

STUDENTS' CRISES MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND SCHOOL EFFECTIVENESS IN OSUN STATE-OWNED TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS

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Abstract

The study investigated students' crisis management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State government-owned tertiary institutions. The study adopted a descriptive research design of correlational type. The population for study comprised of 697 academic staff, 16 administrators, and 20 supervising ministries in the sampled government-owned tertiary institutions in Osun State. The researcher, through the use of simple random sampling technique, selected four out of the six government-owned tertiary institutions in Osun State, while the proportional sampling technique was used to select 281 stakeholders. Self-designed questionnaire titled: 'Students' Crisis Management Strategies Questionnaire (SCMSQ) and Students' Academic Performance Proforma (SAPP) were used to collect necessary data. The mean, standard deviation and Multiple Regression were used to answer the research questions and test hypotheses raised and formulated respectively. The findings indicated that there was a significant prediction of lecturers' compensation and goal achievement in Federal Colleges of Education, South-west, Nigeria. The study concluded that adequate compensation would go a long way in enhancing effective realisation of the goals of these institutions. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that: government should sustain and intensify their efforts by paying more attention to lecturer compensation through timely promotion, provision of affordable health services, salaries and improved training opportunities.

Keywords: Students' Crises Management Strategies; School effectiveness; Negotiation, Dialogue; Compromising

Introduction

Educational institutions are the key drivers of development and global progress, serving as vital tools in any society. This is due to the fact that it is a vital tool to manpower development, social and political development of a society. Undoubtedly, quality education eliminates illiteracy ignorance, laziness, and even poverty from society. However, for any educational goal to be achieved and sustained, the educational system should be devoid or free from any form of crises, especially power tussle within the school management, lecturers, staff and students (Adeyemi, 2019).

Tertiary education is crucial for economic and political development and enhances competitiveness in a global knowledge society. In the case of Africa, tertiary education plays a critical capacity building and professional training role in support of all the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Recent research findings indicate that expanding tertiary education may promote faster technological

growth and improve a country's ability to maximize its economic output (Bloom, Canning, and Chan, 2016). A new range of competences, such as adaptability, team work, communication skills, and the motivation for continual learning, have become critical.

The establishment of any tertiary institution is to facilitate acquisition of knowledge, skills, and values for the purpose of producing individuals who will contribute their own quota to societal development (Yusuf, 2018). In essence, higher institutions of learning are meant to provide students with sound and qualitative education that will make them productive, self-fulfilling and attain self-actualization. The Government (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2013) clearly highlights the aims of higher education as the acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value – orientation for the survival of the individual and society; the development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their environments; the acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into careful members of the community; and the acquisition of an objective view of the local and external environment (Ajayi, 2018).

A perfunctory look at the conditions of higher education in Nigeria, however, shows that the above aims of higher education are difficult to achieve in view of crises that have been rocking most of the tertiary institutions in the country. Asikhia (2019) describe student crises as the revolts and rampages by students to show their grievances or press home their demands from their school authorities. Generally speaking, scholars such as Ngeri (2018) and Balma (2019), have observed that students' crisis is a global phenomenon which has ravaged countries like Peru, Columbia, Paraguay, Bolivia, and Mexico. Also, African countries like Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Benin, Cameroon, Zaire, Gabon, Uganda, Sudan, Kenya, Somali, Zimbabwe, and Zambia have witnessed numerous students' crises. In the same vein, Nigerian tertiary institutions have been witnessing series of crises since the inception of higher education in the country (Alabi, 2010).

Adejuwon (2017) posited that students' crisis is as old as the tertiary institutions in Nigeria itself, while students' militancy in the nation's tertiary institutions has come to be issue of serious concern. As such, revolts, protests, unrests and violence, and incessant closure of schools for months have become a regular characteristic of Nigerian's tertiary institutions. The frequency of these students' riots and crises therefore calls for study from scholars and educationists. According to Bryank (2012), it is the state of disharmony that is brought about by differences of impulses, desire or tendencies. Despite the various forms in which crises emanates, it is as a result of tensions, stress, frustrations, embezzlement, lack of transparency, indiscipline, lack of adequate teaching and struggle to gain higher positions. These unresolved conflict leads to strikes, riots, major injuries, loss of lives and destruction of properties including school buildings as well as arresting those who are involved in such activities. The occurrence of student's crisis could first be shown through boycotts of classes, exchange of black magic powers in the offices, refusal to obey the school rules and regulations, carrying of placards and chanting of solidarity songs by the students and staff, to make their grievances be known to the authorities (Ajibade, 2013).

It is very obvious that crisis in educational institutions can make or mar the progress and the development of the institutions. This, the reason why school administrators and managers must adopt certain administrative and managerial strategies or measures in the formulation and implementation of law and order in schools. These strategies according to Alabi (2002) may include; dialogue, suspension, use of enforcement agents, confrontation; and joint problem solving strategies to enable schools continue to pursue and achieve the targeted desired and set goals of teaching and learning. Based on the foregoing discussions, this paper is set out to examine students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-Owned tertiary institutions.

Statement of the Problem

A myriad of factors does influence schools' effectiveness at all levels. Many of these factors are subject to human manipulation while others are not. The incessant occurrence of crises among students in public tertiary institutions has become a major concern in our educational system, this is seen in the area of lack of school equipment, inadequate supply of school amenities and students denial of their rights to the amenities they paid for because of shortage in supply, the use of ineffective leadership style which sometimes cause misunderstanding among staff and students and gap in the communication channels. It may be that most heads of institutions of public schools in Osun State do not employ effective management strategies that can adequately resolve crises among students. This study seeks to identify and develop effective strategies for managing crises in Osun State' public tertiary institutions, addressing a critical gap in crisis management research.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to examine students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-Owned tertiary institutions. Specifically, the study aimed to:

- i. evaluate the causes of students' crises in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions.
- ii. examine the most effective students' crises management strategies in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions; and
- iii. investigate the level of school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

- i. what are the causes of students' crises in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions?
- ii. what are the most effective students' crises management strategies in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions?
- iii. what is the level of school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions?

Research hypothesis

The hypothesis was formulated to guide the study:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-Owned tertiary institutions.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive research design of correlational type. The population for the study comprised 697 academic staff, 16 administrators and 20 officers from supervisory ministry in six-state owned tertiary institutions in Osun State. The researcher, through the use of random sampling technique, selected four out of the six state-owned tertiary institutions in Osun State and was based on the year of establishment while proportional sampling technique was used to select 281 stakeholders. “Students’ Crises Management Strategies Questionnaire” (SCMSQ) and a proforma tagged “School Effectiveness Proforma” (SEP) were used to collect required data for the study. To determine the reliability of the instruments, 30 copies each of the instrument were administered to sets of respondents outside the sample of the study. Thereafter, the data gathered were analysed using Cronbach’s Alpha at 0.05 level of significance and a reliability coefficient of .80 was obtained for SCMSQ. The researcher personally visited the sampled state-owned tertiary institutions with the help of three trained assistants. These research assistants were recruited based on their proximity to the study locations, and were properly trained during a one-day session to familiarize them with the administration procedures. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to answer the research questions raised while Inferential statistics (Pearson product-moment correlation statistics) was applied to test all hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance as the decision threshold. A total of 281 questionnaires were distributed out of which 209 were returned representing a response rate of 74.4%.

Results

Research Question 1: what are the causes of students’ crises in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions?

Table 1

Mean Ranking Order of the Causes of Students’ Crises

S/N	Causes of Students’ Crises	X	SD	Rank Order
1	Inadequate provision of physical amenities such as electricity and water	3.77	.34	1 st
2	Denial of rights and privileges for students	3.31	.38	5 th
3	Non implementation of government circular on students welfare	3.30	.65	6 th
4	Imposition of decisions on students by professional administrators	3.05	.48	9 th
5	Refusal of management to honour agreement reached with students union	3.22	.28	7 th
6	Sudden change in institution policies on students	3.10	.85	8 th
7	Allegation of corruption against institution professional administrators	2.44	.15	10 th
8	Communication gap between the authorities and the students	3.41	.98	3 rd
9	Discriminatory application of institution rules and regulations	3.33	.32	4 th
10	failure of authority to listen to students’ complaints	3.71	.87	2 nd

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 1 presents the ranked causes of student crises in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions based on their mean scores. The highest-ranked factor is inadequate provision of physical amenities ($M=3.77$, $SD=0.34$), followed by the failure of authorities to listen to student compliant ($M=3.71$, $SD=0.87$). The least significant cause is allegations of corruption against institutional administrators ($M=2.44$, $SD=0.15$). These findings suggest that poor infrastructure and ineffective communication are the primary triggers of student unrest.

Research Question 2: what is the most effective students' crises management strategies in Osun State-owned tertiary institution?

Table 2

Mean Ranking Order of the Students' Crises Management Strategies

S/N	Students' Crises Management Strategies	X	SD	Rank Order
1	Striving toward good interpersonal relationship with students	3.89	.67	1 st
2	Asking students to write letter of undertaking makes parents to participate in managing crises	3.47	.31	5 th
3	Police intervention in students' crises has negative effects on students stability	3.23	.19	6 th
4	Closure of schools is an effective way of checking student's crises	3.11	.22	8 th
5	Suspension of students' leadership assist in checking students' crises	3.82	.28	2 nd
6	Providing opportunity for students to attend courses in conflict management	3.13	.60	7 th
7	Use of student representative (SR) in management, decision-making and administration	3.78	.63	3 rd
8	Clear definition and description of roles and responsibility on school management between stakeholders	3.56	.55	4 th

Source: Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2 presents the ranking the student crisis management strategies. The most effective approach is fostering good interpersonal relationships between students and administrators ($M=3.89$, $SD=0.67$). This suggests that open communication and rapport-building play a crucial role in preventing student crises. The second most effective strategy is suspending student leadership ($M=3.82$, $SD=0.28$), which indicates that some institutions resort to administrative control measures. On the other hand, school closures ($M=3.11$, $SD=0.22$) are the least effective method, suggesting that punitive measure alone may not be a sustainable solution.

Research Question 3: what is the level of school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions?

Table 3

Level of School Effectiveness in Osun State-owned Tertiary Institutions

Year	Distinction	Credit	Merit	Lower Merit	Pass	Fail
2021	0.5%	2%	73%	15%	7%	2.5%
2022	0.25%	1.5%	80%	12.5%	5%	0.75%
2023	0.2%	5.5%	20%	17%	4.2%	1.1%
2024	2%	17%	67%	4%	4%	6%

Table 3 presents the distribution of student performance in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions from 2021 to 2024. The data reveal that the majority of graduates each year earned merit classifications, with figures ranging from 20% in 2023 to 80% in 2022. The proportion of students graduating with Distinctions remained consistently low across the years, peaking at 2% in 2024. This trend suggests that while most students achieve satisfactory academic performance, very few attain exceptional result. The implication of these findings should be examined further to institutional policies and crisis management strategies.

Ho: There is no significant relationship between students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions.

Table 3

Students' Crises Management Strategies and School Effectiveness

Variable	N	\bar{X}	SD	df	Cal r-value	P-value	Decision
Students' Crises Management Strategies	209	2.57	.60				
				207	.776	.000	Ho Rejected
School Effectiveness	209	2.77	.98				

***Significant $P < .05$**

Table 3 shows the calculated r-value of .776 while p-value (0.001) is less than the significance level (0.05) for 207 degrees of freedom. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions is rejected. The finding reveals that there is significant relationship between students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions.

Discussion of the Findings

This section gives detailed discussion of the findings from the research questions and the hypotheses tested. Findings on research question one revealed that inadequate provision of physical amenities such as electricity and water is the most causes of students' crises in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions. The finding agrees with the Ajibade (2019) who found the causes of students unrest to include those arising from shortage of basis facilities (water, light just to mention a few). Also, Ishola (2018) found that lack of amenities in the school constitute a major causes of students' crisis which has a negative effect on the actualisation of the tertiary institution goals.

Also, the finding discovered in the research question two shows that striving toward good interpersonal relationship with students is the most effective students' crises management strategies in Osun State-owned tertiary institution. This finding also supports that of Etadon (2023) who found that that harmonious relationship in the school is the effective ways of managing students crisis due to the fact if the school develop a good relationship in the school with the students, crises can be reduced to barest minimum.

Meanwhile, findings on research question three revealed that more than half of population of students graduating each year graduated with merit passes and very few (rare) students graduated with distinction. The implication of this analysis is that the students' crisis management strategies in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions determines the level of academic performance of students at point of graduation. This finding is in agreement with that of Uchendu, Anijaobi-Idem, and Odigwe (2023) who discovered that the level of school effectiveness in Colleges of Education was average.

Finally, the findings on research hypothesis one revealed that there was significant relationship between students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions. This finding is in agreement with that of Ademola (2022) who discovered that that there was significant relationship between students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Kwara State tertiary institutions

Conclusions

Based on the findings which stemmed from the data collected and analyzed with the results obtained, it could be concluded that inadequate provision of physical amenities such as electricity and water is the most causes of students' crises in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions; striving toward good interpersonal relationship with students is the most effective students' crises management strategies in Osun State-owned tertiary institution; more than half of population of students graduating each year graduated with merit passes and very few (rare) students graduated with distinction; and there is significant relationship between students' crises management strategies and school effectiveness in Osun State-owned tertiary institutions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. School management should provide adequate social amenities in the school so as to avoid students' crises thereby enhancing the actualisation of the school goals and objective;
2. The academic and professional administrators should continue to demonstrate spirit of tolerance so as to ensure the smooth running of the college;
3. The management of school should always explore regular dialogue strategy as a foremost step in managing conflict before embarking on the others for higher school effectiveness in the institutions;
4. Conflict management should not be seen to connote a rigid approach that suits all situations, rather, it should develop a strong interpersonal relationship to prevent and arrest a seemingly serious crisis; and
5. Conditions that promote effective conflict management should include consideration of a wide range of alternative solutions, a cooperative climate, an organized and orderly process, and avoidance of artificial conflict-reducing devices such as voting or relying on a leader to make the final decision.

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