are structured, often making them less comprehensive.	108	3.22	.77	5 th
18.	Insecurity affects the timely grading and feedback on civic education assessments.	108	3.15	.74	6 th
19.	Teachers are less confident in evaluating civic education students due to the ongoing insecurity in the region.	108	1.93	.84	9 th
20.	Insecurity has caused an increase in the reliance on written assessments, rather than other forms of evaluation like discussions or oral exams, for civic education.	108	1.96	.85	10 th
Cumulative Mean/StD		108	3.04	.67	

Decision mean = 2.500

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree.

Table 2 shows how insecurity affects the assessment and evaluation of students in civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State. The table revealed that Insecurity has greatly reduced the quality of learner's assessment of civic education, frequency of assessments and evaluations for students, limited the use of diverse assessment methods such as group projects or community involvement, assessment of the full understanding of civic education among students, brought about changes in how civic education exams are structured etc with mean values ranging from 3.56 to 1.86 respectively. Also, the cumulative mean was 3.04 which is above the decision mean. Thus, evidence suggests that insecurity has adversely impacted the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State.

Discussion of Findings

The first major finding indicates that insecurity greatly undermines the quality of civic education instruction. The rise in criminal activities and the presence of armed groups in the region have created an unsafe environment, making it difficult for teachers to conduct lessons effectively. Many educators report feeling unsafe, which reduces their ability to engage students in meaningful learning experiences. Adeyemi (2012) emphasizes that a secure learning environment is crucial for effective teaching, as it fosters better teacher-student interaction. However, in Gusau, the frequent disruption of school activities due to

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64348/zije.202519>

Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of ... Sheu, A. L. & Sule, M. (2025) security threats leads to recurrent closures, significantly reducing instructional time for civic education an essential subject that promotes democratic values and responsible citizenship (Harris & Jones, 2020). Moreover, the unstable security situation discourages teachers from utilizing interactive teaching methods, such as group discussions and experiential learning activities, which are vital for deepening students' understanding of civic issues. Instead, educators often rely on lecture-based instruction, limiting students' ability to critically engage with governance and citizenship topics. McKnight (2017) argues that active learning strategies are essential in civic education as they enhance students' critical thinking. However, due to safety concerns, teachers are compelled to abandon these methods, affecting students' comprehension of civic concepts.

The second key finding highlights that insecurity significantly disrupts student assessment in civic education. Continuous school closures and the displacement of teachers and students result in incomplete syllabi, making it difficult to track academic progress. Afolabi (2018) asserts that consistent student-teacher engagement is necessary for effective assessment, yet insecurity weakens this interaction, compromising the quality of evaluations. Teachers in Gusau Educational Zone face challenges in administering structured assessments, such as written exams and hands-on evaluations, due to safety concerns. As a result, they often resort to informal methods, such as oral questioning, which may not accurately measure students' understanding of civic concepts. Gokce and Arslan (2017) stress the importance of formal assessments in gauging students' critical thinking, particularly in civic education. However, insecurity makes it difficult to implement these assessments systematically. Additionally, Fagbemi (2015) highlights that the inconsistency in student evaluations due to insecurity affects the reliability of academic records, making it difficult to make informed decisions regarding students' performance. Apple (2016) similarly points out that conflict-affected education systems often experience weakened assessment structures, reducing the overall quality of education. In Gusau, these challenges have severely impacted the evaluation of students' comprehension of civic values, limiting their preparedness for active civic participation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study conclude that insecurity has significantly affect the teaching and assessment of civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State. These challenges has weaken teachers and students' civic knowledge and national identity, ultimately affecting their ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

Recommendation

1. Local authorities should collaborate with security agencies to enhance safety around schools by deploying security personnel and establishing safe routes for students and teachers.
2. Schools should implement emergency response protocols and engage with communities to ensure a secure educational environment.
3. Teachers should adopt flexible assessment methods such as continuous assessments, project-based evaluations, and online testing to mitigate disruptions caused by insecurity.

References

- Achumba, I. C., Ighomereho, O. S., & Akpor-Robaro, M. O. (2013). Insecurity and socio-economic development in Nigeria. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 3(4), 285-291.
- Adams, O. T., Adedeji, M. S., Majekodunmi, O. A., Kehinde, B. R., & Adams, T. A. (2021). *The effects of insecurity on school system (secondary schools) in Nigeria*. Global Insecurities: Challenges and the Ways Forward, 126-136.
- Adebayo, S. (2020). The impact of insecurity on teachers' effectiveness in conflict zones. *Journal of Educational Research and Development*, 12(3), 45-60.
- Adeyemi, M. B. (2012). The impact of security on educational outcomes in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Development*, 15(2), 45-59.
- Andrade, H. G., & Cizek, G. J. (2019). *Handbook of formative assessment*. Routledge.
- Afolabi, M. O. (2018). Impact of insecurity on academic performance in Nigeria: A study of secondary schools. *Journal of Educational Research and Policy*, 30(1), 122-137.
- Apple, M. W. (2016). *The politics of education: A critical introduction*. Routledge.
- Barakat, S., & Uitto, J. I. (2019). The impact of armed conflict on education in fragile states. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 68, 12-21. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2019.03.001>.
- CIRCLE. (2020). *Civic education and engagement in the 21st century*. Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement. <https://circle.tufts.edu>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.64348/zije.202519>

- Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of ... Sheu, A. L. & Sule, M. (2025) Fagbemi, O. O. (2015). Assessment in Nigerian schools: Challenges and solutions. *Nigerian Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, 18(3), 25-37.
- Gokce, S., & Arslan, A. (2017). The role of assessment in the development of civic education. *International Journal of Educational Studies*, 8(4), 55-70.
- Hang, S.S. (2022). Assessment of Curriculum Delivery in Basic Education Schools and Security Challenges in some States of Northern Nigeria. *International Journal of Education Development* ISSN: 1119-74-98 University of Uyo.
- Harris, A., & Jones, M. (2020). School leadership and the impact of societal issues on education. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 50(3), 289-305.
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81-112. <https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487>
- Hess, D. E. (2017). *Controversy in the classroom: The democratic power of discussion*. Routledge.
- Mertler, C. A. (2020). Introduction to educational research (10th ed.). Pearson.
- McKnight, L.(2017). Active learning in civic education: Approaches and challenges. *Education and Democracy*, 14(2), 72-85.
- Muhammad, S., and Many-Manya, N.U. (2024). Strategies for Combating Terrorism and Violent Extremism in Nigeria. *Bayero Journal of Education in Africa*, 10(1), Pp. 297-307.
- Mustapha, A.I., Sallee, K.W., and Adaramaja, S. M. (2023). Assessment of insecurity on quality education in Nigeria tertiary institutions. *KWASU International Journal of Education* 1 (6) 178-184, <https://www.kije.com.ng>
- Okeke, R., & Nwankwo, C. (2021). Insecurity and its implications for civic education in Nigerian schools. *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 18(2), 78-92.
- Omotoso, F. (2020). Understanding the socio-economic implications of insecurity in Nigeria. *Journal of African Security*, 13(1), 32-48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19392206.2020.1797991>
- Ogona, I. K., & Anele, G. M. (2021). State of insecurity: Its effect on quality and standard of education in Nigeria. *International Journal of Scientific Research in Education*, 14(3), 525–532.
- Stiggins, R. J. (2017). *The formative assessment action plan: Practical steps to more successful classrooms*. Pearson.
- Torney-Purta, J. (2002). *The study of civic education in the United States and abroad*. In J. L. Deaton (Ed.), *The Civic Mission of Schools* (pp. 71-98). Carnegie Corporation of New York.
- Vogel, D. L., Wei, M., & Oren, N. (2020). Psychological insecurity: Self-concept, social anxiety, and coping. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 67(4), 528-541. <https://doi.org/10.1037/cou0000402>.
- Westheimer, J., & Kahne, J. (2004). What kind of citizen? The politics of educating for democracy. *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(2), 237-269. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312041002237>
- Yusuf, M., & Ahmed, B. (2019). Teachers' coping strategies in insecurity-affected regions: A case study of Northern Nigeria. *International Journal of Education and Policy Studies*, 15(1), 33-49.