RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERCEIVED CAUSES OF CONFLICTS AMONG SECONDARY STUDENTS IN SOKOTO STATE IMPLICATION FOR COUNSELLING

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This paper focused on Secondary student's perception of causes of conflicts between students and their colleague, also between students, school Management. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated for the study. The sample comprised two-hundred and thirty (230) students. A structured questionnaire titled 'Causes of conflicts among secondary school Questionnaire (COASSQ) was used to collect data. Mean and t-test statistics were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses formulated. The study revealed that, causes of students-students conflicts included, corporal punishment by senior Students, rape and drug abuse, stilling of students properties disputes over a female students friend ships, socio economic class of student. Some of the identified causes of student to School management conflicts were lack of qualified teaching Staff, lack of social amenities, bad relationship with students and Staff, lack of School counselor, and indiscipline of students. All the forms of conflict can be resolved through the counseling to resolve students-student conflicts and to resolve. Students to management conflicts:

INTRODUCTION

Conflict is inevitable in any organization as it is natural part of working relationships. Achieving the goal of Secondary education requires the collaborative efforts of different categories of people within the Secondary School system, such as Principal, Teachers, students, other admin staff, non-academic staff. A conflict often arises within the various groups in the course of carrying out their functions. Conflicts in Secondary Schools in Sokoto State, take the form of strike actions, riots, demonstrations protest and political violence. Presently, as a result of frequents strike actions and students unrest leading to closure of some secondary schools in the state. Students are unable to predict the actual time of completing their studies. Frictions among students have led and properties and sometimes innocent members of the public have had to bear the brunt of the conflicts. The vital role of Secondary School educations in promoting national development is to produce best students that can be enrolled in to our Universities across the Nation. Conflict has been defined by various scholars. A musan (1996) defined conflict simply as disagreement between two parties. Similarly, Bloiss (2007) saw conflict as a disagreement between two or more parties that are incompatible.

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However, conflict is perceived to be more than just a disagreement between people. Wilmsot and Hocks (1998) defined conflict as an expressed struggle between two interdependent parties over unmet needs, incompatible goals and interference from others. Conflict is more of a tension arising from a group of people's perception that their need or desires are denied (Bens, 1997). Also, according to Rahim (2010), conflict is an interactive process in which incompatibility, disagreement or dissonance within or between social entities is manifested. Basically, conflict is a serious friction, discord or disagreement that arises between two parties when members envisage a threat to their needs and interests. Conflict as intra-group, conflict while that between members of two (or more) groups is referred to as inter-group conflict. Conflict in secondary school in Nigeria has become a major concern to all stakeholders in education. Students' unrest, revolts and violence are regular features of our schools today (Adeyemi Ekundayo and Alonge, 2010). Conflict hinders productivity, lowers moral and stimulates inappropriate behaviours in individual (Mc Namara, 2007). When conflicts are not prevented, properly managed and /or resolve, the resultant effect is ineffective teaching and learning in our secondary schools. Conflicts hamper the capacity of both staff and students to develop new ideas and thinking creatively. Though conflict is inevitable, the causes of conflicts need to be addressed so as to understand the nature of conflict

and also to put in place necessary/ appropriate conflict resolution mechanisms to produce conducive learning atmosphere. This paper therefore focuses on students' perception of causes of conflicts among students (student-student conflicts) on one hand and causes of conflict between students and Administrators parents (Student- Administrator conflicts), on the other hand. Understanding of these will pave way for recommendations of effective strategies for managing conflicts.

Statement of the Problems

There is no doubt in saying the fact that, there are many problems that are associated with the conflict in secondary schools in Sokoto state. Some of the problems are based between students and their colleague while some causes are between the students and School management. Part of the causes of secondary school conflicts amongst the students to students are corporal punishments, drugs abuse and rape cases, stilling of students properties, dispute over a female relationship with a male students, socio economic class of students, tribalism and religious affiliations, inadequate instructional materials etc. While in students to management conflicts are also many but some of the expected causes are lack of or qualified teachers, inadequate provision of social amenities, relationship between teachers and female students, indiscipline of students etc. As we all believed that these students are future leaders of tomorrow it become pertinent to identify the areas where counselling intervention could be provided based on their areas of problems so as to ameliorate their causes of conflict by making recommendation for counselling implication.

Research Questions

This study is instituted to find out:

- What are the perceived causes of students-student conflicts in secondary schools in Sokoto state?
- What are perceived causes of student- School Management conflicts in secondary school in Sokoto state?

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:

- To find out whether the perceived causes of students-student conflicts in secondary schools in Sokoto state is significantly positive?
- To find out whether the perceived causes of student-School Management conflicts in secondary school in Sokoto state is significantly positive?

Research Hypotheses

Based on the purpose of the study, null hypotheses were postulated and tested during the investigation.

A research hypothesis was also postulated

The attitude of male and female Secondary Students towards conflicts between students - students do not differ significantly in their mean responses on the causes of conflicts between students and fellow students.

The attitude of male and female Secondary Students towards conflicts between students - Management do not differ significantly in their mean responses on the causes of conflicts between students and Management is not significantly positive.

Research Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used for this study. The population comprises of all the Secondary school in Sokoto State. Sokoto State was divided in to four zones (North, South, East and West). This necessitated the use of a questionnaire to elicit information from students on their perception of causes of conflicts. The participants in the study were 230 SS3 in Government Secondary Schools across the state. Fifty seven students was randomly selected from each zones, North, South, East and West, the Secondary Schools. The male students were 140 in number while female 90 respectively.

The instrument used for data collection was the questionnaire which was developed based on the purpose of study the instrument was validated by expert in the department of counseling psychology in Usmanu Danfodio University Sokoto. The titled, of the questionnaire was 'Causes of conflicts among secondary school Questionnaire" (COASSQ), was made up of 21 items which were divided into two sub-sections. The first section with 11 items focused on eliciting information on the causes of conflict between students and fellow students, while the second section with 10 items focused on acquiring information on causes of conflicts between students and management respondents were instructed to rate the items on a 4-point likert scale of Strongly Agree (points), Agree (3 points), Disagree (2 points) and Strongly Disagree (1 point). Data collected were analysed using the statistical weighted mean and t-test. The mean ratings of the respondents were categorized by using the real limits of numbers of responses made. The cut-off point fixed at 2.5. As a decision rule, any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above on the 4-point likert scale was regarded as agree" while any mean below 2.50 was regarded as "Disagree".

RESULTS

Research Question 1. What are perceived causes of student-student conflicts in secondary school?

Table 1 shows that 90% of the items on the causes of students-student conflicts were agreed on by the students. They disagreed with item 7- Lack of internet service in the school can cause of conflict among students.

Research Question 2. What are perceived causes of student-Management conflicts in secondary school?

Table 2 indicates that all the items on causes of Student-Management conflicts were agreed on by the students.

Hypothesis 1. Male and female SS 3 students do not differ significantly in their mean responses on the causes of conflicts. The result in table 3 shows that the calculated t value of -1.68 is less than the critical t-value of. 87 228 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, there is no significant difference between male and female secondary students in their perception of causes of conflicts. The null hypothesis is rejected. Both male and female student had similar perceptions of the causes of conflicts.

Table 1. Mean ratings of students' responses on the causes of student-student conflicts

S/N	Items on the causes of students-student conflicts		SD	Decision
1	Corporal punishment	2.92	0.86	Agree
2	Rape and drug abuse	3.54	0.67	Agree
3	Stilling of students properties	3.40	0.62	Agree
4	Dispute over a female student	2.87	0.85	Agree
5	Socio-economic status of students	3.07	0.79	Agree
6	Tribalism and religious affiliations	3.02	0.78	Agree
7	Lack of internet services in the school	1.80	0.83	Disagree
8	Inadequate teaching/learning facilities 3.26	2.90	0.88	Agree
9	Nudity in hostel by students	3.26	0.82	Agree
10	Indiscipline of student	3.19	0.70	Agree
11	Discrimination in student leadership	2.86	0.84	Agree

Table 2. Mean ratings of students' responses on the causes of student-Management conflicts

S/NO	Items on the causes of Student-Management conflict	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Lack of qualified Teachers	3.60	0.64	Agree
2	Relationship with female students	3.73	0.53	Agree
3	Lack of social amenities	3.12	0.69	Agree
4	Lack of a School Cousellor	3.33	0.71	Agree
5	Indiscipline of students	3.21	0.67	Agree
6	Lack of instructional materials	2.70	0.90	Agree
7	Lack of respect to the school authority 3.28	3.27	0.72	Agree
8	Corporal punishment	3.28	0.75	Agree
9	Use of politics in the School	3.02	0.77	Agree
10	Mischief by management	3.46	0.66	Agree

Table 3. Independent t-test analysis of gender difference in the students' perception of causes of conflict

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t cal	T Critical
Male	140	2.82	0.50			
Female	90	2.83	0.57	228	-168	.87

DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of this study indicated that conflict among secondary students in Sokoto state were caused by poverty, different perspectives on issues, different soci-cultural backgrounds, discrimination in student leaderships, different religions affiliations and tussle over boy/girl friends amongst others. These findings are in line with Ramani and Zhimin (2010) that identified certain variables such as differences in individual capacities and religious in Kenya. Also in support of the findings is Egwunyenga (2009) who focused on roommates conflicts in Nigerian secondary and reported that different cult members in a room with different interests was a likely causes of conflicts.

This study also found out the variables responsible for student-administration/parents conflicts in secondary school as indicated in table 2. From the students' perspectives, the causes of student-administration conflicts were inadequate provision of basic amenities and learning facilities, arbitrary increase in school fees, lack of proper communication channel, indiscipline on the part of students, disrespectful attitude of students towards authorities, destruction on school facilities by students, imposition of rules on students by school management and lack of students' complaints. Generally, these findings are supportive of the submission of Scott (2003) that conflict is a part of every human relationship or associations. The results of this study have reinforced the need for public awareness of the causes of conflicts in our tertiary institutions. The causes of conflict vary and are unique. If conflict is unavoidable, then there is need to be aware of the causes of conflicts in order to understand and fashion out strategies to employ in preventing, resolving and managing conflicts.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made in managing and resolving conflicts:

Student-Student Conflict

- **Dialogue_** Students should seek dialogue, interact and discuss with the opposing group or person as a better potion than violence in seeking
- **Use of Dean of Students and Student-leaders-** Student should freely take their complaints to Dean of students or student-leaders (as necessary). Some conflicts are resolved at the n level.
- **Use of Counseling as preventive and curative measures:-** Students should seek counseling from the institutions' Counseling in order to overcome ill-fellings and other conflicting problems before they are driven into violence of criminal acts.

Implication for counseling

- Awareness should be created in tertiary institution on the causes of conflicts, consequence of conflicts and appropriate resolution mechanisms. These can be done through orientation for new students, matriculation ceremony and peace talks.
- The negative impact of cultism and the need to avoid cultism should be stressed during matriculation and graduation ceremonies.

- Cordial relationship should be built between management and students. Regular meetings and discussions on rules, decisions and policies affecting students should be made with student leaders. Students' complaints should be promptly addressed.
- School management should improve on the communication network between management and students. Proper communication channels should be created for students to express their views and complaints.
- There should be effective computerized information system that disseminates reliable information to students regularly in order to bridge communication gap.

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