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Incidence, Consequences and Control of Students' Unrest in Tertiary Institutions in Lagos State, Southwest Nigeria

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to investigate the occurrence, consequences and control of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State, southwest Nigeria. The study was borne out of persistent students' revolts and unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos State in particular and Nigeria in general with its concomitant breakdown of law and order. The population was made up of all staff, students, heads of all tertiary institutions and student union executive members in selected tertiary institutions in Lagos State out of which 954 respondents were selected through a stratified random sampling technique. Four structured questionnaires, with a reliability coefficient (r) of 0.84 obtained through a test-retest method, were used to collect data for the study. Data collected were analysed using frequency counts, percentages, correlation analysis, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The findings revealed that students' unrest occurred more frequently in State-owned tertiary institutions than those owned by the Federal Government. The study also revealed a significant difference in the consequences and control of students' unrest in both Federal and State tertiary institutions. It was recommended that government especially at the State level should appropriate more funds to tertiary institutions and that management of institutions should make judicious use of funds allocated to them. It was also recommended that students should be carried along in the decision-making process of their institutions especially on matters affecting their well-being.

Keywords: Student unrest, Incidence, Consequences, Control, Tertiary institution

Introduction

The importance of education in the acquisition of knowledge and productive skills for a meaningful socio-economic and political development of any society cannot be over-emphasised. This is because education occupies a strategic position in individual and societal growth and development. This explains why education is fundamental to the growth and development of the society. In light of the foregoing, tertiary institutions have been established to provide sound and qualitative education so that their graduates can be self-reliant, self-fulfilling and to attain optimum productivity in life (Akeusola, Viatonu and Asikhia, 2012).

To this end, the National Policy on Education (2013) has highlighted the goals of tertiary education to include:

- a) Contribution to national development through training of high level manpower;
- b) Promotion and encouragement of scholarship, entrepreneurship and community service;
- c) Reduction of skill shortages through the production of skilled manpower relevant to the labour market;

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- d) The acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills that enable individuals to develop into careful members of the community; and
- e) Promoting national and international understanding and interaction.

These goals are to be achieved through teaching, articulated research, knowledge dissemination and service to the community. However, tertiary institutions in Nigeria have continued to witness disruption in their academic activities occasioned by student unrests which on many occasions have led to violent confrontation with the institutions' management, security agencies and even the government thus making it difficult for the institutions to achieve the goals of tertiary education (Akpan, 2014; Makinde, 2014).

Students' unrest, according to Malley (2013), is when students are dissatisfied with and fighting against certain social ills or irregularities at local, national and international levels. Some felicitous examples were aptly captured in The Nation Newspapers of January 10th and 25th, 2012 with the following headlines:

Youth killed over fuel subsidy

Police disperse protesting students

Students clash with police

Students protest at the University of Ibadan

Studies (Ajibade 2012; Egboluche, 2013; David, 2013; Ige, 2013; Akpan, 2014) among others have also shown the incidence and consequences of student unrests in Nigerian tertiary institutions as precipitated by several factors. Some of these factors are non-participation of students in decision making process, academic stress, changing value systems of students, teachers' influence, parental influence, contemporary national issues and welfare problems. Akindele (2014) also noted that inadequate classrooms, ill-equipped library and laboratories have been responsible for student crises in Nigerian tertiary institutions. Furthermore, Akeusola, Viatonu and Asikhia (2012) have noted that inadequate funding, mismanagement of resources and cult activities have led to violent student protests in institutions of higher learning in Nigeria.

Some of the incidence of student unrest in Nigeria, their causes and consequences are outlined in the table below (see table 1).

Table 1. Incidence of student's unrest in Nigeria

Year	Institutions	Stated Causes of Unrest	Outcomes of the crises
1960	Many Nigerian University	Signing of Military pact by the Federal Government of Nigeria with the United Kingdom	Cancellation of the pact
1981	Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Religion and against Vice Chancellor over alleged Rice deal	Student died and Vice-Chancellor dismissed.
1984	Many Nigerian tertiary institutions	Proposed introduction of tuition fees and the scrapping	Many Universities were closed down for months
1986	Many Universities in Nigeria	High handedness of the Vice-Chancellor of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria	Most Universities in Nigeria were closed down for months. While several students were expelled.
1988	Many Nigerian Universities	Removal of subsidy from petroleum and allied products	Many schools were closed for a period of Six months.
1989	Several schools In many parts of Nigeria	Introduction of Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) by the Federal Government	Improved conditions of service for workers, closure of several institution for about six months. Many students lost their lives during the Protest as a result of open shooting by Police/Army
1992	Many Universities in Nigeria	Deregulations of Nigerian currency and mounting hardship	Several students died, workers' conditions of service were improved, while several schools were closed for months
1998	Ambrose Alli Uni., Ekpoma, Nigeria	Cult Activities	Violence leading to the death of many students
2003	Many universities in Nigeria	Increase in the prices of petroleum products	Peaceful in some campuses violent in others
2005	Olabisi onabanjo University (OOU) Ago-Iwoye	Killing of Students by the members of the host community	50 vehicles were completely vandalized and the palace of the monarch of the town was burnt
2005	OOU College of Agricultural Science, Ayetoro	Killing of Student by the police	Divisional police headquarter as well as Wema Bank branch were completely burnt

Source: (1) Aluede, O Jimoh, B. Agwinede, B. O., and Omoregne, E. (2005) "Student Unrest in Nigerian Universities: Looking Back and Forward" *Journal of Social Science*, 10.1: 17-22. (2) *The Punch Newspaper* June 17, 2005; *The Guardian Newspaper* June 17, 2005.

Also, studies (Ige, 2013; Tatalovic, 2014; Wragg, 2014) have shown that students' unrest has led to students' misbehaviour, boycott of classes, disturbances, loss of lives and property, breakdown of law and order and disturbance of public peace.

Although students' crisis is a global phenomenon which has ravaged countries like Peru, Columbia, Paraguay, Bolivia, Mexico and some African countries like South Africa in Southern Africa; Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire and Republic of Benin in West Africa, Cameroon, Zaire and Gabon in Central Africa, its occurrence in Nigeria in the recent past has assumed such an alarming proportion that educationists, administrators, policy makers and other stakeholders have been compelled to look for ways to curb the menace (Ajibade, 2012; Malley, 2014). This becomes more imperative because the main aim of higher education in Nigeria is to give very sound and qualitative education which, according to Adeyemi, Ekundayo and Alonge (2010), will enable an individual to function effectively in any environment in which he finds himself. This was also noted by Lawal and Viatonu (2017) who opined that the general mandate of tertiary institutions is to generate knowledge and information through teaching and community service and extend the frontiers of knowledge through research.

This shows that the importance of tertiary education to national development cannot be over emphasized. However, the country (Nigeria) cannot achieve any meaningful development in a crisis- ridden or violent-prone education system. Questions that readily come to mind are: what are the main causes of student unrests? Do the internal influences within the country alone account for the present stance of the Nigerian students? Should students be allowed to participate in the administration of their institutions? Would such involvement and participation minimize their agitations and hence reduce the chances of any violent confrontation? Do the institution's administrators realise that the use of force against the students cannot always bring a positive effect but rather harden their attitudes and ultimately make matters worse? There cannot be an end to these and many other questions on the incidence, causes and control of students' crises in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

This present study therefore attempts to find out the incidence, consequences and control of student unrests in tertiary institutions in Nigeria by using Federal and State owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State as a case study.

Statement of the Problem

The continuous occurrence of students' unrest and its concomitant wastage of human, material and financial resources on the nation's economy are becoming worrisome. The inability of tertiary education to fulfil its major objective of providing sound and qualitative education that will make it serve as agent of development through teaching and research for knowledge creation and dissemination is now a major concern to educators, policy makers and other stakeholders. This long standing problem of students' unrest has severely constrained the realization of various developmental initiatives in the country. Therefore, the need to adequately conduct a study on the consequences and control of students' unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos State in particular and Nigeria in general has become imperative if the objectives of tertiary education are to be fully realized.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were stated and tested at $p < 0.05$ level of significance:

- Ho.1 There is no significant difference in the incidence of students' unrest between Federal and State owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State.
- Ho.2: There is no significant difference between consequences of students' unrest in Federal and State tertiary institutions in Lagos State.
- Ho.3: There is no significant difference between the control of students' unrest in Federal and State tertiary institutions in Lagos State.

Methodology

Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design. This research design was used because data were collected over a large area for making description about the incidence, consequences and control of students' unrest in Federal and State tertiary institutions in Lagos State.

Population

The population of the study was made up of all Vice-Chancellors/Rectors/Provosts (Chief Executive Officers) students, staff (academic and non-academic) and students' union executive in all Federal and State higher institutions located in Lagos State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

A sample of three Federal tertiary institutions representing the three tiers of higher education (University of Lagos, Akoka, Yaba College of Technology, Yaba and Federal College of Education (Technical), Akoka) and three state-owned tertiary institutions (Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu and Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija-Epe) were selected. Simple random sampling technique was used in selecting 954 respondents. The respondents were selected as follows:

Table 2. Distribution of respondents according to institution

S/N	Institutions	Students		Students Union ExcOs		Academic & Non-Academic Staff		CEOs	TOTAL
		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female		
1.	University of Lagos, Akoka.	50	50	4	4	25	25	1	159
2.	Lagos State University, Ojo.	50	50	4	4	25	25	1	159
3.	Yaba College of Technology, Yaba.	50	50	4	4	25	25	1	159
4.	Lagos State Polytechnic, Ikorodu.	50	50	4	4	25	25	1	159
5.	Federal College of Education(T), Akoka.	50	50	4	4	25	25	1	159
6.	Michael Otedola College of Primary Education, Noforija-Epe.	50	50	4	4	25	25	1	159
	TOTAL	300	300	24	24	150	150	6	954

Research Instruments

Four (4) structured questionnaires were administered to four (4) groups – Heads of sampled tertiary institutions, the Student Union Executives, students, academic and non-academic staff of the sampled tertiary institutions. Section A of the questionnaires consisted of items requesting personal demographic information from the respondents such as sex, age, name of institution while section B consisted of items dealing with school fees, management styles of heads of institutions, government policies, school environment, accommodation for students and teaching learning and welfare facilities, relationship with the host community, student unionism cult activities and a host of other perceived causes of students crisis. The instruments also sought to find out the number of occurrence of students' unrest, consequences and strategies for controlling or preventing the menace in institutions of higher learning in Lagos State.

Validity of the Instrument

The content validity of the instrument was determined by experts in test and measurement who were asked to examine the arrangement and adequacy of the items, difficulty of the wordings and match each item of the questionnaire with the research questions and hypotheses to ascertain whether the instrument actually measured

what it was supposed to measure. Moreover, it has been used in a previous study (Akeusola, Viatonu and Asikhia, 2012).

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was determined through test-retest reliability co-efficient. In doing this, a pilot study was carried out in 6 tertiary institutions in Ogun State which shared similar characteristics with the selected institutions for the study. The institutions used for the pilot study were one each of Federal University (Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta); State University (Tai Solarin University of Education, Ijagun, Ijebu-Ode); Federal Polytechnic (Federal Polytechnic, Ilaro), State Polytechnic (Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Ojere-Abeokuta); Federal College of Education (Federal College of Education, Osiele-Abeokuta) and State College of Education (Tai Solarin College of Education, Omu-Ijebu). The instruments were administered to 4 (2 male and 2 female) students union executive members, 10 (5 male and 5 female) students in each of the 6 selected institutions, 10 (5 male and 5 female) academic and non-academic staff, as well as 6 (1 each) Student Affairs' Officers of each selected tertiary institutions in Ogun State. After a period of two weeks, the instruments were re-administered to the same respondents. The data collected on the two tests were collated and analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment reliability. A correlation coefficient 'r' of 0.84. This was an indication that the instruments were suitable and reliable for the study.

Administration of the Instrument

The researchers made use of research assistants in the administration and retrieval of the instruments from the respondents in various institutions selected for the study.

Data Analysis

The data were collected and analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

The results of the study are presented below:

Test of Hypotheses

Ho.1: There is no significant difference between the incidence of students' unrest in federal and state owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State.

Table 3. Incidence of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos state

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
UNILAG	98	10.3	10.3
LASU	282	29.6	39.9
YABATECH	106	11.1	51.0
LASPOTECH	215	22.5	73.5
FCE-TECH	147	15.4	88.9
MOCPEP	106	11.1	100.0
TOTAL	954	100.0	

Source: Akeusola, Viatonu and Asikhia (2012)

Table 3a. Descriptive statistics of incidence of student crises in federal and state tertiary institutions in Lagos state

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Federal	30	4.30	29.00	11.47	5.82
State	30	9.20	48.30	20.33	9.60
Valid N (listwise)	30				

Table 3b. Paired sample test of incidence of student crises in federal and state tertiary institutions in Lagos state

	Mean	Paired Difference		Lower	Upper	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
		Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean					
Pair 1	-8.86333	5.92059	1.08095	-11.07412	-6.65255	-8.200	29	.000

Table 3a shows that the mean score of the incidence of students' crisis in federal institution is 11.47 while it is 20.33 for state institutions with maximum score of 48.30 for federal as against 29.00 for the state. The standard deviation is 5.82 for federal and 9.60 for state. Thus, the mean occurrence of students' crisis is greater in state institutions. The mean difference is found to be statistically significant at 0.05 level of significant as shown in Table 3b. Therefore the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the occurrence of students' crisis in state and federal institutions in Lagos State is hereby rejected.

Ho.2: There is no significant difference in the consequences of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State.

Table 4. Crosstab Analysis consequences of students' unrests among tertiary institutions

		UNILAG	LASU	YABATE	LASPOT	FCE	MOCPED	
		CH	ECH	AKOKA				
Disruption of school activities	Count	124	87	0	0	0	0	211
	Expected Count	27.4	44.7	18.8	49.8	29.9	40.5	211.0
Elongation of academic calendar	Count	0	66	0	0	0	0	66
	Expected Count	8.6	14.0	5.9	15.6	9.3	12.7	66.0
Closure of school	Count	0	49	73	0	0	0	122
	Expected Count	15.9	25.8	10.9	28.8	17.3	23.4	122.0
Sanction or expulsion of some students	Count	0	0	12	48	0	0	60
	Expected Count	7.8	12.7	5.3	14.2	8.5	11.5	60.0
Vandalization of properties	Count	0	0	0	160	0	0	160
	Expected Count	20.8	33.9	14.3	37.7	22.6	30.7	160.0
Loss of lives	Count	0	0	0	17	91	0	108
	Expected Count	14.0	22.9	9.6	25.5	15.3	20.7	108.0
Police intervention/confrontation	Count	0	0	0	0	44	75	119
	Expected Count	15.5	25.2	10.6	28.1	16.8	22.8	119.0
Overall poor academic standard	Count	0	0	0	0	0	108	108
	Expected Count	14.0	22.9	9.6	25.5	15.3	20.7	108.0
	Count	124	202	85	225	135	183	954
	Expected Count	124.0	202.0	85.0	225.0	135.0	183.0	954.0

Table 4 shows that of the variant consequences of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos state, disruption of school activities (211, 22.1%) was rated as being the highest consequence while sanction or expulsion of erring students (60, 6.3%) was the minimum consequence observed.

Table 5. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) of consequences of students' unrest among tertiary institutions in Lagos state

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	5321.182	5	1064.236	3684.687	.000
Within Groups	273.808	948	.289		
Total	5594.990	953			

F (5,948) = 3684.687, F(tab) = 3.20, df = 953, P<0.05

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) in table 5 shows a statistical significant difference in the respondents' perception of the consequences of students' unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos state. Since the F(5,948) = 3684.687 is greater than the F(tab) = 3.20 with a difference of 953 at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the consequences of students' unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos state is hereby rejected, and an alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference in the consequences of students' unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos State is adopted.

Ho.3: There is no significant difference in the control of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State.

Table 6. Crosstab Analysis of the control measurs of students' unrests among tertiary institutions

		UNILAG	LASU	YABATECH	LASPOTECH	FCE(T) AKOKA	MOCPED	
Stable and moderate tuition	Count	124	100	0	0	0	0	224
	Expected Count	29.1	47.4	20.0	52.8	31.7	43.0	224.0
Students' friendly and effective leadership	Count	0	102	3	0	0	0	105
	Expected Count	13.6	22.2	9.4	24.8	14.9	20.1	105.0
Good government policies and adequate funding	Count	0	0	39	0	0	0	39
	Expected Count	5.1	8.3	3.5	9.2	5.5	7.5	39.0
Considerate students welfare	Count	0	0	43	94	0	0	137
	Expected Count	17.8	29.0	12.2	32.3	19.4	26.3	137.0
Efficient teaching-learning facilities	Count	0	0	0	81	0	0	81
	Expected Count	10.5	17.2	7.2	19.1	11.5	15.5	81.0
Cordial community relations	Count	0	0	0	42	0	0	42
	Expected Count	5.5	8.9	3.7	9.9	5.9	8.1	42.0
Cultured and motivated students unionism	Count	0	0	0	8	52	0	60
	Expected Count	7.8	12.7	5.3	14.2	8.5	11.5	60.0

Total ban on campus cultism	Count	0	0	0	0	53	0	53
	Expected Count	6.9	11.2	4.7	12.5	7.5	10.2	53.0
Good governance and effective social security	Count	0	0	0	0	30	26	56
	Expected Count	7.3	11.9	5.0	13.2	7.9	10.7	56.0
Students' participation in administration	Count	0	0	0	0	0	116	116
	Expected Count	15.1	24.6	10.3	27.4	16.4	22.3	116.0
Dialogue with parents and other stakeholders	Count	0	0	0	0	0	41	41
	Expected Count	5.3	8.7	3.7	9.7	5.8	7.9	41.0
	Count	124	202	85	225	135	183	954
	Expected Count	124.0	202.0	85.0	225.0	135.0	183.0	954.0

The crosstabs in table 6 show that stable and moderate tuitions (224, 23.5%) was considered as the most effective control measure for students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos state, while good government policies (39, 4.1%) would also help in reducing the problem.

Table 7. Analysis of variance of control measures of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos state

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	10465.732	5	2093.146	5166.153	.05
Within Groups	384.097	948	.405		
Total	10849.829	953			

F (5,948) = 5166.153, F (tab) = 3.20, df = 953, P<0.05

Table 7 shows a statistical significant difference in the perceived control measures of students' unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos state. Since the F(5,948) = 5166.153 is greater than the F(tab) = 3.20 with a difference of 953 at 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the control of students' unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos state is hereby rejected, and an alternate hypothesis which states that there is a significant difference in the control of students' unrests in tertiary institutions in Lagos State is adopted.

Discussion of Findings

Students' unrest, in whatever form or guise, negatively affects the roles of any higher institution in achieving the goals of national development for which it was set up (David, 2013). This perhaps explains why the findings of this study are quite important and timely. The first hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the occurrence of students' unrest between federal and state-owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State was rejected. This is an indication that state-owned tertiary institutions are more prone to students' unrest than their federal counterparts. This difference may be because funds that are allocated to Federal higher institutions are promptly released unlike their counterparts in State-owned higher institutions. It may also be because of the differences that may exist in these institutions in terms of the nature of students, leadership, student unionism, staff strength and quality of staff. The findings of the study corroborate those of Odu (2013), Omonijo, Uche, Rotimi and Nwadiolor (2014) and Omisade (2014) who found that funds, equipment and facilities such as lecture halls, laboratories, students' hostels, library and office spaces, necessary for teaching, learning and research are either lacking or inadequate in tertiary institutions owned by State Governments. Ajayi and Ekundayo (2006) also noted that the Nigerian governments over the years have not met the United Nations

Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) recommendation of 26% of the total budget allocation to the education sector.

The study also found a significant difference in the consequences of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State as the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the consequences of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State was rejected. This difference may not be unconnected with the disparity in leadership styles of the management of the institutions, availability of funds, the nature of students and students' union leadership in place. The study has revealed that disruption of school activities, indefinite closure of schools and vandalization of government property are some of the consequences of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State. This finding supports the submissions of Akeusola, Viatonu and Asikhia (2012); Hajek (2013) and Anna (2014) that the consequences of violent confrontation with institutions' authorities are incessant closure of institutions, loss of lives and property and disruption of academic activities.

The study has also revealed a significant difference in the control of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State as the hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in the control of students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State was rejected. The study showed that stable and moderate tuitions was the most effective control measures for students' unrest in tertiary institutions in Lagos State. This is contrary to the findings of Adeyemi, Ekundayo and Alonge (2010) and Oludayo,Uche, Omonijo and Eche (2015) which discovered that some of the strategies that can be used to control students' unrest are maintaining a cordial relationship between school authority and students and involving the students in decision making process of their institutions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study have shown that the incidence of students' unrest in tertiary institutions should not be handled with levity as the consequences of such unrests have not been palatable to the students, parents, academic and non-academic staff and other stakeholders in the society. This therefore behoves the management in every tertiary institution and the government to handle issues of students with care and every sense of urgency it deserves particularly tuition fees and relationship with the students .

Based on the foregoing findings, it is recommended that governments should allocate more funds to the tertiary institutions to make them more effective and efficient in order to realise the objectives for which they were established while Management of tertiary institutions should make adequate and judicious use of the funds allocated to them by the government.

It has become evident that government alone cannot fund education. This therefore means that other stakeholders in the education sector such as corporate bodies, philanthropists, alumni associations should join hands with the government in the provision of facilities and equipment in tertiary institutions.

Tertiary institutions should endeavour to involve students in the decision-making process particularly on matters affecting their well-being and create avenues where students can express their grievances before they turn violent.

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