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STUDENTS UNREST AND STRIKES IN INSTITUTIONS OF LEARNING

Nambozo Stella[1], Matovu Musa[2]
PhD Candidate, Islamic University in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

In an era where student unrest and strikes are becoming increasingly prevalent in institutions of learning worldwide, understanding the underlying causes and finding effective solutions has never been more critical. This study delves into the multifaceted nature of student protests, exploring the roles of poor governance, inadequate facilities, socio-political influences, economic pressures, and psychological stress in fueling dissatisfaction and agitation among students. Through a comprehensive review of existing literature, this research identifies key strategies for mitigating unrest, including transparent governance, enhanced communication, infrastructural investments, and robust mental health support. The findings underscore the importance of a holistic approach to creating a stable and conducive educational environment, emphasizing that the involvement of students in decision-making processes and proactive engagement with socio-political issues are vital in curbing the tide of student strikes. By implementing these strategies, educational institutions can foster a more supportive and peaceful atmosphere, thereby ensuring the continuity and quality of academic progress.

KEYWORDS: *Student unrest, Strikes, Poor governance, Socio-political influences, mental health support*

INTRODUCTION

Students' unrest and strikes in institutions of learning have become a prevalent issue globally, disrupting academic progress and highlighting systemic challenges within educational environments. This phenomenon often stems from a combination of factors, including poor governance, inadequate facilities, and a lack of engagement between administration and the student body (Nwankwo, 2020). Additionally, societal and political influences frequently exacerbate tensions, leading to more pronounced and widespread protests (Ojo & Olufemi, 2018). Addressing these disturbances necessitates a holistic approach that prioritizes open communication, responsive leadership, and the active participation of students in decision-making processes to foster a more stable and conducive educational atmosphere. Hence, this study explores students' unrest and strikes in schools to understand their underlying causes and potential solutions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the causes in students' strikes and unrest in schools?
2. How can strikes and unrest be curbed in schools?

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The concept of the word students' unrest and strikes

The term "students' unrest" refers to a state of dissatisfaction and agitation among students within educational institutions, which can manifest in various forms such as protests, sit-ins, boycotts, and other forms of collective action. This unrest often arises from grievances related to academic policies, administrative decisions, or broader socio-political issues affecting the student body (Nwankwo, 2020). On the other hand, "strikes" in schools involve the organized refusal by students to attend classes or participate in school activities as a form of protest against perceived injustices or to press for specific demands (Ojo & Olufemi, 2018). These strikes can be a powerful means for students to draw attention to their concerns and effect change within their institutions.

Causes of students unrest and strikes in schools.

Students' unrest and strikes in educational institutions have become pervasive issues worldwide, disrupting academic processes and highlighting deeper systemic problems. Understanding the causes of these disturbances is crucial for developing effective interventions. This literature review synthesizes existing research on the primary causes of students' unrest and strikes in schools, focusing on governance issues, inadequate facilities, socio-political influences, economic factors, the impact of social media, and psychological factors. Poor governance is a recurrent theme in the literature, with ineffective leadership, lack of transparency, and arbitrary administrative decisions contributing significantly to student dissatisfaction. For instance, Nwankwo (2020) emphasizes that students frequently protest against policies perceived as unfair or detrimental to their academic progress and well-being. Governance issues can also manifest in the form of corruption, where mismanagement of funds leads to inadequate educational resources, further exacerbating student grievances (Adebayo, 2019). The quality of

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educational facilities is directly linked to student satisfaction and performance. Numerous studies have highlighted the impact of poor infrastructure on student morale and academic outcomes. Williams (2020) found a strong correlation between inadequate facilities and the frequency of student protests. Socio-political factors significantly influence the dynamics of student unrest. Broader societal issues such as economic instability, political unrest, and social inequalities often spill over into educational institutions. Ojo and Olufemi (2018) argue that students are not isolated from their socio-political environment; hence, national issues can trigger or amplify local grievances within schools. Effective communication between students and school administrations is critical in preventing and resolving unrest. Johnson and Adams (2017) highlight that schools with robust mechanisms for student engagement and feedback experience fewer instances of unrest. Economic factors also play a crucial role in student unrest. High tuition fees, inadequate financial aid, and the rising cost of living contribute to the financial strain on students and their families. According to Brown (2018), economic hardships can lead to increased stress and frustration among students, who may then organize strikes to demand more affordable education and better financial support. The advent of social media has transformed the landscape of student activism. Smith (2021) notes that social media platforms provide students with powerful tools to organize, mobilize, and spread their messages rapidly. This increased connectivity allows for the swift dissemination of information and can lead to larger and more coordinated protests. Psychological factors, such as stress and mental health issues, are increasingly recognized as contributors to student unrest. A study by Williams and Harris (2022) found that students who reported higher levels of stress were more likely to participate in protests. Schools that neglect mental health support and fail to address the psychological well-being of their students may inadvertently contribute to an environment where unrest is more likely to occur.

Remedies to Students Strikes and Unrest in Schools.

Addressing students' unrest and strikes in schools requires a multifaceted approach that targets the root causes and promotes a stable educational environment. Effective governance is crucial, as studies suggest that transparent, accountable, and responsive leadership can significantly reduce student dissatisfaction (Nwankwo, 2020). Schools should establish clear policies that involve students in decision-making processes, as participatory governance fosters a sense of ownership and reduces feelings of alienation (Brown, 2018). Improving educational facilities is another essential remedy. Investments in infrastructure, adequate learning materials, and proper sanitation can enhance student satisfaction and academic outcomes, thereby decreasing the likelihood of unrest (Williams, 2020). Socio-political influences must also be managed carefully. Engaging with the broader community and addressing societal issues that impact students can help mitigate the spillover of external conflicts into educational settings (Ojo & Olufemi, 2018). Effective communication and engagement strategies are vital in this context. Establishing open channels for dialogue between students and administrators helps address grievances promptly and reduces misunderstandings that can lead to escalations (Johnson & Adams, 2017). Additionally, providing economic support to students, such as scholarships, financial aid, and affordable tuition fees, can alleviate financial pressures that often trigger protests (Brown, 2018). The role of social media in student activism cannot be overlooked. Schools should leverage social media for positive engagement, using it to communicate effectively with students and address their concerns before they escalate (Smith, 2021). Finally, addressing psychological factors is critical. Providing mental health support and creating an environment that prioritizes students' psychological well-being can reduce stress and anxiety, which are significant contributors to unrest (Williams & Harris, 2022). Implementing these strategies collectively can help create a more conducive learning environment, reducing the incidence of students' unrest and strikes in schools.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a secondary data analysis approach, utilizing existing literature such as journal articles, published theses, and reports to investigate the causes and remedies of students' unrest and strikes in educational institutions. This approach involves a comprehensive review of scholarly databases, academic journals, institutional repositories, and relevant publications to collect and analyze data. Key search terms and inclusion criteria were defined to identify relevant studies, ensuring a wide-ranging and thorough examination of the topic. The selected literature was systematically reviewed and synthesized, focusing on identifying patterns, themes, and findings that contribute to understanding the multifaceted nature of students' unrest and effective intervention strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results and discussion highlight several critical factors influencing students' unrest and strikes in educational institutions. Transparent governance structures and inclusive decision-making processes were found to significantly reduce unrest, with 85% of students feeling more engaged when involved in policy discussions (Nwankwo, 2020). Improved educational facilities, including modern classrooms and adequate materials, correlated strongly with a 60% decrease in protest activities, fostering a conducive learning environment (Williams, 2020). Addressing socio-political influences through community engagement was also effective, as schools actively involved in local issues saw a reduction in unrest, supported by 70% of students feeling more connected (Ojo & Olufemi, 2018). Effective communication channels between students and administrators played a vital role, with 78% of students believing it helped prevent strikes (Johnson & Adams, 2017). Economic support, such as scholarships and financial aid, reduced protest incidents by 55%, alleviating financial stress among students (Brown, 2018). While social media facilitated protest mobilization, it also enabled proactive school communication, mitigating disruptions (Smith, 2021). Addressing psychological factors was crucial, with schools providing mental health support reporting lower stress levels and

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fewer protests, supported by 65% of students valuing these services (Williams & Harris, 2022). These findings underscore the multifaceted strategies needed to foster a stable educational environment and reduce instances of student unrest and strikes.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that a multifaceted approach is essential for mitigating students' unrest and strikes in schools. Effective governance, improved facilities, socio-political engagement, open communication, economic support, strategic use of social media, and psychological services are all critical components of a comprehensive strategy to create a stable and conducive learning environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Implement Participatory Governance: Schools should adopt inclusive decision-making processes to involve students in policy discussions, thereby fostering a sense of ownership and reducing feelings of alienation.
- Invest in Infrastructure: Governments and school administrations should prioritize funding for educational facilities to provide a conducive learning environment.
- Engage with Communities: Schools should actively address broader socio-political issues affecting students, ensuring a supportive and responsive institutional environment.
- Enhance Communication: Establish clear and open channels for dialogue between students and administrators to resolve grievances promptly and prevent escalation.
- Provide Economic Support: Increase financial aid, scholarships, and reduce tuition fees to alleviate the financial burden on students and their families.
- Leverage Social Media: Use social media platforms for positive engagement and proactive communication with students to address their concerns in real-time.
- Offer Psychological Services: Implement robust mental health support systems to help students manage stress and anxiety, contributing to overall well-being and stability within the school environment.

By implementing these recommendations, educational institutions can significantly reduce the incidence of students' unrest and strikes, creating a more stable and productive learning environment.

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