

## OCURRENCES AND PERCEIVED STRATEGIES FOR ERADICATION OF STUDENTS' UNREST IN POLYTECHNICS IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*Tertiary institution in Nigeria today has been battling with different kinds of unrest which invariably affects the academic activities in schools and its' environment. This study therefore, carried out investigation on occurrences and perceived strategies for eradicating students' unrest in Polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria. The design for the study was descriptive survey. The population was all lecturers and students of Polytechnics in Kwara State. The study sampled 365 lecturers and 1,162 making 1,527. Multistage sampling techniques involving simple random, proportional and stratified random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. A researcher designed questionnaire titled, 'Perceived Strategies for Eradication Students' Unrest Questionnaire (PESUQ) with a reliability index of 0.72r was used to collect data from the respondents. The data collected were analyzed using percentage indices and t-test statistics. The result of the finding revealed that students unrest could be curbed or managed with the use of ID Card on campus, constitution of students' disciplinary committee, creation of functional guidance and counseling unit, monitoring of unionism on campus by the management, presence of security agents (stop and search mechanism) and serious campaign through banners, bill boards, conferences, workshops and symposium. It was recommended that Sociologist, religious leaders, government, homes and school management should embark on enlightenment campaign programs to eradicate students' unrest in our society.*

**Keywords:** *Occurrences, Perceived strategies, Eradication, Students, Unrest*

### **Introduction**

Students' unrest is an impediment that disturbs minds of both lecturers and members of the larger society because of every day unacceptable attitudes and behaviors displayed from students during protest. Students' unrest is defined by the World Health Organization (2010) as the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened against a person, group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting

in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development or deprivation. Students' unrest can be classified in to protest, cultism, destructions of properties and rioting. These consequences can be immediate, as well as latent, and can last for years after the initial occurrence. Defining outcome solely in terms of injury or death thus limits the understanding of the full impact of violence on individuals, communities and societies at large.

Ali and Smith (2012) asserted that students' unrest is responsible for a situation where a graduate with Bachelor's degree is unable to write an application for a job and speak intelligently and grammatically correct English. This was why he concluded that "Examination malpractice is an extension of violence". Idowu (2006) observed that students are getting more sophisticated because of the influx of young and educated Nigerians who had been involved in unrest activities while on campuses.

All over the world, polytechnics have often been regarded as citadels of learning. Until recently, this perspective also applied to all Nigerian tertiary institutions which have, as a result of incessant unrest, become "centers of crises." Tunde (2017) reported that nine students of the Polytechnic, Ibadan, Oyo state were on Sunday arrested following the invasion of the police headquarters, Eleyele, Ibadan. The students' union president allegedly mobilized students to invade the police command under the pretense of going to observe jumaat prayer at the commands mosque. The students were singing solidarity songs, and in the process, police were injured, as a result nine students were arrested including the SUG president. Khusamat and Ayorinde (2013) while referring to students' unrest on campuses contended that polytechnics in Nigeria now offer HND in violence and an ND in cultism. Pemedede (2010) observed that it seems that each day, new story of shameful acts perpetrated by students' unrest groups emerge. Students' unrest is very broad, according to him. He also believes that individuals with the same ideological orientation gather together to practice evils.

Students' unrest in Nigerian polytechnics has being in existence in many forms for several decades, hence, they have now evolved into an institutions of violence. In describing the situation, Pemedede (2010) noted that stories of students' unrest, torture and unwarranted intimidation emanate from Universities, Polytechnics, Colleges of Education, other tertiary institutions and even secondary schools.

Abdulaziz (2014) observed that the incident was the third in a series of murders recorded within the last three (3) months in this area.. The deceased is said to be a thug and loyalist of Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) in Benue State. He was also believed to be one of the youths who have terrorized political opponents during the last elections. Pemedede (2010) narrated a case of students' unrest where a 100 level student of Mass Communication at the University of Agriculture, Markudi in Benue State was killed by suspected Black Axe confraternity. The group inflicted several machete cuts on his neck, almost severing his head. Sagie (2004) argued that perpetrators have characteristics that may be sociological or economical which distinguish them from the rest of us. They pointed out that there is the need to comprehend the "how" and the "why" of students' behaviour before much can be said about cult activities. The "how" involves focusing

upon earlier sequence which has resulted in the current patterns of behaviour. Such knowledge will help to reduce the occurrences of students' unrest on campus among the students; it will also help to develop more adaptive behaviour that is preventive rather than curative.

Sociologists have come to agree that students' unrest constitute a social problem about which something must be done. Kayode (2016) recently reported that three persons were feared dead in a clash between rival cult groups at the Mashood Abiola Polytechnic (MAPOLY), Abeokuta, the Ogun State. As a result of this, members of the cult group stormed the campus and started shooting indiscriminately. They killed a suspected member of Eeye confraternity at Adigbe. This resulted to panic among residents of Oluwo, Onikolobo, Adigbe, Oloke, Ibara-Penseke and other communities around the school.

Cases of students' unrest have generated a lot of fear, tension, insecurity and closure of schools in Nigeria. School authorities, parents, members of the public and government have been concerned with how to develop acceptable frameworks of action to ameliorate the menace of students' unrest and other violence which have continued to create insecurity to lives and properties on campuses. Jekayinfa (2003) asserted that, University of Ilorin, Ogun State University, University of Calabar, Kwara State Polytechnic, as well as all Federal Polytechnics and Colleges of Education nationwide have witnessed serious conflagration as a result of cultism.

Tertiary institutions in Nigeria have witnessed various forms of violence in recent years. For instance, Salami (2012) reported the outrage in the University of Lagos, Akoka (Unilag) as students protested violently against renaming of the University by the Federal Government on 29<sup>th</sup> May, 2012 after late Mashood Abiola, the presumed winner of the June 12 1993, presidential election. The Academic Staff Union of the University (ASUU) described the decision as Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) agenda to compensate for its appalling failure in governance. Students' unrest is also synonymous with hooliganism. The most synonymous form of hooliganism is celebratory violence that includes riots which involves destruction of property leading to injury and deaths. Abdulaziz (2014) opined that students' unrest in our society include: cultism, suicide mission, rape and homicide. He further explained that the types of violent activities include psychological violence, sexual violence, economic violence and spiritual violence. The psychological violence is the form of violence that is more insidious and unpleasant; it develops gradually without being noticed. In this case, women are directly affected in their dignity, such ways as blackmail, threat, false accusation and isolation from family.

Common observations revealed that many Nigerian newspapers and magazines have become bulletin boards for reporting daily exploits of members of secret cults. Applying this definition to the cultism in schools (campuses), cultism would be explained as a secret association of students exposing the same objectives and beliefs which are not for public consumption. In achieving their objectives, they could be violent and a member on initiation is bound by an oath which is kept secret. There are always very

rigid, strict rules and sanctions for members (cults) daring to go against or break the rules which are invariably very severe, sometimes this might be death (Idowu, 2006).

Armed robbery, assassination, murder, sexual harassment, examination malpractices, arson, prostitution and piracy are spring offs of cultism. Corroborating this assertion, Daramola (2012) observed that crime is multi-faceted with different colorations. Amongst the different colours of crime, violence appears to be gaining more recognition in the society because it encompasses a large number of other criminal activities such as murder, rape, armed robbery, drug abuse and unnecessary intimidations resulting in clashes and crisis, arson, examination malpractice, to mention but a few.

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Unlike in the past when students in tertiary institutions were described as relatively peaceful and the society was described as crime-free, today, students are increasingly getting engaged in even complex crimes such as killing of innocent students, citizens and even lecturers whose courses were failed by the violent members Khusama and Ayorinde (2013). Thus, increase in violent activities becomes a source of worry to the society as the crimes and killings of students manifest in school environments where students are expected to learn the virtue that can aid their country's development.

Idowu (2006) wrote that secondary school students are gradually taking after students of higher institutions in the pattern of crimes they get involved in. What Adeleke meant was that some crimes like killing, riot, arson and rape that were common in higher institutions are now common among secondary school students. Similarly, Pemedede (2010) reported that six (6) cult members of the University of Lagos were caught raping an 18 year old SS III female student within the school premises.

The general purpose of this study was to find out the occurrences of students unrest and the perceived strategies for eradication of students unrest in polytechnics in Kwara state, Nigeria. Also, to find out the experiences of both federal and state as well as male and female lecturers on the occurrences of students unrest in polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were generated to guide this study.

1. How frequent are the occurrences of students' unrest in polytechnics Kwara State?
2. What are the available perceived strategies put in place to eradicate students' unrest in polytechnics, Kwara state?

### Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated to be tested in other to come up with findings.

- Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the experiences of federal and state lecturers on the occurrences of students' unrest in polytechnics in Kwara state
- Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the experience of male and female students' in the occurrences of students' unrest in both federal and state owned polytechnics in Kwara state, Nigeria.

### Methodology

This study is a design of the survey type that focused on the conceptual framework on the eradication of students' unrest in polytechnics, Kwara state, Nigeria. The population for this study consisted of all students and lecturers of Nigerian polytechnics, while the target population were all students and lecturers of polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the require sample respondents. At the first stage of sampling, two (2) polytechnics were purposively selected (Kwara State Polytechnics Ilorin and Federal Polytechnics Offa), because all polytechnics selected are prone to students unrest at all times. From the purposively selected polytechnics, proportionate sampling technique was used to sample students and lecturers for this study. Research Sample Size Advisor (2006) was strictly employed to select the three hundred and sixty-five (365) respondents that were lecturers from these two (2) polytechnics and one thousand, one hundred and sixty-two (1,162) students. Making the total of one thousand, five hundred and twenty-seven (1,527) respondents. Simple random sampling technique was used to select students from ND2 and HND2. The choice of these levels of students was justified by the fact that they have stayed and interacted with one another in the institutions (campuses) for an appreciable period of time. The total number of students in the two polytechnics located in Kwara State Nigeria is forty-six thousand two hundred and sixty-one (46,261) respectively.

One thousand five hundred and twenty-seven (1,527) respondents were randomly selected from the polytechnics. From these two (2) polytechnics selected, simple random sampling technique was used to sample the respondents. The names of departments were written on some pieces of papers, wrapped, mixed together and poured in a cap while students were asked to pick wrapped papers at random. The students of the departments written on the paper picked served as the sampled respondents in both the federal and state tertiary polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria

The instrument for data collection was a questionnaire was adapted from Dickson, Anna and Diana (2008) titled 'Eradication of Students' Unrest Questionnaire (CFESUT) with psychometric properties, such as face and content validity as well as reliability index of 0.78. The first questionnaire was entitled Conceptual Framework on the ;3.05 Eradication of students' unrest Questionnaire (CFESUT). The questionnaires were divided into four sections: Sections A, B, C and D

The data obtained were analyzed using SPSS 20.0 window version. Research questions 1 was answered using frequency count and percentage. Research questions 2 to 4 that had corresponding hypotheses were tested using inferential statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

**Results**

Research Question One: How frequent are the occurrences of students’ unrest in polytechnics Kwara state?

**Table 1: Occurrences of students’ unrest in polytechnics in Kwara state, Nigeria**

S/N	Items	Frequent	Not frequent
1	How often do students involve in physical combat, beating each other on campus and outside the campus	1319(86.8%)	200(13.2%)
2	How often do students involve in pushing and kicking each other?	1137(74.8%)	383(25.2%)
3	How often do students involve in sexual assault?	1084(71.3%)	436(28.7%)
4	How often students do involve in physical combat, beating or slapping each other in the school and out-side the school.	774(50.9%)	746(49.1%)
5	How often do students involve in threatening fellow students and lecture.	1189(78.2%)	331(21.8%)
6	How often do students involve in violent protest/ riot?	1167(76.8%)	353(23.2%)
7	How often do students involve in killing fellow students?	675(44.4%)	845(55.6%)
8	How often do students engage in the destruction of properties?	1120(25.4%)	400(26.3%)
9	How often do students involve in abduction?	359(23.6%)	1161(76.4%)
10	How often do students involve in suicide mission?	360(23.7%)	1160(76.3%)

Table 1 shows that out of the 358 lecturers and 1,162 students that responded to item 1,1319(86.8%) picked frequent (f) while the remaining 200(13.2%) picked not

frequent (nf). The reactions of lecturers and students to item 5, 1189(78.2%) picked frequent (f) while the remaining 331(21.8%) picked not frequent (nf). The reactions of lecturers and students to item 6, 1167(76.8%) picked frequent (f) while the rest 353(23.2%) picked not frequent (nf) respectively. The least item 9 on the table indicated that 359(23.6%) picked frequent (f) while the remaining 1161(76.4%) picked not frequent (nf) respectively.

**Research Question Two:** What are the available perceived strategies put in place to eradicate students' unrest in polytechnics Kwara state?

**Table 2: The Availability of Management Strategies for eradicating students' unrest in Polytechnics in Kwara State**

S/N	Items	Available	Not available
1	Presence of security agents (stop and search mechanism)	736(48.4%)	784(51.6)
2	Strict control of admission policy	406(26.7%)	114(73.3%)
	Defined punishment for violent groups (suspension, rustication and incarceration)	592(38.9%)	928(61.1%)
3	Improvement in media	751(49.4%)	769(50.6%)
4	Serious campaign through banners bill boards, conferences, workshops and symposium	606(39.9%)	914(60.1%)
5	Discouraging god fatherism among lecturers, students and politicians	457(30.1%)	1063(69.9%)
6	Define rewards for intentional withdrawer from violent activities.	312(20.5%)	1208(79.5%)
7	Monitoring of unionism on campus by management	594(39.1%)	926(60.9%)
8	Involvement of judiciary in curbing violent activities in tertiary institutions.	661(43.5%)	859(56.5%)
9	Constitution of students disciplinary committee	818(53.8%)	702(46.2%)
10	Anti-violent activity sensitization forum	632(41.6%)	888(58.4%)
11	Guidance and counseling unit	863(56.8%)	657(43.2%)
12	Implementation of dress code on campus	601(39.5%)	919(60.5%)
13	Violent activities and its implication as a course in general studies courses in tertiary institutions	274(18.0%)	1246(82.0%)
14	Identification of individuals (i.e. ID Card on campus)	956(62.9%)	564(37.1%)

Table 2 shows that out of the 358 lecturers and 1162 students that responded to item 14, 956(62.9%) picked available while 564(37.1%) picked not available. The reactions of lecturers and to item 11, 863(56.8%) picked available while 657(43.2%) picked not available. The reactions of lecturers and students to item 9, 818(53.8%) picked available while 702(46.2%) picked not available. The least was item 13, 274(18.0%) picked available while 1246(82.0%) picked not available respectively.

**Hypotheses Testing**

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the experience of lecturers and students of federal and state-owned polytechnics on the occurrences of students’ unrest in Kwara state, Nigeria.

**Table 3: The Difference between Experience of Lecturers and Students of Federal and State-owned polytechnics on the occurrences of students’ unrest in Kwara state, Nigeria**

Variable	No	Mean	Std	Df	Calculated t-value	Sig 2-tailed	Decision
Lecturers	358	19.09	6.28	1518	0.89	0.37	Accepted
Students	1162	18.77	6.11				

Critical level sig = 0.05 0

Table 3 reveals that the calculated t-value is 0.89 with 1518 degree of freedom computed at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Since the calculated level of significance (0.37) is greater than the critical level of significance (0.05), hypothesis 1 is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the experience of lecturers and students in the federal and state-owned polytechnics on the occurrences of students’ unrest in kwara state, Nigeria.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the experience of male and female students’ in the occurrences of students’ unrest in both federal and state owned polytechnics in Kwara state, Nigeria.



**Table 4: The experience of Male and Female students in the occurrences of students' unrest in both Federal and State-owned polytechnics in Kwara state, Nigeria**

Variable	No	Mean	Std	Df	Cal-t-value	Sig 2talled	decision
Male students	790	18.66	6.11	1160	0.89	0.37	Accepted
Female students	372	19.00	6.13				

Critical level sig = 0.05

Table 4 reveals that the calculated t-value is 0.89 with 1160 degree of freedom computed at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Since the calculated level of significance 0.37 is greater than the critical level of significance (0.05), hypothesis 2 is accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the experience of male and female students in the occurrences of students' unrest in both federal and state polytechnics in Kwara state, Nigeria.

### Discussion of Findings

This study examined the strategies for eradication of students' unrest in Polymethines in Kwara State, Nigeria. Four (4) research questions were raised while two (2) hypotheses were postulated. One of the finding of the study revealed that both lecturers and students were of the opinion that students do get involved in physical combat, beating each other at all time, or slapping each other in the school and outside the school. The lecturers and students experience revealed that students do involve in violent protests/riots and sexual assault in schools and outside the school which is contradictory to the rules and regulations of the Nigerian Schools. This is in consonance with the assertion of Daramola (2012) who asserted that evidence of violent activities in the school are physical combat, destruction of properties, killing and maiming.

The result of the finding revealed that students unrest could be curbed or managed with the use of ID Card on campus, constitution of students' disciplinary committee, creation of functional guidance and counseling unit, monitoring of unionism on campus by the management, presence of security agents (stop and search mechanism) and serious campaign through banners, bill boards, conferences, workshops and symposium. This is in agreement with the opinion of Fagge (1999), and salami (1996) who maintain that violent activities could be managed with the presence of security agents as well as through guidance and counseling units in the various tertiary institutions.

It was revealed that there was no significant difference in the experience of lecturers and students in the federal and state-owned polytechnics on the occurrences of students' unrest in Kwara state, Nigeria. This implies that there was no divergence view

in the opinion of both lecturers and students on the occurrences of students on rest in Polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Lastly, the outcome of the study revealed that there was no significant difference in the experience of male and female students in the occurrences of students' unrest in both federal and state Polytechnics in Kwara state, Nigeria. This signifies that male and female students had the same opinion on the occurrences of students' unrest in Polytechnics in Kwara State, Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

The following conclusions were based on the findings of this study: Firstly, that the occurrences of students' unrest in polytechnics could be traced down to involvement of students in violent protest as a result of lack of social amenities on campuses physical combat, beating, slapping, harming each other with knife, iron and guns, involvement in destruction of properties and sexual assault inside and outside the school. The prevalence of this menace can be curbed using different strategies such as ID card on campuses, constitutions of students' disciplinary committee, guidance and counseling unit, monitoring of unionism on campus by the school management and so on. If these have been put in place it will automatically reduce the vices to the barest minimal.

### **Recommendations**

The following recommendations were based on the findings of this study:

1. Sociologists, being an expert in school crime analysis and control, should be involved in eradicating students' unrest in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The sociologists can be employed as consultants in schools to be able to curb the affairs of the students in the school environment. To reduce the rate of students' unrest, focus should be on the home which is the first agent of socialization. Parents should provide their children with both psychological and material needs.
2. Government and school management should embark on enlightenment campaign programs to educate parents on the adequate ways of catering for their children, and to advise them to avoid any form of bad gang moving close to them.
3. Government should also sponsor training of more counselors and social workers to be able to effectively monitor and treat violent activities in tertiary institutions.
4. Likewise, more guidance counsellors should be employed in tertiary institutions in order to counsel the youths (students). This could make them be of good behaviour, which will prevent students from dropping out of school.

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