

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS' CONDUCTS IN BASIC SCHOOLS IN NORTH WEST ZONE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

Students' conducts are a challenge burdening stakeholders in education. The objectives of the study were to examine: (i) the level of basic school effectiveness and (ii) the find out the challenges affecting students' conduct in basic schools in the Northwest zone, Nigeria. The study used a descriptive research design with a population of 21,230 basic schools. A sample of 370 basic schools was selected from four states using random, stratified and systematic sampling procedures. A validated Students' Conduct Observation Inventory (SCOI) and Students' Conduct Teacher Questionnaire (SCTQ), with reliability indices of 0.76, and 0.74 respectively, were used to collect data. Percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the demographic data and answer the research questions. The findings of the study show that the level of students' conduct in the North West basic schools was moderate (average mean score of 3.47) and that the challenges affecting Students' conduct in basic schools include parental upbringing, peer group influence, school setting, weather conditions, and teachers' attitude. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Programmes aimed at promoting good students' conduct in basic school should be introduced by the Universal Basic Education Commission, emphasizing how teachers should help students to conduct themselves in schools. Seminars and workshops should be organized by the Universal Basic Education Commission to educated teachers on the challenges affecting students' conduct how to handle issues related to students' conduct in basic schools.

Keywords: Assessment, Students' Conduct, Basic School,

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The ultimate measure of school effectiveness is students' outcomes indicated by their examination results. Iyamu and Aduwa (2004) opined that a school could be regarded as effective if its students exhibit proficiency in reading, writing and computational skills, practical and vocational skills, exhibit the desired level of knowledge in various subjects in the curriculum, and performed well in their examination. According to Sani (2007, p.25), "what is worrisome however is that an examination, especially the Senior School Certificate is not always a true test of knowledge". He noted that the rampant cases of examination malpractices and other irregularities could make one doubt the efficiency of examination results in determining school effectiveness. It was evident that Nigerian students with good grades in the West African School Certificate Examination performed woefully in the

University Matriculation Examinations and in their undergraduate examinations (Uzoka, 2002). This made it necessary to find another good indicator of school effectiveness apart from examination results. However, this is not to underestimate the value of examinations. Examinations remain the basis for certification, employment and admission into higher educational institutions.

Students' conduct is one of the readily observable student outcomes in a school environment. The effectiveness of schools could be observed from the ability of students to set about tasks in an orderly manner, exhibit a high level of discipline, hard work and obedience to school's rules and regulations. They should also exhibit a sense of co-operation and a positive attitude towards themselves, their teachers and the curriculum. Sani (2007) believed that school can be considered effective if its students are able to use available school resources properly and cautiously and are able to take responsibility for their learning. Therefore, this study examined SBMC strategies and community participation in relation to basic school effectiveness in the North-west Zone.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Student' conduct is one of the measures of school effectiveness. According to Iyamu in Sani (2007), the effectiveness of a school could easily be examined through the ways students set about tasks in an orderly way, exhibit discipline, hard work and obedience to school's rules and regulations. It could also be observed by ways students exhibit a sense of co-operation and develop a positive attitude towards themselves, their teachers and the curriculum, and are able to use school resources judiciously and cautiously.

Students' conduct is one of the school achievements one can easily observe in a school environment (Sani, 2007). According to Sani (2007), the task of identifying school effectiveness indicators was not an easy one, either conceptually, technically or politically. The concept of school effectiveness through a central issue in management had continued to generate a lot of controversies to the extent that educational management experts and researchers have not reached a clear cut consensus on what the term actually means (Oduwaye, 1997). School effectiveness as a concept has therefore remained a controversial issue among educational researchers. There had been a continuing argument by different experts who postulated divergently and contradictorily on the constructs as an ideal model (Sani, 2007). According to Blumende (2001), the dilemma had been the inability of educationists to produce a consistent and unambiguous meaning of school effectiveness that encompasses all the criteria over time.

3.0 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

Students' Conduct: Students' conduct in this study is referred to like all the aggregate manners and behaviour expected in students. It is measured using punctuality, cleanliness, personal hygiene, regularity, orderliness, discipline, security consciousness, cooperation with others, interest in schoolwork, participation in classroom activities, creativity and cheerfulness.

Research Objectives

The following are the objectives of this research:

- 1) To determine the level of students' conduct in basic schools in the North-west Zone, Nigeria.
- 2) To examine the challenges affecting students' conduct in basic schools in the North-west Zone, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following are the questions set for this study:

- 1) What is the level of students' conduct in basic schools in the North-west Zone, Nigeria?
- 2) What are the challenges affecting students' conduct in basic school in the North-west Zone, Nigeria?

4.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design for this study was a descriptive survey. The population of this study consisted of 20,632 Universal Basic Education (UBE) schools and their SBMC in North-west Zone, Nigeria. There were seven states in the zone with a total number of 18719 primary schools and 1913 junior secondary schools under UBE (Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC), 2018). The North-west zone of Nigeria is comprised of Jigawa, Kaduna, Kano, Katsina, Kebbi, Sokoto and Zamfara States.

Multi-stage sampling techniques were used in selecting the sample. In the first stage, a simple random sampling technique was used to select four states (which was made up of Jigawa, Katsina, Sokoto and Zamfara State) from the zone. Consequently, a stratified, proportionate and systematic sampling technique was used to select 370 basic schools (40 junior secondary schools and 330 primary schools) across the selected states. In this research, a validated questionnaire with a reliability index of 0.81 titled Students' Conduct Teacher Questionnaire (SCTQ) was used in collecting the data. The data collected for this study was analyzed percentages, mean scores and standard deviations were used to answer the two research questions.

4.1 Data Presentation and Analysis

The data collected during the survey are presented and analyzed in this section.

Research Question One

RQ1: What is the level of students' conduct basic school in the North-west Zone?

In Table 1, the data on the level of students' conduct was presented.

Table 1: Level of Students' Conduct Exhibited in the North-west Zone Basic Schools

S/No	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Remark
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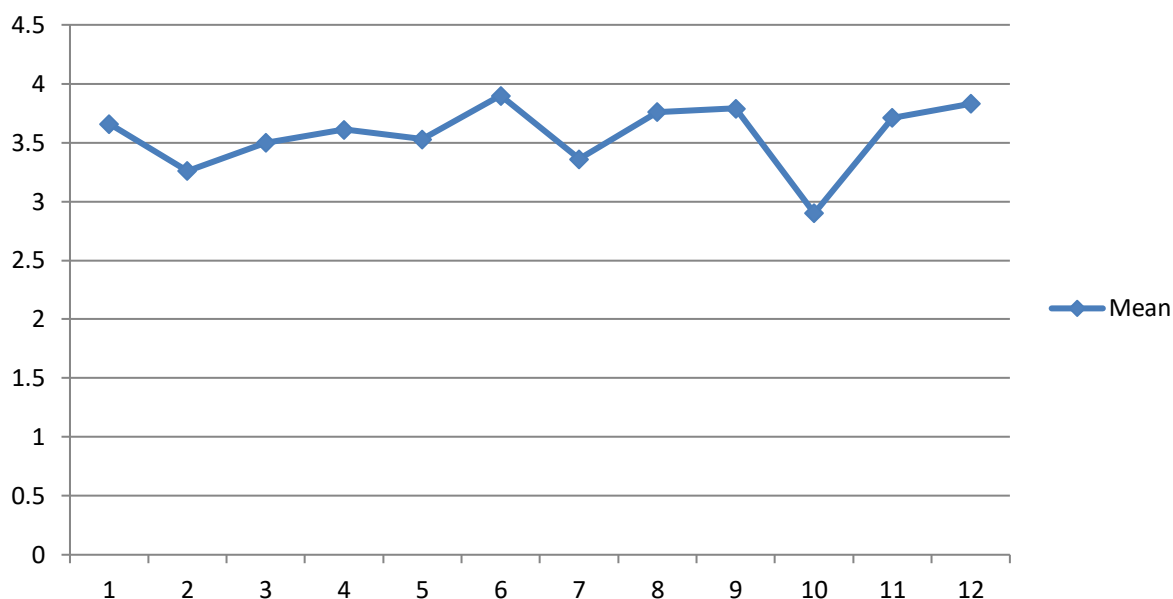
1.	Punctuality	3.66	1.14	High
2.	Cleanliness	3.26	1.20	Moderate
3.	Personal hygiene	3.50	1.27	High
4.	Regularity (Attendance)	3.61	1.21	High
5.	Orderliness	3.53	1.18	High
6.	Discipline	3.90	0.96	High
7.	Security consciousness	3.36	0.86	Moderate
8.	Cooperation with others	3.76	1.08	High
9.	Interest in school work	3.79	1.07	High
10.	Participation in classroom activities	2.90	1.18	Low
11.	Creativity	3.71	1.18	High
12.	Cheerfulness	3.83	1.03	High
	Average	3.47	1.11	Moderate

Source: The Researcher's Field Survey, 2019.

In this table, item 1 recorded a mean score of 3.66. This indicates that there was a high-level exhibition of punctuality among students of basic schools in the North-west Zone. In item 2 of Table 1, a mean score of 3.26 was recorded indicating that the students in the North-west Zone were moderately clean. In the same table, item 3 considered the level of students' personal hygiene. Under this item, a mean of 3.50 was recorded, which shows that the level of students' personal hygiene was high. Item 4 in Table 1 shows a recorded mean score of 3.61 for students' attendance (regularity) to school.

In Table 1, item 5 shows a mean score of 3.53, which indicates that the level of orderliness in the North-west Zone Basic Schools was high. In this table also, item 6 reveals that the level of students' discipline was high, as a mean score of 3.90 was obtained. On average, the level of security consciousness among students in basic schools in the North-west Zone was moderate with a mean score of 3.36.

In Table 1, a mean score of 3.76 was recorded in item 8, which means that the level of cooperation among students in the North-west Zone Basic Schools was high. Interest in schoolwork was high (3.79), while participation in classroom activities was observed to be low (2.90) in the zone's basic schools. The creativity level was found to be high (3.71) among students in the North-west Zone Basic Schools. The level of cheerfulness among students in the zone basic schools was also high (3.83). Generally, the level of students' conduct in the zone was moderate. Figure 1 is a line graph describing the mean scores of the values on individual conduct.



1 = Punctuality 2 = Cleanliness 3 = Personal hygiene 4 = Regularity
 5 = Orderliness 6 = Discipline 7 = Security consciousness 8 = Cooperation
 9 = Interest in work 10 = Participation 11 = Creativity 12 = Cheerfulness

Figure 1: Means of Students' Conduct Exhibited in the North-west Zone Basic Schools

In order to describe the data in Table 28 in details, it is good to present it state by state using mean scores.

Table 29: Students' Conduct Exhibited by States in the North-west Zone Basic Schools

S/ N	Conduct	Jigawa		Katsina		Sokoto		Zamfara		Total	
		X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD	X	SD
1.	Punctuality	3.84	0.772	4.33	0.819	2.45	0.871	3.95	1.137	3.66	1.141
2.	Cleanliness	2.64	0.882	3.72	1.213	4.14	0.841	2.43	0.867	3.26	1.200
3.	Personal hygiene	4.12	1.015	4.40	0.730	2.58	1.003	2.50	0.979	3.50	1.268
4.	Regularity	3.72	1.059	3.99	1.137	2.43	0.867	4.35	0.732	3.61	1.204
5.	Orderliness	3.80	0.805	3.90	1.179	3.72	1.241	2.43	0.867	3.53	1.183
6.	Discipline	4.19	0.777	3.78	1.014	4.15	0.800	3.39	1.003	3.90	0.951
7.	Security cons*	3.19	0.830	3.35	0.744	3.08	0.819	3.79	0.894	3.36	0.860
8.	Cooperation	4.04	0.798	3.67	0.960	3.71	1.248	3.56	1.267	3.76	1.079
9.	Interest in work	3.78	0.826	4.51	0.628	4.07	0.842	2.44	0.881	3.79	1.073

10.	Participation	2.66	0.997	3.78	1.223	2.63	1.048	2.44	0.873	2.92	1.185
11.	Creativity	4.19	0.777	4.44	0.670	2.43	0.865	3.58	1.273	3.71	1.186
12	Cheerfulness	3.01	1.198	3.84	0.773	4.52	0.618	4.02	0.793	3.83	1.026
	Overall Average	3.61	0.891	3.98	0.925	3.32	0.943	3.24	0.962	3.57	1.113

*consciousness

Source: The researcher’s field survey, 2016.

Table 29 re-presents the data by state. In this table, the data presented show that punctuality in Katsina State basic schools was high as confirmed by the mean score of 4.33. The punctuality was also high in both Jigawa and Zamfara States (3.84) and (3.95) respectively, but low in Sokoto State (2.45). In terms of cleanliness, the data indicated that Sokoto State scored the highest mean of 4.14., which explains that the level of cleanliness among students in basic schools in the state was very high. The level was high in Katsina State (3.72), moderate in Jigawa State (2.64), and low in Zamfara State (2.43).

Personal hygiene among students in basic schools was very high in Jigawa and Katsina States with recorded mean scores above 4.50 each, while the level was moderate in Sokoto (2.58) and Zamfara (2.50) States. The regularity level was observed to be high in Zamfara (4.35), Jigawa (3.99) and Katsina (3.72) States, but low in Sokoto State (2.43). The level of orderliness was found to be high in Jigawa, Katsina and Sokoto States with mean scores above 3.50, but low in Zamfara State with a 2.43 mean scores. The level of discipline among students in basic schools was observed to be high in Jigawa (4.19), Sokoto (4.15), and Katsina (3.78) State, but moderate in Zamfara (3.39) State.

The level of orderliness was found high in Jigawa, Katsina and Sokoto States with mean scores above 3.50 each, but low in Zamfara State with 2.43 as a mean score. The level of discipline among students in the basic school was observed to be high in Jigawa (4.19), Sokoto (4.15), and Katsina (3.78) State, but moderate in Zamfara (3.39) State. The level of security consciousness was moderate in Jigawa, Katsina and Sokoto States (3.5 > mean < 2.5), but was found to be high in Zamfara State with a recorded mean score of 3.79. Considering the level of cooperation among students in basic schools, Jigawa recorded the highest mean score of 4.04, which means that the level of cooperation among Jigawa State basic schools students was high. In the three other States, it was also observed to be high (mean > 3.10). Interest in school work among the students was very high in Katsina (4.51), high in Sokoto (4.07) and Jigawa (3.78) States, but low in Zamfara (2.44) State. Level of participation in classroom activities was observed to be high in Katsina State (3.78), but moderate in Jigawa (2.66), Sokoto State (2.63), and Zamfara State (2.44).

In terms of creativity, Jigawa, Katsina and Zamfara States scored means greater than 3.50 which indicated that the creativity level was high. Looking at Sokoto State, it was seen that the creativity level among students was moderate. The level of cheerfulness was observed to be very high in Sokoto (4.52), Katsina (3.84) and Zamfara (4.02) States, but moderate in Jigawa (3.01) State.

Since mean rating was used to describe the individual items in the variable (students' conduct), it is good to describe it using a summated mean score. The students' conduct has 12 items scale of 1 to 5, the minimum summated mean score for an individual respondent is 12, while the maximum is 60. This means that the summated mean scores fall between 12 and 60. In order to provide decision rule (a yardstick for making judgment), the range was divided into five quotas; 0.1 – 12.0 = very low, 12.1 – 24.0 = low, 24.1 – 36.0 = moderate, 36.1 – 48.0 = moderate, and between 48.1 – 60.0 = very high.

Table 3: Summated Mean Scores of Students' Conduct Exhibited by States in the North-west Zone Basic Schools

S/No	State	N	Mean	Remark
1.	Jigawa	618	43.28	High
2.	Katsina	624	47.70	High
3.	Sokoto	534	40.61	Moderate
4.	Zamfara	444	38.17	Moderate
	Total	2220	42.86	Moderate

Source: The researcher's field survey, 2016.

Table 3 presents summated mean scores of levels of students' conduct in the North-west Zone Basic Schools. The total summated mean score was 42.86, which implies that the level of students' conduct in the North-west zone Basic School was moderate. In this table, Jigawa State had a mean score of 43.28, whereas, Katsina had a mean of 47.70, Sokoto had 40.61 and Zamfara had 38.17. By implication, it meant that the level of students' conduct was high in Jigawa, and Katsina states, but moderate in Sokoto and Zamfara states. Looking at the total of the mean scores, it was concluded that the level of students' conduct was moderate in the Zone's Basic Schools.

In Table 3, results show that the levels of students' conduct in the North-west Zone, was moderate with a summated mean score of 42.86. Students' conduct was moderate in Jigawa (43.28), Sokoto (40.61), and Zamfara (38.17) States, with Zamfara State scoring the least. In Katsina State, the recorded mean was 47.70, which indicates that students' conduct was high in that state. This is against the findings of Sani (2007) that the overall level of conduct exhibited by students was not good, it was inadequate and unsatisfactory. He quoted Iyamu (2005) saying that the poor level of students' conduct was partly a reaction to frustrating environmental conditions surrounding students in their schools. He claimed that the impact of the environment could be appreciated from the fact that Northern states are located on the fringes of the Sahara Desert with extreme temperatures at various seasons. He observed that some classrooms had broken windows, doors and leaking roofs, which exposed students to climatic hazards and discomfoted that taxed on their patience and endurance with the results that they tended to react negatively. Therefore, weather conditions could be more responsible for students' conduct than the conditions of school buildings. School buildings in the North should therefore be designed in a way to protect students from the hostile weather. Students' conduct was one of the readily observable student outcomes in school environments. According to Iyamu (2005), the effectiveness of a school could easily be assessed from the

ability of its students to set about tasks in an orderly way, exhibit discipline, hard work and obedience to school rules and regulations, exhibit a sense of co-operation and positive attitude towards themselves, their teachers, and the curricula. They should also be able to use available school resources properly and cautiously and were able to take responsibility for their learning.

Research Question Two

RQ2: What are the challenges affecting students conduct in basic schools in North West Zone, Nigeria?

This research question is presented and analyzed in Table 4.

Table 4: Challenges of Students' Conduct in Basic Schools

S/N	Item Statement	Yes		No	
		Freq.	%	Freq.	%
1.	Do you think whether parental upbringing can affect students' conduct?	336	84	62	16
2.	Do you think whether weather condition can affect students' conduct?	346	87	52	13
3.	Do you think whether peer group influence can affect students' conduct?	347	87	51	13
4.	Do you think whether school setting can affect students' conduct?	328	82	70	18
5.	Do you think whether teachers' attitude can affect students' conduct?	359	90	39	10

In Table 4, information has shown that there are many challenges affecting students conduct in basic schools in the North West Zone, Nigeria. In the table, parental upbringing is expected to affect students' conduct as 84% of the respondents believes that parental upbringing can affect students' conduct in basic schools. In item 3, up to 87% of the respondents believe that whether the condition can also affect students' conduct. Another 87% of the respondents believe that peer group influence can also affect students' conduct. Weather condition is also expected to affect students' conduct as indicated by about 82% of the respondents. Another 90% of the respondents believe that teachers' attitude can affect students conduct.

5.0 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study are summarized as follows:

1. The level of students' conduct in basic school in the North-west Zone was moderate with a summated mean score of 42.86. The students' conduct was moderate in Jigawa (43.28), Sokoto (40.61), and Zamfara (38.17) states, with Zamfara State scoring the least. In Katsina State, the recorded mean was 47.70, which indicates that students' conduct was high in the state than in the others.

2. The challenges affecting Students' conduct in basic schools include parental upbringing, peer group influence, school setting, weather conditions, and teachers' attitude.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The level of students' conduct in basic schools is not satisfactory. This is because character building should be one of the top priorities for schools. Not paying more attention to students conducts in school might have been the genesis of the social, economic and political problems in Nigeria.

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the research findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Programmes aimed at promoting good students' conduct in basic school should be introduced by the Universal Basic Education Commission, emphasizing on how teacher should help students to conduct themselves in schools.
2. Seminars and workshops should be organized by the Universal Basic Education Commission to educated teachers on the challenges affecting students' conduct how to handle issues related to students' conduct in basic schools.

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