

# Influence of Insurgency on Geography Teachers' Attitude and Students' Achievement in Senior Secondary Schools in Maiduguri, Borno State, Northeastern Nigeria

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## ABSTRACT

The influence of insurgency on Geography teachers' attitudes towards teaching and students' achievement constituted the problem of the study. Ex-post facto and survey research designs were employed for the study. The stratified sampling method was used to extract a sample of 134 Geography teachers and 357 senior secondary school students who were used for the study. These were distributed in 20 schools (5 private & 15 public). The WASSCE results for the 2019 session from the 20 sampled schools, as well as a Teachers' Questionnaire on the Influence of Insurgency on Attitude and Achievement (TQIIAA) were used to gather the data for the study. Cronbach Alpha technique was used to determine the reliabilities of WASSCE and TQIIAA. This yielded reliability coefficients of 0.80 and 0.82 for WASSCE and TQIIAA respectively. Frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and the chi-square test were used to analyze the data. The results showed that insurgency predominantly led to teachers' negative attitudes and insufficient time devoted to the teaching of Geography which resulted in students' failure in the subject. The test of hypotheses however proved that the relationship between these teachers' variables (attitude and time devotion to teaching) and students' achievement was not significant. It was therefore recommended that the Government restore peace and security to the study area in collaboration with school communities. It was further recommended that Geography teachers' welfare should be given a premium to improve their attitude towards teaching the subject.

**Keywords:** Insurgency, Teachers' attitude, Achievement, Geography.

## INTRODUCTION

The study of man and his interaction with phenomena in and on the earth's surface, as well as the spatial locations, distributions, and processes therein, all constitute geography, not only as a science but a spatial science. As a spatial science, it studies humans about the physical elements of their surroundings, and how the elements of the earth relate to one another in terms of place and time, as well as how humans influence the elements and vice versa. Geography is one of the earliest disciplines taught in Nigerian schools and the world. The early methods of studying geography included collecting and memorizing facts and studying specific places, and thus idiographic. Today, the approach to studying the subject has changed to a quantitative, theoretical, scientific, research process, and formulation of spatial models and laws, and thus nomothetic in nature. Those who study Geography gain a solid understanding of their local area, learn to understand and interpret natural occurrences and develop practical skills and perspectives that would help them contribute positively to both their community and the country as a whole.

The National Educational Research and Development Commission (NERDC, 2007) developed a new Geography curriculum to enable every student to access more advanced education that better suited their unique needs and skills. The curriculum promotes learning in social sciences and natural scientific fields, which are all cohesively integrated under the spatial and environmental paradigms (Yeung, 2015). To accomplish this purpose of the new curriculum, several themes were added to the existing geography curriculum. Noteworthy among the new themes were environmental problems and the Geography Information

System (GIS), which focuses on methods for gathering, analyzing, and displaying geospatial data. One of the many difficulties encountered in achieving the goals of the new Geography curriculum has been insecurity, especially in Northeastern Nigeria.

In addition to having an impact on domestic security in the nation, the rise of the Boko Haram sect in northeastern Nigeria has shifted important discussions about national security, politics, economy, and education in general. Why Boko Haram emerged remains a question of contrary feelings among Nigerians. Thus, while the majority of Nigerians condemn Boko Haram and its activities, Bilyaminu and Purokayo (2017) for instance, believe they are individuals who have “genuine, legitimate, deeply felt grievances” that explain or, better yet, legitimize their emergence. This explains why these kinds of groups that advocate for particular causes have proliferated throughout Nigeria, affecting both people and their properties. Therefore, insurgents have been observed to deploy increasingly sophisticated instruments in their attacks, wielding high-tech weapons with a degree of accuracy in a consistent manner. Thus, planned bombings, kidnappings for ransom, violent ethno-religious conflicts, and abductions have all become almost regular occurrences. According to Ajayi (2011), there have been specific instances of insurgents breaking into jails and releasing hundreds of prisoners, kidnapping students, and targeted bombings of government buildings, marketplaces, and places of worship, to name a few. There are several explanations for the deeds and activities of these rebels. However, they are adherents to an extreme religious belief that is completely opposed to the Western perspective of education. As a result, many of these rebels hold that accepting Western education is “Haram” or “sinful” because it was not disclosed by the prophet Mohammed. Schools and anything related to Western education have been among their worst targets because of this. This has persisted despite concerted efforts by the security forces to neutralize the rebels’ activities in the country’s Northeastern region.

The social, economic, and political lives of the people living in Northeast Nigeria have been adversely affected by the insurgents’ operations. People are greatly deprived and live in terror (Shuaibu et al., 2015). The region’s economic activities have decreased because markets are seen as easy targets for attacks. The nation’s food supply has also been stifled because of threats and attacks on farmers. In certain parts of the region, general elections were postponed and even canceled at the height of the conflict. Since worship centers are frequently targeted, religious worship also experienced losses in this area, which is known to be predominantly home to Muslims and Christians. Because of the attacks that terrorists in Northeast Nigeria have carried out, schools and other learning facilities have seen their share of damage, making them dangerous for students and their teachers.

Schools in Northeastern Nigeria have been deprived of a safe and secure atmosphere, which is necessary to properly achieve the goals of teaching, progressive learning, and student achievement. It is believed that learning is enhanced in a well-secured environment free from security risks. Hence, Shuaibu et al (2015) affirm that security is a highly esteemed objective. Students’ safety is currently a top priority for anyone involved in Nigeria’s education system. This is because insurgency is starting to become a persistent issue throughout the country, particularly in Nigeria’s Northeastern states of Borno, Yobe, Adamawa, and Taraba. Concerns for their children’s safety in the wake of terrorist attacks in Nigeria, particularly in the aforementioned states, are shared by parents. The terrorist organization (Boko Haram) has been on the rampage for years, and its effects are still seen every day in the Northeastern region of Nigeria, where it attacks and bombs public spaces, including schools. They abduct teachers, schoolchildren, adults, and women and girls. A report by Uzochukwu (2014) revealed that the majority of the 276 secondary school girls from Chibok who were abducted by Boko Haram in 2014 have not yet been located. It is also on record that since 2009, over 1,400 schools have been destroyed and 2,295 teachers killed across the Northeast as a result of the Boko Haram crisis (Haruna, 2023). In addition, 19,000 teachers have been displaced in the Northeast since the Boko Haram insurgency started in 2009.

Northeastern Nigeria has seen significant disruptions to education, which have resulted in low funding (Ruquyyatu, 2013), staffing losses (Okoli & Iortyer, 2014), subpar academic achievement (Etebu & James, 2011), and school demolitions (Yakubu, 2012). There have been several reports of teachers and kids being abducted, killed, and injured. More than 300 schools have allegedly been set on fire by rebels since 2012, denying students access to education. In addition to the physical and psychological repercussions of these events on students, teachers, and communities are forced to evacuate their homes under threat. This cost is too

high for the school system and the country to endure. These occurrences contributed to the dread that parents, teachers, and students felt, which led to the student's withdrawal from the schools and the complete or long-term closure of schools. Education in the region has also been marked by non-coverage of contents, low attendance, vandalism of school property, the creation of half-baked graduates, and the absence of new schools since insurgents controlled Northeast Nigeria. Some teachers have been prompted by these unpleasant results to avoid going to school out of fear. Others have left the area to safety, culminating in depleted teachers' disposition to work and students' achievement.

Academic achievement is defined as a student's capacity to remember facts, memorization content, and oral or written communication of that knowledge—even under test conditions (Kpolovie et al, 2014). According to Samuel (2012), achievement is a result of education determined by how well a teacher, student, or institution has met the learning objectives. Academic achievement expressed in test grades is a crucial factor in determining how well students have learned across a spectrum of subject areas in schools. This could include the grades students receive which demonstrate their capacity to learn and retain information and their ability to express it verbally or in writing while taking an examination. Students' achievement cannot be determined by a single element because achievement is a product of multiple elements interacting together. One of these highly influential factors relating to the teachers is attitude.

According to Perloff (2016), individuals' attitude consists of the mental and emotional state that motivates them to act in a particular way toward a subject or object. Similarly, attitude describes how one feels, thinks, or behaves toward a person or thing (Khan & Ali, 2012). In a research report by Ekperi et al (2019), teachers' attitude to teaching was found to positively correlate with students' academic success, and thus concluded that a teacher's attitude to teaching will certainly affect the outcome of students' learning in the classroom. Akinfe et al (2012) in a study of teachers' characteristics as predictors of students' academic achievement in Osun State, found that student's academic achievement and teachers' attitudes to teaching and learning in the classroom correlated positively and significantly. Teachers' positive attitudes were found in another study to positively influence students' achievement (Uluga et al, 2011). These therefore suggest strongly that students' achievement in any subject can be determined by the disposition of a teacher toward teaching and management of the entire teaching and learning process.

In the Maiduguri metropolis, Northeast Nigeria, ravaged by over a decade's widespread insurgency, it is most probable that some of the most remote elements of teaching and learning such as teachers' attitudes and students' academic achievement could have been compromised. Students' achievement in the popular WASSCE and SSCE conducted in the country is reportedly low or subpar. The authorities of WAEC and NECO expressed concerns over the downward slope of students' achievement over the years. Though this concern is attributable to several possible causes, this study focused on exploring the impact of insurgency as an influencer on Geography teachers' attitudes and students' academic achievement. In doing this, the researchers investigated teachers' attitudes and disposition toward teaching Geography about students' achievement in the subject.

## Objectives

The study investigated the influence of insurgency on the attitude of Geography teachers and student's academic achievement in senior secondary schools in Maiduguri Borno State, Nigeria. Objectives of the study included determining:

1. The extent to which insurgency affects the attitude of teachers toward the teaching of Geography.
2. The extent to which insurgency affects the time devoted to the teaching of Geography.
3. The relationship between teachers' attitude toward teaching Geography and students' achievements.

## Research Questions

1. What is the effect of insurgency on the attitudes of teachers towards the teaching of Geography?

2. To what extent does insurgency affect the time devoted to the teaching of Geography?
3. What is the relationship between teachers' attitudes toward teaching Geography and students' achievement?

## Hypotheses

The study tested the following hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between the time Geography teachers devote to teaching and students' achievement.
2. There is no significant relationship between teachers' attitudes towards teaching Geography and students' achievements.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The study used two different research designs: survey and ex-post-facto. The survey was chosen because data was gathered through a questionnaire from a sample of geography teachers in the study area. The ex-post-facto design was used because the study used academic achievement records of students from the West African School Certificate Examination (WASCE) when insurgents devastated the region.

### Sample and sampling method

The sample for the study consisted of 134 Geography teachers, and 357 students who wrote Geography WASCE in 2019. The sample was derived from 20 senior secondary schools (public and private), representing 20% of the 98 public and private schools in Maiduguri, the study area. A stratified sampling method was used to select 5 private and 15 public senior secondary schools for the study. Thus, all the schools were assigned serial numbers, starting with public schools, followed by the private. Then a table of random numbers was used to first select 15 public schools, followed by the selection of 5 private schools. All the teachers and students in the resulting schools were used for the study. Thus, 134 Geography teachers and 357 students who wrote WASCE in 2019 emerged as the sample for the study.

### Instruments

The study employed two tools to gather data. The West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examination (WASSCE) for students in 2019 and a questionnaire given to teachers were used to gather data. Teachers' Questionnaire on the Influence of Insurgency on Attitude and Achievement (TQIIAA) was administered to teachers. The WASSCE results for 2019 were used to gauge the academic achievement of the students. The TQIIAA is made up of 10 items, broken down into sections A, B, and C. The teacher's biodata was contained in Section A, their attitude toward Geography teaching, Section B (5 items), and the amount of time teachers spent teaching Geography in Section C (5 items). Items in sections B and C were quoted on a four-point Likert-like scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD) with ratings 4, 3, 2, 1 respectively, and criterion mean of 2.50.

The official 2019 WASSCE results, as reported by the schools, were acquired and utilized to gauge the Geography achievement of the students. A nine-point rating system was used to rate the results: A1, B2, B3, C4, C5, C6, D7, E8, and F9. A1 was the highest possible grade, and F9 was the lowest. The grades D7, E8, and F9 were classified as fails. Grades A1, B2, B3, C4, C5, and C6 were considered as passes because only these grades qualify students for admission into advanced programs in Geography and related fields at the nation's higher institutions.

The TQIIAA was evaluated by three experts, two in Geography Education. One expert in educational tests, measurements, and evaluation, all from the University of Jos. Using the Cronbach Alpha technique, the

reliability coefficients of TQIIAA and WASSCE were determined to be 0.80 and 0.87, respectively.

### Statistical Analysis

Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), mean score, frequency, and percentage were used to analyze the data obtained during the study. Chi-square was used to test the hypotheses, while frequency, percentage, and mean score were employed to answer the research questions.

### Data Collection Procedure

The TQIIAA was administered to 134 Geography teachers in the study area by the researchers, and retrieved on the spot. In order to reduce errors and guarantee the maximum return rate, the researchers administered and supervised the filling process of the questionnaires. The WASSCE results of the 357 students in Geography, duly signed by the examination body and kept by the sampled schools, were collected and used for the study.

## RESULTS

Results of the study were presented in tables based on the research questions and hypotheses as follows:

**Research Question One:** The research question probed into the influence of insurgency on the attitude of teachers toward the teaching of Geography in Maiduguri, Borno State. Table 1 contains a summary of the analysis of data for the research question.

Table 1: Summary of Responses on Influence of Insurgency on Teachers' Attitude towards Teaching Geography in Maiduguri

Items	n	Negative		Positive		Mean	Total
		SA	A	D	SD		
1. Teaching geography is not the best thing I can do amidst insurgent activities.	134	68	43	15	8	3.28	134
2. I will only teach geography when my school is safe for teaching and learning activities.		45	67	20	2	3.15	134
3. I do not care whether I cover the syllabus because of insurgency.		61	56	13	4	3.30	134
4. Teaching geography amidst insurgency is a threat to my life		71	32	20	11	3.22	134
5. I will not keep teaching and be abducted and/or killed like my other colleagues and students.		63	39	23	9	3.16	134
Total /Percentage		308 (46%)	237 (35%)	91 (14%)	34 (5%)	3.22	670 (100%)

Table 1 presents information regarding the attitude of teachers toward the teaching of Geography in Maiduguri, Northeast Nigeria, during the insurgency. Of the 134 teachers, 670 frequencies were recorded for the five items. Of these, 545 (81%) reported a negative attitude toward teaching geography, while 125 (19%) reported a positive attitude. The majority of teachers of Geography attributed their negative attitude toward teaching to insurgency and the threats that result from it.



**Research Question Two:** The research question investigated the influence of insurgency on the time teachers devoted to the teaching of Geography in Maiduguri, Borno State with results presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of Responses on Influence of Insurgency on Time Devoted by Teachers in Teaching Geography in Maiduguri

Item	n	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Decision
1. The time we spend in school daily teaching and learning has been greatly reduced by insurgency.	134	46	49	21	18	2.92	Accept
2. The more time I spend teaching Geography, the more risk I am exposed to.		51	43	26	14	2.98	Accept
3. The duration of terms has been reduced significantly due to insurgency.		66	43	18	7	3.25	Accept
4. I am often in a hurry to complete my teaching tasks due to fear of insurgent attacks.		58	51	19	6	3.20	Accept
5. It is impossible to have sufficient time to cover the geography curriculum because of insurgency.		51	43	25	15	2.97	Accept
Total/Percentage			272 (41%)	229 (34%)	109 (16%)	60 (9%)	3.10

The results in Table 2 represent teachers’ responses on the time they devoted to teaching Geography in the study area. The findings confirmed that teachers do not spend enough time teaching Geography, which is inadequate for covering and comprehending the subject’s content. A total of 501 (75%) out of 670 (100%) frequencies concurred that insurgents have shortened periods and the amount of time they spend teaching each day in the classroom. They also rush through lessons, never having enough time to cover the topics in Geography. The majority of teachers also stated that the risk of their exposure to insurgency attacks increases with the amount of time they spend in the classroom. Conversely, 169 respondents (or 25%) disagreed with the items. This is the reason for the conclusion that teachers did not dedicate the required time to teaching and covering the Geography curriculum in Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.

**Research Question Three:** This question focused on the influence of insurgency on students’ achievement in Geography in Maiduguri, Borno State. Results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of Students’ Achievement in Geography in Twenty Sampled Schools in Maiduguri

School	Pass (A1 – C6)	Fail (D7 - F9)	Total (%)
1	2	13	15
2	3	11	14
3	5	14	19
4	4	33	37
5	3	11	14

6	4	9	13
7	4	10	14
8	8	9	17
9	3	9	12
10	1	17	18
11	6	28	34
12	1	13	14
13	4	18	22
14	1	15	16
15	0	9	9
16	1	14	15
17	1	12	13
18	3	20	23
19	3	19	22
20	6	10	16
Total	63 (18%)	294 (82%)	357 (100%)

In Table 3, a summary of Geography students’ achievement in the 2019 WASSCE in Maiduguri amidst insurgency is presented for 20 sampled schools. According to the results, 294 (82%) and 63 (18%) of the candidates who took the Geography examination failed (grades D7–F9) and passed (grades A1–C6) respectively. This shows that the majority of candidates who took the examination in 2019 failed. It follows that they were not qualified for admission into higher studies in Geography-related fields, which could have detrimental long-term effects on Maiduguri and possibly, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis One:** This hypothesis tested for a significant relationship between the time Geography teachers devote to teaching and students’ achievement. The outcome of the test is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Chi-Square Analysis of Significant Relationship between Times Devote to Teaching Geography and Students’ Achievement

Grades	n	Sufficient Time	Insufficient Time	$\alpha$	df	$\chi^2$	$\rho$ -value	Decision
Pass	63	16	47	.05	1	.001	.970	Accept
Fail	294	74	220					

The result presented in Table 4 is the SPSS Chi-squared ( $\chi^2$ ) test of a significant relationship between time devoted by Geography teachers and students’ achievement in Maiduguri, Borno State amidst insurgency. The result shows that the calculated value ( $\chi^2$ ) is 0.001, the degree of freedom is 1 and the  $\rho$ -value is .970. The decision is to accept the null hypothesis at a .05 level of significance. This is because  $\rho = .970 > .05$ , depicting

that the test of relationship is not significant. The evidence indicates that there is no significant relationship between the time devoted by Geography teachers to teaching and students' achievement. The conclusion is that the influence of Geography teachers' devotion to teaching on students' achievement in the subject is not significant.

**Hypothesis Two:** This hypothesis tested for a significant relationship between teachers' attitudes towards teaching Geography and students' achievement. The outcome of the test is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Chi-Square Analysis of Significant Relationship between Teacher's Attitude towards Teaching Geography and Students' Achievement

Grades	n	Positive Attitude	Negative Attitude	$\alpha$	df	$\chi^2$	$\rho$ -value	Decision
Pass	63	13	50	.05	1	.010	.919	Accept
Fail	294	59	235					

The result presented in Table 5 is the SPSS Chi-squared ( $\chi^2$ ) test of a significant relationship between the attitude of Geography teachers and students' achievement in Maiduguri, Borno State amid an insurgency. The result shows that the calculated value ( $\chi^2$ ) is 0.010, the degree of freedom is 1 and the  $\rho$ -value is .919. The decision is to accept the null hypothesis at a .05 level of significance, indicating that the relationship test is not significant. This implies no statistically significant relationship existed between teachers' attitudes towards teaching Geography and students' achievement. It was thus concluded that the influence of Geography teachers' attitudes on students' achievement in the subject is not significant.

## DISCUSSION

This study investigated the influence of insurgency on Geography teachers' attitudes, the time they devoted to teaching the subject, and the extent to which these affected students' achievement. Results of the study revealed that insurgency resulted in teachers' negative attitudes and insufficient time devoted to teaching Geography. These resulted in students' failure in the subject. The results however showed no significant relationship between teachers' negative attitudes and students' achievement, as well as between the time they devoted to teaching and students' achievement. This finding corroborates Kurgat and Gordon (2014) who reported that poor performance of students could not be attributed to teachers' attitudes. This is against findings by Ekperi et al (2019), Uluga et al (2011), and Ndifon and Cornelius-Ukpepi (2014) who reported in their respective studies that achievement has a positive and significant relationship with teachers' attitudes. The findings of the current study, therefore, suggest that the grades the students obtained in Geography were influenced by factors other than the attitude of the Geography teachers and the time they devoted to teaching.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the insurgency was responsible for the negative attitude of Geography teachers, the reduced time they devoted to teaching and low student achievement. However, teachers' negative attitudes and insufficient time devotion to teaching were not responsible for student's failure in the subject.

## RECOMMENDATION

Based on the outcome of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. The government should restore peace and security to the study area in collaboration with school communities.
2. Teachers' welfare should be given a premium to enhance their attitude to work.
3. Fleeing teachers should be replaced as quickly as possible to avoid dampening the attitude of those left.



## Ethical Approval

Necessary approval was secured to carry out the study. This included permission from schools, parents, and teachers who were involved in the research.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors are unified in the compilation of this research paper, and there is no conflict of interest relating to any portion of it. It was also with the consent of the authors that the article was presented for review and subsequent publication.

## Data Availability

Data that has been analysed and presented in this article are true and any portion or the whole is available and can be reproduced.

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