Contemporary Behavioural Issues in Education

Osakwe, Stephen Onyeanwuna, and Ogona, Anita Ufuoma

Department of Office Technology and Management, School of Business Studies, Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe-Oghara.
*Corresponding author: e-mail: steveosakwe1212@gmail.com

Abstract
Contemporary behavioural issues are seemingly causing many setbacks to educational attainments in the society today. These issues are mostly associated with cases of indiscipline both in school and the society. In schools today, indiscipline which is one among the major contemporary issues that seems to cause a lot of setback in education. It stems from cultism, gangsterism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, truancy, cheating and bullying, thuggery among others. This issue has become so alarming in schools that students hardly have time for their studies. In most cases, some are distracted by these issues to the extent of not seeking to further their education. The major thrust of this study is to examine the contemporary issues affecting educational attainment. The paper looked at the concept of contemporary behavioural issues, educational attainment such as: cultism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity, examination malpractice, bullying, indecent dressing and thuggery in terms of their negative influence on the educational development of the students and the way forward. A survey research design was employed for the study.

Keywords: Contemporary behavioural issues, educational attainment, cultism, drug abuse, sexual promiscuity

Introduction

Every society trains her members to be useful and not useless. The main reason for the training is to instill discipline in them to maintaining their cultural values and norms to enable them to contribute positively to building the society. Moreover, schools are established to transmit what is worthwhile to the learners. This is through inculcating into the learner our cultural values, norms and good attitudes that will make him to become a useful and functional member of the society. Anti-social activities are rampant in the contemporary Nigerian Society. This is evident in the deluge of social problems witnessed on regular bases. These problems which include various factors such as social inequality, ethnicity, limited resources, corruption, poverty, criminality, and other socio-economic crises pervade the country's length and breadth.

Students are admitted into the universities or tertiary institutions year after year. On this ground, it is expected that the students are acquainted with the aim of education as specified as specified in the National Policy, as well as fulfilling the goal for tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Nzotta, (2002) defines training as a mixture of teaching and practices carried out in other to attain a desired standard of behaviour efficiency and effectiveness. On the other hand, Egungu (2001) sees training as a way of building people's capacity and adding values in knowledge, skills and attitude.

From the above definitions, training means the acquisition of skills, attitude, instruction and practical in order to ensure a remarkable influence on behaviour. Also, it means solving educational objectives through the act of doing, attempting, reflecting on experience and familiarizing in the act for the purpose of development and required skills.

According to Koonz and Weihrich (1990), development refers to a system integration and planned approach to improve the effectiveness of an individual. To Nzotta (2002), development includes the progress made by a person which may involve intellectual or conceptual growth along with practical performance. This shows that development has to be well organized, planned and articulated idea for change, upgrading, application and expression. Development

enhances the trainee or learners in achieving optimum potentials and capabilities before the end of the programme,

There is a wide gap between the expectations of the society and its actual manifestations. Hardly would a

day go by without a record of one form of social problem or the other (Eitzen, 2009). His level of discipline in school determines the success of any student in terms of academic achievement. Oladunmi(2010) observes that students in schools today are not performing as well in their academic activities as expected. Oladunmi further states that the reason for students' poor performance in academic activities is as a result of their indisciplinary act which to a large extent affects their educational attainment.

Contemporary Behavioural Issues

Contemporary issues are subjects that are currently in public discourse. Most often, it is a problem that people are discussing about and trying on bounce ideas of themselves in order to find a solution e.g. the issue of indiscipline in schools such as: truancy, cultism, sexual promiscuity, examination malpractice, drug abuse, indecent dressing, cheating and bullying. Moreso, the issue of Girl Child education in Africa, peace in the Middle East, the issue of insurgency (Paddy, 2010) "A contemporary issue can also be defined as any event, idea, opinion or topic in a given subject that is relevant to the present day. Contemporary issues can be found in almost any matter of interest." Any issue which has its implications, applicability, relevance, significance, effect and material presence in present time or at its given frame (period) of time can be sorted as Contemporary issues (Rogers, 2011:4).

Educational Attainment

Educational attainment refers to the highest level of education that an individual has completed. This is distinct from the level of schooling that an individual is attending (Voogt, & Roblin, 2012). In another view, Indyar (2015) define educational attainment as the number of years of education a person has attended and completed, or the highest degree earned. This includes the number of elementary and high school years completed, participation in college prior to graduation, and varying levels of degree attainment (i.e. Associates, Bachelor's, master's, professional, and doctoral degrees). Educational attainment is not a measure of the quality of education received by the student during these years or their proficiency or grades in subject areas. Nor does the statistic explain contextual causes or influences, such as attainment of

learning objectives, immigration patterns, test scores, discipline, or public policies.

Educational attainment, in terms of the highest level of education completed, is associated with various positive outcomes. Pellegrino and Hilton (2013) reviewed studies and concluded that educational attainment is a stronger predictor of labour market success than measures of cognitive skills, personality traits, and intra-and interpersonal competencies. Workers who are better educated have better abilities to complete a given task, learn more from complex task training, and are more efficient in allocating work resources compared to workers who had attended school for fewer years.

Countries recognize that educational attainment is important to the economy because by logic of reasoning: more years of schooling means workforce will become more highly skilled and productive, leading to higher output of goods and services and eventually a stronger economy (Barro& Lee, 2011). Other than economic outcomes, educational attainment is also related to social outcomes, such as health, population growth, and income distribution (Barro& Lee, 2013). To develop a workforce that can meet the new economy's demands, education systems have to anticipate these needs and keep up with the changes. Dede (2007) argued that the emergence of a global, knowledge-based workplace require the new generation of workers to gain 21st century skills and knowledge. Workers of the new economy do not necessarily equate to new business employees as current trends show that students are more likely to start their own businesses. Therefore, educational attainment is not only a matter of the number of years of schooling people complete, but also the range of knowledge, skills, and competencies they acquired to take on the responsibilities of leading the world's economy in the upcoming century.

Contemporary issues affecting students' educational attainment

There has been serious increase in cases of indiscipline in institutions of learning particularly in recent times. Commenting on past disciplinary issues in secondary schools, Agba (2008) opines that many schools today hardly provide the conducive, mental, social and psychological atmosphere of security so valuable to leadership skills and positive acceptable student behaviour. Contributing to the above, Enoch (2006)

observes that schools today in Nigeria have become grounds for guerrilla warfare, anti-social behaviours and breeding grounds for unacceptable behaviours by students and teachers rather than being in places where desirable and relevant changes in behaviours of learners occur.

In the opinions of Obiabo and Leke (2007), the act of indiscipline among students in schools today is characterized by truancy, cultism, sexual immorality, drug abuse, gansterism, cheating, stealing, fighting, bullying, indecent dressing among others. This makes most of the students lack proper concentration properly on their studies. According to Paddy (2009), some students end up repeating classes because of poor academic performance while others get suspended from school sometimes thereby losing valuable academic activities that culminate in failures in their external examination. Orhungur (2010) opines that students who indulge in drug abuse spend most time in cult activities, gangsterism, fighting in schools and examination malpractice. Musa (2013) asserts that if students are to learn what the society expects of them and to encourage their behaviour to conform to these expectations, then their upbringing should be good. Aduloju (2007) lists the causes of disciplinary behaviours among school students to include; poor parental upbringing, peer group influence and the school's inability to impact the right norms and values into the learners as well as indiscipline. This according to Adulogu has resulted in affecting their educational life.

Viewing the issue of indiscipline, Waraba (2008) opines that the societal expectation of every school-going child is to acquire the right cultural values and norms that will make him useful to his parents, relations and the society at large. Waraba reiterates that the act of indisciplinarybehaviour on the part of students in schools today is really telling on them as most of them end up as drop-outs or finish their schools without valid certificates. Some even end up as drug addicts, political thugs and sex hawkers among others. This is because their level of educational attainment has been badly affected by their acts of indiscipline while in school. In most schools in recent times, students exhibit high level of truancy and indulge in cult-related activities and immoral sexual acts. It is difficult to assume or know when the school is on break. This is because of the level of students' truancy. They hardly stay in their classes for lessons but play truant or hang outside the class or school until school closes. Also students' level of involvement in cult-related activities is on the increase particularly the secondary schools. They go about intimidating other students, teachers and even outsiders. This tends to keep them away from school programmes which seem to affect their educational attainment. Moreso, the extent of promiscuity among the students, especially the female ones, is high both in and outside the school. Students now go about befriending each other and exhibiting immoral acts capable of jeopardizing their educational attainment. Most of the students who, even after graduation, instead of working hard to proceed to higher institutions, decide to engage themselves in contemporary issues that jeopardise their educational attainment. The following are some of the issues to be examined;

Cultism

Cultism is defined as any form of organization whose activities are exclusively kept away from the knowledge of others. Such activities are carried out at odd hours of the day and often clash with everyday life's accepted norms and values (Ogunbameru, 2014). Onikpe in Ezra (2014) maintains that cultism "contaminates" the school environment and jeopardizes the educational process. According to Onikpe, there can be long-standing effects such as physical, emotional and psychological implications for students including, distress, reduced self-esteem, risk of depression and suicide, reduced school attendance, impaired concentration, fear and a diminished ability to learn by students. This is also capable of affecting their educational development in the future. Anwuluorah (2008:7) opines that the youth's involvement in cultism is a serious concern for many Nigerians. The secret cults engage in nefarious activities like armed robbery, petty theft, murder/killings, rape, hard drugs, cruel acts, rudeness, and fighting. The above supports the claim made by many that most of the unrest and the state of anarchy in educational institutions are due to cultism. Most student cultists sometimes end up as kidnappers. Such act can affect their educational attainment in life as most of them end up being either rusticated from school, imprisoned or even killed.

Truancy

Truancy according to Orhungur (2010) is the act of staying away from school without permission by the school authority. To Jekins (2011) truancy is any intentional unauthorized absence from compulsory schooling. It also refers to students who attend school but do not go to classes. Eze (2010) maintains that the term truancy typically describes absences caused by students of their own will, and usually does not refer to legitimate "excused" absences such as the ones related to medical conditions. Eze further notes that in most institutions of learning today, most students are seen roaming around the street of markets, film halls, stadiums and drinking joints during school hours without any genuine reason for staying away from school. In his opinion, Amema (2007) asserts that truancy has the following effects: stealing, dishonesty, sex offences, disobedience, drug abuse, assault, wickedness, suicide and charms which has negatively affect the educational attainment of such students in life. This is becausetruant students may find it difficult to pass their internal and external examinations.

Sexual Promiscuity
Sexual promiscuity according to Musa (2013) is the deliberate violation of accepted principles of right and wrong, including any form of "illicit sexual intercourse, adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals". Musa puts it that sexual promiscuity has suddenly been dignified in most schools and this seems to have portrayed a very bad image on the school by the public. Accordingly, Okpani and Okpani (2010) wrote concerning the decline in the age of sexual experience among adolescents contrary to accepted moral and cultural values. They observed that this is a dangerous trend which affects the educational attainment of the child and the society at large. According to Akingba (2012), the estimated account for inducing abortion is currently between 20,000 to 50,000 annual maternal deaths in Nigeria. This could be the reason why Uchechukwu (2011, p. 14) wrote, "If one goes by the multifarious social problems plaguing the Nigerian society in recent times, one will appreciate the urgent need for the school to wade in and give parents a helping hand in the appropriate education on issues concerning sex early in life".

Drug Abuse
Drug Abuse is any drug taken without medically recommended or if its use causes physical, psychological, legal or social harm to the individual user or other affected by the drug users' behaviour (NDLEA, 2012). Nte (2008) observes that students who abuse drugs are found loitering and participating in other forms of criminal activities in the school and outside the school, thereby causing distraction to school academic activities. They are also likely to receive poor grades and drop out of school. Denga (2011) stresses that drug abuse does not only affect the academic activities of students, but also affect the lives of the students and the measure of their educational achievement. Denga further states that some students drop out of school because they cannot cope with academic activities as drugs have taken their time and changed their perception and thinking.

Examination Malpractice
Examination malpractice is also a disciplinary problem and a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of our educational system today. Odo (2011) sees it as any irregular behaviour exhibited by candidates charged with conducting examinations or outside the examination hall before, during or after such examinations. He further maintains that such irregular behaviour contravenes the rules and regulations governing the conduct of such examination. According to him, if his opinion is correct, then examination malpractice is another form of indiscipline during or after examinations. The negative implication of such acts is that, such students may end up being rusticated from school when caught or imprisoned for years. This is thus capable of affecting their educational attainment in life.

Indecent Dressing
In our institutions of learning today, students dress how way they feel and leave for school. They do not follow the acceptable way of dressing as students before going to school. Nivi (2012) observes that the issue of indecent dressing in institutions of learning is more pronounced than even outside the school setting. Nivi maintains that indecent dressing is the unacceptable and unconfirmed way of dressing by students of an institution to school. Nivi also notes that most students dress indecently to school. They are seen flying their shirt, while the girls dress with tight uniforms showing their all round shape or with short

skirts that attract a lot of attention by other students and teachers. Students are dressed half naked and expose their bodies to teachers and other students. This is also an unwanted phenomenon that is bugging the Nigerian education system today. Answers.com (2011) maintains that there is a likelihood that female students who dress indecently or provocatively in their uniform like wearing of skimpy and tight fitting and transparent clothes could be pruned to sexual harassment and rape among students and teachers. Jacob (2011) asserts that many students who dress indecently are easily invited for suppressed sex only to become pregnant and drop out of school or being killed by ritualists. The negative consequences of indecent dressing have also been identified to include rape, prostitution, HIV/AIDS and other venereal diseases, infections,, armed robbery, and poor academic performance in school. Similarly, Articles base.com (2011) posits that students who dress indecently in their uniforms are easily forced to sex against their will, resulting in their contact of venereal disease such as HIV/AIDS because of lack of protection.

Fighting/Bullying

A critical observation of schools today shows that students are seen fighting or bullying each other while in school and after school hours. Thus, the stronger students take advantage of the weaker ones by unnecessarily beating and bullying them. This sometimes leads to gangsterism and cultism. School bullying is a type of bullying that occurs in connection with education, either inside or outside of school. Bullying can be physical, verbal or emotional and is usually repeated over some time. According to Laving (2010) bullying in schools occurs in all areas. It can occur in nearly any part in or around the school building, though it more often occurs in physical education, recess, hallways, bathrooms, classes that require group work and/or after school activities. Ayainde (2009) stated that, bullying in school sometimes consist of a group of students taking advantage of or isolating one student in particular and gaining the loyalty of bystanders who want to avoid becoming the next victim. These bullies taunt and tease their target before physically bullying their target.

Targets of bullying in school are often pupils and students considered strong or different by their peers, making the situation harder for them to deal with. One student or a group can bully another student or a group of students. While bystanders may participate or watch, sometimes out of fear of becoming the next victim. This is also a form of disciplinary problem and indiscipline plaguing our schools from time immemorial. The act of this bullying may for example include; punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, and inappropriate touching, tickling, headlocks, school pranks, teasing and fighting with the use of available objects as weapons. This act can earn a student suspension from school, rustication or even arrest and imprisonment, which may affect their academic attainment in life.

Thuggery

Most students who graduate from secondary schools take profession of becoming political thugs. They do dirty deals for their pay masters who do not even care about their future educational attainment. For instance, during elections in Nigeria, politicians make good use of students' cultist as thugs to disrupt election exercises. Moreso, in the school settings, teachers and fellow students are beaten and manhandled for one reason or the other by students who are thugs. Some teachers are intimidated and threatened. Academic activities are halted in schools and fear of uncertainty freeze human beings (Osarenren, 2012). Such act of indiciplinecan affect students' educational attainment as most of them do not end up well in life. Some of them end up frustrated in life, used and dumped by politicians or sometimes killed by political associates of their pay masters.

Conclusion

Educational institutions in Nigeria are in the war front because of students' indisciplinary acts and activities. School environments are no longer conducive for effective learning. Lives of students, teachers or other personalities have been at stake. There is terror and sorrow in the school and the society. Government, parents and the community among others are not at rest as there are frequent cases of one form of students' misbehaviour and another. The educational attainment of such students is also at stake as most students who indulge themselves in such acts end up as drop-outs or even become political thugs who are sometimes killed. The future of the Nigerian youths and the nation is also at stake. All hands must be on deck to eliminate

contemporary issues like indiscipline, especially in schools, to produce graduates who would be useful and not useless in the society tomorrow. Disciplinary acts of students must come to an end to enable our students acquire mass qualitative and effective education for meaningful survival in the society.

Recommendations

1. Students who are caught practisingcult-related activities should be rusticated from the school and that there should be a standing policy that will warrant all their identity published in newspapers and announced on radio, and televisions such that the students would be rejected anywhere.

2. Appropriate school authorities should devise means of stopping truancy among school students. This can be done through checking of students regularly and giving them severe punishment.

3. Seminars and workshops should be organized periodically on the dangers of sexual promiscuity among students to scare them to desist from such act capable of jeopardizing their educational attainment. The government, Ministry of Health and some NGOs should also extend the fight against HIV/AIDS a byproduct of sexual promiscuousness to secondary schools and higher institutions where a larger group of people are vulnerable to infection.

4. The management of the schools at all levels should intensify efforts to minimise drug abuse among students. This they can do through making it a policy in the school that students are regularly checked by medical team to know those who do drugs and either rusticate them or punish them in any other way so as to serve as deterrent to others.

5. Cases of examination malpractices could be minimized through the efforts of counselors, teachers and other educational practitioners who would take time to orient students on the dangers of engaging in examination malpractices, particularly regarding jail terms accrued to it when caught.

6. The management of schools should enact policies through the various Departments on the kind of dressing that students would wear. Anything different from the acceptable one should not be accepted. Any student caught flaunting the school orders should be dealt with seriously.

7. The school managers should make it a policy that any bullying act found among students will amount to immediate rustication. This will help to serve as a deterrent to other students with such characteristics.

8. Religious institutions should be more serious with our youths to indoctrinate them in virtues before they leave their homes. They should be made to know that they are leaders of tomorrow not just by name but by exhibiting characters that would prepare them to take over leadership and not allow themselves to be used as thugs and end up being killed at any time. This will go a long way in helping to avert the problem of thuggery.

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