

INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL VIOLENCE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOLS STUDENTS IN NASSARAWA STATE: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING

BY

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Abstract

This study examined influence of school violence on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State: Implications for counselling. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study. The study adopted descriptive survey design. 250 Teachers and 20 Principals representing 15% of the total Population was sampled from Northern senatorial district using simple random sampling technique. The structured questionnaire developed by the researcher was used to collect data. The instrument was validated by experts and a reliability 'r' coefficient of 0.82 was obtained. Mean, standard deviation and chi-square was used to analyze the data collected in the study. The major finding revealed that violence has effects on secondary schools students' academic performance. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that there is significant influence of violence on secondary school students' academic performance and there is significant influence of guidance and counselling on secondary school students academic performance. Thus, it was recommended that Guidance counsellors should set up a mechanism for settling violence in schools such as inculcating positive attitude to students by encouraging them to engage in interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships with both the students and teachers. This is to maintain peace and safety environment for students and teachers.

Keywords: School Violence, Academic Performance, Students, Implications for Counselling.

Introduction

The world today is confronted with heterogeneous violent situations. These are constantly dramatized at the individual, family group, community, state and international levels in frightening manners that the socio-economic, political, ecological orders and indeed humanity are threatened. These conflict violent situations are expressed in many forms and not limited to fighting, protests, rioting, unrest, armed violence, ammunition trafficking and civil wars. The effects of violence, be it the school, domestic, communal and international, could be reduced or eradicated and devastating resulting to loss of human lives, properties and infrastructure. Even in areas not experiencing civil disturbances, wars, violent conflicts or areas of aggressions, the security and stability of such schools or areas are often threatened. Tension, fears, anxieties, uncertainties and frustrations could soar resulting to stress, emotional dislocation and other pathological consequences (Usman, 2017).

Violent environments has exposed schools, home and community to many injury which has contributed in the reduction of academic performance and increased disrupting classroom behavior for all the students in secondary schools and adolescents. It is estimated that between 10 and 20% of children in the United States are exposed to domestic violence annually (Carlson, 2000) and are physically injured (Fusco & Fantuzzo, 2009). Violence is positively associated with school size. Schools that have more students are more likely to experience increased school conflict and students maltreatment (Jungmeen, Talbot, & Cicchetti, 2009), which may lead to intrapersonal, interpersonal, and academic limitations. Students affected by school community violence suffer from lowered social and emotional competence, diminished academic performance (Mohr, 1999), and fear of abuse (Burnham, 2009). With repeated exposure to traumatic events, a proportion of individuals may develop disorders characterized as Post-traumatic Stress and Oppositional Defiant (Aisenberg, Trickett, Mennen, Saltzman, & Zayas, 2007). Given these issues, there is an increased need for school personnel to address the effects of violence on students' performance in the classroom.

The effects of violence on students' academic performance and challenges of guidance and counselling may differ from classroom behaviour. When working with victims of violence, educators in school may observe various behaviours in the school environment. Students nurtured in abusive environments are more likely to exhibit behaviour of concern (Silverstein et al., 2006). For example, adolescents are more likely to display a lack of interest in social activities, have lowered self-esteem (Dube et al., 2006), avoid peer relations, maintain unhealthy relationships and exhibit increased rebellion and defiant behaviors in the school environment. Stress and trauma placed on students are more likely to affect neurodevelopment and potentially may lead to alcohol usage. Guidance and counseling is an essential element in discipline management of people in all societies even the most primitive societies grew out of the necessity of guiding individual's behavior patterns in the interest of the group. Society itself could not function without the exercise of discipline. Using guidance and counseling to enhance discipline must be continuously being practiced if people are to work harmoniously for the achievement of common purpose.

Hendrikz (2017) stressed that teachers and school administration have the responsibility of ensuring that students mature steadily along their own personal line. Students are priceless assets and most essential element in education. It is absolutely necessary to direct students to exhibit acceptable attitude and behavior within and outside the school. Meyer (2018) stated that discipline problems in schools and institutions are perhaps the single greatest cause of concern for educators globally. Student indiscipline had plagued schools leading to series of unrest, destruction of school property, vandalism, sexual abuse, killing and drug abuse just to mention. According to Agenga and Simatwa (2011) at Colobine high school in Colorado two heavily armed students killed twelve students, one teacher and seriously wounded nearly two dozen others before killing themselves, in the Sharpeville massacre of 1960 that affected many students. The National University Commission (NUC) recognizes the effective of guidance and counseling unit in the institution of our learning to counseling students discipline to enable the school promote the growth of self-defense among student in their career journey. Despite this recommendation, the use of guidance and counseling service was wanting in helping curb indiscipline in schools, which was increasing in assault, arson, fighting, and theft, and vandalism, destruction of school property, harassment, riots, rape and loss of lives. The cases had continue to increase unabated to the extent that, the government in 2001 introduced guidelines on safety in schools as stated by Simatwa (2007) Raffer and Johson (2016) which maintained that, many students' discipline problems that occur in secondary schools might not exist if guidance and counseling service were correctly offered. All these incidents made it necessary to strengthen guidance and counseling service in enhancement of student discipline in secondary schools. The current obstacles of guidance and counseling in secondary schools since 2007 when guidance and counseling departments were established in all schools in Nigeria to address academic career and discipline issues are negative attitudes by teachers, parents and school administration and incompetence towards guidance and counseling service as stated by (Muitie and Ndambuki, 2002).

It is on this background that this study examined influence of school violence on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nassarawa State: Implications for counselling.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. Is there influence of school violence on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State?
2. What are the challenges of guidance and counselling on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for this study:

1. There is no significant influence of school violence on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State.
2. There is no significant influence of guidance and counselling on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State.

Methodology

The research design used in this study was descriptive research of survey type. The population of this study consisted of all the secondary school students in Northern senatorial district of Nasarawa State. The target population comprised of teachers and Principals. Two hundred and fifty (250) Teachers and twenty (20) principals were the respondents that were served with questionnaires. The sample for the study were drawn from the population of teachers and Principals. Taro Yamane formula for determining sample size was adopted and a sample size of 250 teachers and 20 principals were determined respectively. Consequently, simple random sampling was used to select respondents from their various schools.

The instrument for data collections was a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher titled “Influence of School Violence on Academic Performance Questionnaire (ISVAP)”. The questionnaire has two sections. Section A has 10 items on influence of school violence on academic performance while section B has 10 items on influence of guidance and counselling on academic performance. This was designed to find out respondents views on how violence affected students’ academic performance in Northern district of Nassarawa State. Modified Likert rating scale with response mode of Strongly Agree (SA)=4, Agree (A)=3, Disagree (D)=2 and Strongly Disagree (SD)=1 was used to provide responses to the study. To ensure that the instrument measured what it is meant for, the instrument were subjected to face and content validity by experts and a reliability ‘r’ coefficient of 0.82 was determined through Pearson Product Moment Coefficient. The data collected for the study were coded and analyzed using statistical package for social science (SPSS). Mean and standard deviation and chi-square statistics were used for the data analysis.

Research Question one: Is there influence of school violence on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State?

Table 1: Influence of School Violence on Academic Performance

S/N	Items	X	SD
1	Students vandalized school properties	3.11	0.81
2	Students stole school properties	3.12	0.82
3	Students use to abuse teachers verbally	3.11	0.81
4	Students use to confront teachers physically	3.10	0.80
5	Students use weapon to fight teacher in the school	3.15	0.85
6	Students use violence to teachers face to face	3.16	0.86
7	Students fight openly in the school	3.11	0.81
8	Students destroy classes desks in the school	3.17	0.87
9	Students sexually abuse teachers	3.18	0.98
10	Students riots in the schools	3.11	0.81

Table 1 shows that the respondents agreed to all items indicating that violence have an effect on students’ academic performance in Northern district of Nassarawa State.

Research Question Two: What are the challenges of guidance and counselling on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State?

Table 2: Challenges of Guidance and counseling on Academic Performance

S/N	Items	X	SD
1	School have guidance and counseling unit	3.13	0.83
2	School improve on counseling curriculum	3.15	0.85
3	School have computer facilities for clients records	3.11	0.81
4	School have storage facilities	3.18	0.88
5	School have communication facilities	3.16	0.86
6	School have clients files	3.14	0.84
7	School counselor have capacities to counsel clients	3.15	0.85
8	School counselor can handle challenges successfully	3.15	0.85
9	School counselor address students discipline	3.16	0.96
10	School counselor have potential to settle unrest in school	3.14	0.84

Table 2 show that the respondents agreed to all items indicating that challenges of guidance and counseling on secondary school students academic performance in northern district of Nasarawa State.

Ho₁: There is no significant influence of school violence on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State.

Table 3: Significant Influence of School Violence on Academic Performance

	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Df	Level of Sign	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Decision
Teachers	20 (7.4%)	250(92.6%)	2	0.05	2.10	.12	Ho
Principals	250(93%)	20(7.4%)	2				Rejected Null

Table 3 shows Chi-square test score of the effect of violence on secondary school students' academic performance. Chi-square calculated value of 2.10 was greater than the chi-square table value of 12 checked at 0.05 level of significance and at 1 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This connotes that there is significant effects of violence on secondary school students' academic performance in Northern district of Nasarawa State.

Ho₂: There is no significant influence of guidance and counselling on academic performance among secondary schools students in Nasarawa State.

Table 4: Significant Influence of Guidance and Counselling on Academic Performance

	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	Df	Level of Sign	χ^2 -cal	χ^2 -tab	Decision
Teachers	20 (7.4%)	250(92.6%)	2	0.05	2.21	.17	Ho
Principals	250(93%)	20(7.4%)	2				Rejected Null

Table 4 shows the Chi-square test on the influence of guidance and counselling on secondary school students' academic performance. Chi-square calculated value of 2.21 was greater than the chi-square table value of 17 checked at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected. This connotes that there is significant influence of guidance and counseling on secondary school students' academic performance in northern senatorial district of Nasarawa State.

Discussion

The findings of the study revealed that violence has effects on students' academic performance of secondary schools in Nasarawa State. Results showed that the respondents agreed that students vandalized school properties, students stole school properties, students use to abuse teachers verbally, students use physical conflict in school, students use weapon in the school, students abuse teachers face to face, students use alcohol openly in the school, students use illegal substance in the school, students sexually abuse teachers and students riot in the schools. Also There is no significant influence of violence on secondary school students academic performance was rejected because chi calculate is greater than chi crit, this means that There is significant influence of violence on secondary school students academic performance.

The finding is in agreement with previously existing findings for example; Hendrikz (2017) which stressed that teachers and school administrators have the responsibility of ensuring that students matures steadily along his own personal line. Students are priceless assets and most essential element in education. It was absolutely necessary to direct students to exhibit acceptable attitude and behavior within and outside the school.

Findings also revealed that guidance and counselling have influence on secondary school student students' academic performance in northern senatorial district of Nasarawa State. Results showed that respondents held strongly the view that the school have guidance and counseling unit, school improve counseling curriculum, school have computer facilities for students records, school have storage facilities, school have communication facilities, school have client files, school counselor have capacities to counsel clients, counselor can handle challenges successfully, counselor address students disciplines and counselor have potential to settle unrest and sexual abuse.

The hypotheses two which states that, there is no significant influence of guidance and counselling on secondary school students academic performance was rejected because the chi-square calculated is greater than chi-square critical value, meaning There is significant influence of guidance and counselling on secondary school students academic performance. The finding is in agreement with other previously existing studies for example; Usman (2017) opined that counseling to enhance discipline and it must be continuously being practiced if people are to work harmoniously for the achievement of common purpose to reduce the rate of crime and victimization school community for effective and productivity of teachers which in turn lead to students' academic performance in the school.

Conclusion

Conclusion drawn from the outcome of this study indicated that, respondents agreed that students vandalized school properties, students stole school properties, students use to abuse teachers verbally, students use physical conflict in school, students use weapon in the school, students violet teachers face to face, students use alcohol openly in the school, students use illegal substance in the school, students sexually abuse teachers and students riot in the schools. There was significant influence of violence on secondary school students' academic performance. Also respondents held strongly the view that the school have guidance and counselling unit, school improve counselling curriculum, school have computer facilities for students records, school have storage facilities, school have communication facilities, finally there is significant influence of guidance and counselling on secondary school students academic performance.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made to include;

1. Guidance counsellors should set up a mechanism for settling violence in schools such as inculcating positive attitude to students by encouraging them to engage in interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships with both the students and teachers. This is to maintain peace and safety environment for students and teachers.
2. Functioning and effective guidance and counselling centre should be establish where not available by school heads and proprietors so as to counselled students and teachers on the effects of violence in schools.

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