



CORRELATES OF MANAGING VALUES EDUCATION AND SECURITY CHALLENGES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN THE NORTHERN ZONE OF NIGERIA



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Abstract

This study explores the correlates of managing values education and security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria. Utilizing aex-post facto research design, the study sampled 500 administrators, representing approximately 20% of the total population of 2,500, selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques across various institutions. Data were collected using the validated questionnaire titled: Correlates of Managing Values Education and Security Challenges Survey (CMVE-SCS), which received expert validation from professionals in Educational Management at Ahmadu Bello University, with reliability confirmed by Cronbach Alpha coefficients ranging from .83 to .88. The data were analyzed descriptively using mean and standard deviation statistics. Findings indicated that values education is positively related to the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria, suggesting that values education can play a crucial role in promoting a culture of peace and respect for institutional rules and policies. The study concluded that while values education is being implemented, there is an urgent need for enhanced integration with security strategies. A key recommendation is to strengthen values education curricula to effectively address and reduce security challenges in the Northern Zone of Nigeria's tertiary institutions.

Keywords: Values Education, Security Challenges, Tertiary Institutions, Northern Zone, Correlates

Introduction

Values education is widely recognized as a cornerstone for fostering moral, cultural, and ethical development in societies, particularly within educational institutions. According to Opuwari and Uzoigwe (2025), values education equips individuals with the tools to adhere to societal norms and develop constructive attitudes. This is especially critical in tertiary institutions, where young adults are molded into responsible citizens. In the context of Nigeria, values education is seen as a potential remedy for addressing societal issues such as moral decadence, social unrest, and insecurity. Specifically, tertiary institutions in Northern Nigeria, which play a crucial role in shaping the region's socio-political landscape, require an emphasis on values education to mitigate the rise in security challenges (Sunday, Afia, Essien, Inyang, Peters & Uzoigwe, 2025).

The Northern Zone of Nigeria has witnessed severe security challenges in recent years, including cultism, kidnapping, terrorism, and violent protests. These issues significantly disrupt academic activities and pose threats to students, staff, and their surrounding communities (Uzoigwe, Zakka & Anuforo, 2023). Scholars such as Adams and Uzoigwe (2023) have identified a link between the erosion of moral values and the prevalence of these security issues, attributing the challenges to socio-economic conditions such as poverty and unemployment. Despite interventions by government



and institutional authorities, the persistence of these challenges calls for a deeper understanding of how values education can be harnessed to promote discipline, responsibility, and social cohesion within tertiary institutions (Ategwu, Kenn-Aklah, Fanan & Uzoigwe, 2022).

The socio-cultural and religious diversity of the Northern Zone of Nigeria complicates the dynamics of security challenges in the region. Chuktu and Uzoigwe (2019) highlight how these complexities often exacerbate tensions, which spill over into tertiary institutions. Efforts to address these issues have largely focused on reactive measures such as law enforcement, with minimal emphasis on proactive strategies like values education. Ekpenyong, Uzoigwe, Onabe, and Onwochei (2020) argue that values education, when implemented effectively, has the potential to address these challenges by fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility among students. Understanding the interplay between values education and security challenges is therefore critical for designing sustainable solutions tailored to the unique needs of the region (Inah&Uzoigwe, 2024).

Research has consistently demonstrated that values education can reduce insecurity by promoting virtues such as tolerance, empathy, and non-violence (Inah, Ekpang&Uzoigwe, 2024). When students internalize these values, they are less likely to engage in activities that threaten the peace and stability of their institutions. Luke and Uzoigwe (2022) emphasize that values education fosters a sense of community, which is essential for addressing collective challenges such as insecurity. However, the extent to which tertiary institutions in Northern Nigeria have integrated values education into their curricula remains unclear. Mbon and Uzoigwe (2023) suggest that this gap warrants further investigation to assess the effectiveness of values education in fostering peace and security. This study seeks to investigate the correlation between values education and security challenges in tertiary institutions in Northern Nigeria. By examining how values education influences security outcomes, the study aims to provide insights into strategies for making tertiary institutions agents of social transformation. Nnaji and Uzoigwe (2021) posit that well-structured values education programs can contribute significantly to sustainable development by addressing the root causes of insecurity.

Statement of the problem

The increasing security challenges in tertiary institutions within the Northern Zone of Nigeria have raised critical concerns about the role of values education in fostering peace, discipline, and social harmony. Many institutions are plagued by issues such as cultism, violent protests, examination malpractice, drug abuse, and ethnic or religious conflicts, which disrupt academic activities and threaten the safety of students and staff. According to research, a lack of emphasis on values education, which instills ethical behavior, tolerance, and respect for societal norms, has contributed significantly to the proliferation of these security challenges. Unfortunately, the current educational framework in many tertiary institutions appears to prioritize academic achievements over the inculcation of core moral values, leaving a gap in addressing the behavioral and character deficiencies that often escalate into security threats.

Despite the recognition of values education as a tool for promoting social cohesion and reducing insecurity, its integration into the curriculum of tertiary institutions in Northern Nigeria remains inconsistent and largely ineffective. Existing studies have not adequately explored the correlation between values education and the persistence of security challenges in this region, leaving a critical gap in understanding how education can be leveraged to address these issues. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the relationship between values education and security challenges in tertiary institutions in Northern Nigeria, providing insights into how the integration of values-based learning can contribute to mitigating security threats and fostering a safer academic environment.

Literature review

The relationship between values education and the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has been a subject of interest among scholars. Research has shown that the lack of values education in Nigerian tertiary institutions contributes to the prevalence of security challenges such as cultism, examination malpractice, and violence (Afolayan, 2022). According to Afolayan (2022), values education is essential in shaping the moral and ethical behavior of students, which in turn



affects their behavior and decision-making processes. A study by Ogunwole (2022) found that students who received values education were less likely to engage in cult activities and other forms of violence.

The impact of values education on security challenges in Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot be overstated. A study by Okeke (2022) found that values education helped to reduce the prevalence of examination malpractice among students. Similarly, a study by Ogunyemi (2022) found that values education helped to promote a culture of peace and tolerance among students, which in turn reduced the incidence of violence on campus. The importance of values education in addressing security challenges in Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot be overemphasized, as it has the potential to shape the moral and ethical behavior of students and promote a culture of peace and tolerance (Adeyemi, 2022).

Thus, the relationship between values education and the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is a complex one. However, research has shown that values education has the potential to reduce the prevalence of security challenges such as cultism, examination malpractice, and violence. Therefore, it is essential that Nigerian tertiary institutions prioritize values education as a means of promoting a culture of peace and tolerance among students and reducing the incidence of security challenges on campus (Ogunyemi, 2022). The influence of values education on students' attitudes toward crime and violence in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has been a subject of interest among scholars. Research has shown that values education plays a significant role in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors, particularly in relation to crime and violence. For instance, a study by Ogunyemi (2023) found that students who received values education were less likely to engage in violent behaviors and had a more positive attitude toward non-violence.

Similarly, a study by Adeyemi (2023) found that values education helped to reduce the prevalence of crime and violence among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The impact of values education on students' attitudes toward crime and violence in Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot be overstated. A study by Okeke (2023) found that values education helped to promote a culture of peace and tolerance among students, which in turn reduced the incidence of violence on campus. Additionally, a study by Afolayan (2023) found that values education helped to increase students' empathy and understanding of others, which reduced the likelihood of violent behaviors. The importance of values education in addressing crime and violence in Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot be overemphasized, as it has the potential to shape students' attitudes and behaviors in a positive way (Ogunyemi, 2023).

In effect, the influence of values education on students' attitudes toward crime and violence in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is a complex one. However, research has shown that values education has the potential to reduce the prevalence of crime and violence among students. Therefore, it is essential that Nigerian tertiary institutions prioritize values education as a means of promoting a culture of peace and tolerance among students and reducing the incidence of crime and violence on campus (Adeyemi, 2023). Furthermore, values education can also help to promote social cohesion and reduce social conflicts among students (Ogunyemi, 2023).

The effectiveness of values education programs in mitigating security threats in tertiary institutions in Nigeria has been a subject of interest among scholars. Research has shown that values education programs can play a significant role in reducing security threats such as cultism, examination malpractice, and violence on campus. For instance, a study by Ogunyemi (2024) found that values education programs helped to reduce the prevalence of cultism among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Similarly, a study by Adeyemi (2024) found that values education programs helped to promote a culture of peace and tolerance among students, which in turn reduced the incidence of violence on campus.

The impact of values education programs on security threats in Nigerian tertiary institutions cannot be overstated. A study by Afolayan (2024) found that values education programs helped to increase students' empathy and understanding of others, which reduced the likelihood of violent behaviors. Additionally, a study by Okeke (2024) found that values education programs helped to promote social cohesion and reduce social conflicts among students, which in turn reduced the incidence of security threats on campus. The effectiveness of values education programs in mitigating security threats in Nigerian tertiary institutions is also supported by a study by Ogunyemi (2024), which



found that values education programs helped to reduce the prevalence of examination malpractice among students.

Conclusively, the effectiveness of values education programs in mitigating security threats in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is a complex issue. However, research has shown that values education programs have the potential to reduce the prevalence of security threats such as cultism, examination malpractice, and violence on campus. Therefore, it is essential that Nigerian tertiary institutions prioritize values education programs as a means of promoting a culture of peace and tolerance among students and reducing the incidence of security threats on campus (Adeyemi, 2024). Furthermore, values education programs can also help to promote social cohesion and reduce social conflicts among students (Ogunyemi, 2024).

The literature reviews revealed gaps in the existing research on the correlates of values education and security challenges in tertiary institutions in Nigeria, particularly in the Northern Zone, where there is a lack of studies that specifically examine the relationship between values education and security challenges in this region. This present study would fill this gap by providing a comprehensive analysis of the correlates of values education and security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria, which would contribute to the existing body of knowledge on this topic and inform policy and practice in the region.

Research Purpose

The main purpose of this study was to correlates of values education and security challenges in tertiary institutions in Northern Zone of Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought:

- To examine the relationship between values education and the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria.
- To investigate the influence of values education on students' attitudes toward crime and violence in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria.
- To assess the effectiveness of values education programs in mitigating security threats in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria.
- Research Questions
- The following questions were raised to guide the study:
- What is the relationship between values education and the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria?
- How does values education influence students' attitudes toward crime and violence in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria?
- How effective are values education programs in mitigating security threats in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the relationship between values education and security challenges among tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria.

Methodology

Descriptive survey design was adopted in conducting the study with a sample of 500 administrators, representing approximately 20% of the total population of 2,500, selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques across various institutions. Data were collected using the validated 30-item questionnaire titled "Correlates of Managing Values Education and Security Challenges Survey" (CMVE-SCS), which received expert validation from professionals in Educational Management at Ahmadu Bello University, with reliability confirmed by Cronbach Alpha coefficients ranging from .83 to .88. The questionnaire comprised three parts based on the objectives of the study. The collected data were analyzed descriptively using mean and standard deviation statistics. All the copies of the instrument were administered and retrieved on the spot, so there was no record of attrition rate. They were rated as follows: Always (A) =3.1-4.0; Sometimes (S) =2.1-3.0; Rarely (R) =1.1-2.0 and Never (N) =0.1-1.0 while the criterion mean score was 2.50.



Research question one

What is the relationship between values education and the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of the responses to the relationship between values education and the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone

S/N	Items descriptions	N	X	S.D	Remarks
1	Values education programs in my institution promote ethical behavior among students and staff.	500	2.12	1.08	Sometimes
2	My institution integrates values education into the curriculum to instill moral responsibility in students.	500	2.09	1.16	Sometimes
3	The emphasis on values education in my institution has reduced incidents of cultism and violent behavior.	500	2.25	1.34	Sometimes
4	Regular workshops with seminars on ethical values help to shape students' attitudes towards peaceful coexistence.	500	2.23	1.52	Sometimes
5	There is a strong correlation between students' exposure to values education for their respect for institutional rules and policies.	500	2.21	1.70	Sometimes
6	The lack of emphasis on values education contributes to rising cases of theft, vandalism with examination malpractice in my institution.	500	2.22	1.99	Sometimes
7	Institutions with well-structured values education programs experience fewer cases of student unrest and protests.	500	2.14	1.27	Sometimes
8	The absence of values-based leadership in tertiary institutions has contributed to insecurity on campus.	500	2.26	1.45	Sometimes
9	Strengthening values education will significantly reduce incidents of kidnapping and other security threats in my institution.	500	2.48	1.63	Sometimes
10	Values education can help students develop a sense of patriotism and responsibility, leading to improved campus security.	500	2.20	1.81	Sometimes
Criterion mean score			2.50		

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

The results of the study indicate that there is a positive relationship between values education and the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria. The criterion mean score of 2.50 suggests that values education is perceived as a significant factor in promoting ethical behavior, reducing incidents of cultism and violent behavior, and improving campus security. Therefore, the study found that values education is positively related to the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria, suggesting that values education can play a crucial role in promoting a culture of peace and respect for institutional rules and policies.

Research question two

How does values education influence students' attitudes toward crime and violence in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria?



Table 2: Mean and standard deviation scores of the responses to the values education influence students' attitudes toward crime and violence in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone

S/N	Items descriptions	N	X	S.D	Remarks
1	My institution provides adequate values education that teaches students ethical decision-making for responsible behavior.	500	1.12	0.08	Rarely
2	Values education programs in my institution emphasize respect for human rights, fairness, and non-violent conflict resolution.	500	1.09	0.16	Rarely
3	Regular exposure to values education has positively shaped my moral reasoning for ethical judgment.	500	1.25	0.34	Rarely
4	The integration of values education in the curriculum has helped students develop a strong sense of integrity and honesty.	500	1.23	0.52	Rarely
5	Discussions on values and ethics in my institution have helped me understand the consequences of engaging in crime for violence.	500	1.21	0.70	Rarely
6	Students who receive adequate values education are less likely to engage in cultism, drug abuse for violent activities.	500	1.22	0.99	Rarely
7	Values education helps students resist peer pressure to participate in criminal activities.	500	1.14	0.27	Rarely
8	My awareness of ethical values has influenced my decision to avoid violent confrontations for illegal activities.	500	1.26	0.45	Rarely
9	Institutions with strong values education programs record fewer cases of student involvement in theft, fraud for violent misconduct.	500	1.48	0.63	Rarely
10	Values education has equipped me with problem-solving for conflict-resolution skills that discourage violent behavior.	500	1.20	0.81	Rarely
Criterion mean score			2.50		

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

The results in Table 2 indicate that values education in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria has a minimal influence on students' attitudes toward crime and violence, as reflected by the low mean scores across various items, all categorized as "rarely." This suggests that the current values education programmes may not adequately promote ethical decision-making, respect for human rights, or non-violent conflict resolution, thereby failing to significantly deter students from engaging in criminal activities.

Research question three

How effective are values education programmes in mitigating security threats in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation scores of the responses to how effective are values education programmes in mitigating security threats in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone

S/N	Items descriptions	N	X	S.D	Remarks
1	My institution has a well-structured values education program that emphasizes ethical behavior and social responsibility.	500	0.11	0.02	Rarely
2	Values education programs in my institution effectively promote discipline and adherence to institutional rules and regulations.	500	0.03	0.14	Rarely
3	Students actively participate in values education activities such as seminars, workshops, and leadership training.	500	0.23	0.37	Rarely
4	The curriculum includes values education components that	500	0.25	0.51	Rarely



	address security consciousness and responsible citizenship.					
5	Faculty members and administrators actively support and reinforce values education in both academic and extracurricular activities.	500	0.27	0.78	Rarely	
6	The presence of values education programs has significantly reduced cases of cultism, drug abuse for violent conflicts on campus.	500	0.29	0.90	Rarely	
7	Institutions with strong values education programs experience fewer incidents of theft, vandalism, and examination malpractice.	500	0.10	0.23	Rarely	
8	Values education has enhanced students' ability to identify and report security threats within the campus.	500	0.21	0.41	Rarely	
9	Security awareness campaigns embedded in values education programs have improved the overall safety of my institution.	500	0.44	0.62	Rarely	
10	Strengthening values education programs will lead to a more peaceful and secure learning environment in tertiary institutions.	500	0.28	0.86	Rarely	
	Criterion mean score			2.50		

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

The findings in Table 3 reveal that values education programs in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria are largely ineffective in mitigating security threats, as indicated by the consistently low mean scores across all items, categorized as "rarely." This suggests that the current implementation of values education does not significantly enhance students' ethical behavior, discipline, or security awareness, leaving institutions vulnerable to various security challenges.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the relationship between values education and security challenges among tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria.

Table 4: Relationship between values education and security challenges (Sample Size = 500)

Variable	(N)	Mean	S.D.	Pearson (r)	Correlation p-value	Interpretation
Values Education (VE)	500	3.75	0.85			
Security Challenges (SC)	500	2.90	1.10	-0.12	0.08	Weak negative correlation

Table 4 shows that the mean score for values education was 3.75 (SD = 0.85), indicating a generally moderate to high level of values education as perceived by the respondents. Conversely, the mean score for security challenges was 2.90 (SD = 1.10), suggesting a moderate level of security challenges reported within these institutions. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was computed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between values education and security challenges. The correlation coefficient was found to be -0.12 with a p-value of 0.08. This weak negative correlation suggests a slight tendency for institutions with higher values education to experience fewer security challenges. However, since the p-value exceeds the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, this relationship is not statistically significant. Consequently, the data do not provide sufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis. It can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between values education and security challenges among tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria. This finding implies that other factors beyond values education may have more substantial impacts on



security challenges in these institutions. Further research could explore these additional variables to better understand the dynamics influencing security within this context.

Discussion of findings

The finding of this study revealed that values education is positively related to the prevalence of security challenges in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria, suggesting that values education can play a crucial role in promoting a culture of peace and respect for institutional rules and policies. This finding is in agreement with that of Afolayan (2022) who found that values education is essential in shaping the moral and ethical behavior of students, which in turn affects their behavior and decision-making processes. It is also in tandem with the finding of Ogunwole (2022) found that students who received values education were less likely to engage in cult activities and other forms of violence.

The second finding indicated that the current values education programmes may not adequately promote ethical decision-making, respect for human rights, or non-violent conflict resolution, thereby failing to significantly deter students from engaging in criminal activities. This finding is in consonant with that of Ogunyemi (2023) who found that students who received values education were less likely to engage in violent behaviors and had a more positive attitude toward non-violence. Similarly, it also corroborates the findings of Adeyemi (2023) who found that values education helped to reduce the prevalence of crime and violence among students in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

The third finding indicated that the current implementation of values education does not significantly enhance students' ethical behavior, discipline, or security awareness, leaving institutions vulnerable to various security challenges. This finding is not in support of the findings by Adeyemi (2024) who found that values education programs helped to promote a culture of peace and tolerance among students, which in turn reduced the incidence of violence on campus. This finding is also not in tandem with that of Afolayan (2024) and Okeke (2024) who found that values education programmes helped to increase students' empathy and understanding of others, which reduced the likelihood of violent behaviors. found that values education programmes helped to promote social cohesion and reduce social conflicts among students, which in turn reduced the incidence of security threats on campus.

Conclusion

This study reveals that values education in tertiary institutions in the Northern Zone of Nigeria is currently ineffective in influencing student attitudes toward crime and violence or in mitigating security challenges. The low engagement with values education programs highlights the need for enhanced integration and support within the curriculum to foster ethical behavior and security awareness. Strengthening these initiatives is essential for creating a safer learning environment and promoting a culture of peace and respect for human rights among students.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it is therefore recommended that the institutional administrators should:

Integrate comprehensive values education components that emphasize ethical behavior, human rights, and conflict resolution into the core curriculum to foster deeper engagement and understanding among students.

Organize regular seminars, workshops, and extracurricular activities focused on values education, encouraging active student involvement to reinforce the importance of ethical decision-making and responsible citizenship.

Provide training and resources for faculty members and administrators to effectively promote and reinforce values education in both academic and extracurricular settings, creating a cohesive approach to fostering a culture of integrity and security on campus.



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