

EFFECTIVENESS OF ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE MEDIATION TECHNIQUES ON PEER RELATIONSHIP QUALITY AMONG IN-SCHOOL ADOLESCENTS IN RIVERS STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the effectiveness of alternative dispute mediation techniques on peer relationship quality among in-school adolescents in Rivers State. A quasi-treatment research design was adopted to examine two objectives, research questions, and hypotheses. The study population consisted of 4,215 students from 18 public schools in the study area. A sample of 220 SSS II students was selected through an intact class approach, comprising 85 students in the treatment group and 135 students in the comparison group. Peer Conflict-Mediation and Peer Relationship Quality Scale (PCPRQS) were developed and utilized for data collection. The instruments' reliability was established using the Cronbach Alpha method which yielded a reliability index of 0.841, indicating acceptable internal consistency. Baseline data were collected prior to intervention. Students in the treatment group participated in a structured peer mediation programme, which included training in active listening, non-violent communication, and collaborative problem-solving techniques over a six-week period. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, and Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was applied to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings indicated, among other results, that students who underwent alternative dispute mediation training demonstrated a noteworthy enhancement in the quality of peer relationships compared to the comparison group. The study concluded that alternative dispute mediation techniques have a positive effect on promoting peaceful peer interactions and improving the overall relational climate among students. The study recommended that school administrators and teachers should adopt peer mediation frameworks within school conflict management policies.

Keywords: Alternative dispute mediation, conflict resolution, peer mediation, peer relationship, restorative dialogue

Introduction

Peer relationship quality refers to the depth, positivity, and stability of interpersonal connections between individuals of the same age group, particularly among adolescents in school settings. High-quality peer relationships are characterized by mutual trust, empathy, respect, cooperation, and conflict resolution (Wentzel et al., 2022). These relationships contribute significantly to students' emotional wellbeing, academic engagement, and social competence (Jones, Greenberg & Crowley, 2022). However, many schools in Nigeria, especially in communities like Ahoada West in Rivers State, continue to grapple with poor peer dynamics, often worsened by unresolved conflicts, bullying, and communication breakdown among students (Adewuyi & Olatunji, 2023). As such, intentional strategies for improving peer relationship quality are increasingly necessary.

Among these strategies are alternative dispute mediation techniques, which offer restorative and non-punitive approaches to handling peer conflict. One such technique is peer conflict-mediation, where students are trained to serve as mediators in resolving disputes among their peers through dialogue, empathy, and negotiation. Studies have shown that peer conflict-mediation fosters social-emotional learning and reduces the likelihood of repeated conflicts (Hilton, Sheridan & Chafouleas, 2021). Another approach is restorative dialogue, which focuses on repairing harm and restoring relationships through structured conversations that involve both the offender and the affected parties (Thorsborne & Blood, 2022). Restorative dialogue promotes accountability, emotional expression, and inclusive solutions, creating a culture of empathy and shared responsibility (Wong, Cheng, Ngan & Ma, 2021).

Given the potential of these techniques to improve school relationships, this study explores their effectiveness in enhancing peer relationship quality among students in Rivers State. It is on this basis the researchers investigated the effectiveness of alternative dispute mediation techniques on peer relationship quality in AWALGA, Rivers State.

Conceptual Clarification

Alternative Dispute Mediation (ADM)

ADM is a voluntary, structured, non-adversarial conflict resolution process where an impartial third party assists the disputing individuals in communicating effectively to reach a mutually acceptable resolution. Unlike litigation or traditional punitive approaches, ADM emphasizes collaboration, empathy, mutual respect, and problem-solving, making it especially suitable for educational settings such as schools (Thorsborne & Blood, 2022). The process encourages participants to articulate their needs, acknowledge the impact of their actions, and work together to restore relationships and promote accountability (Wong et al., 2021).

In culturally diverse educational contexts like Nigeria, where peer disputes may stem from socio-economic, ethnic, or religious differences, ADM offers an inclusive and transformative approach to school discipline. It shifts the focus from punishment to restoration and growth,

making it an essential component of modern student support systems (Adewuyi & Olatunji, 2023). Thus, in this study, Alternative Dispute Mediation is conceptualized as a strategic, student-centred intervention that promotes peaceful peer interactions and enhances relationship quality among students.

Peer Conflict-Mediation

Peer Conflict-Mediation is a structured, school-based conflict resolution process in which trained students (peer mediators) assist their fellow students in resolving interpersonal disputes through dialogue, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving. It is rooted in the principle that students, when given appropriate skills and support, can play a meaningful role in managing and resolving conflicts among themselves without resorting to adult-imposed disciplinary actions (Hilton et al., 2021). The mediation process typically involves voluntary participation by both disputants, guided by peer mediators who help them express their perspectives, identify the root causes of the disagreement, and work toward a mutually agreeable solution (Jones et al., 2022).

In multicultural and diverse settings like Nigerian secondary schools, where peer-conflict is often fuelled by differences in language, social class, or ethnic background, peer conflict-mediation offers a culturally sensitive and inclusive method of engagement. By focusing on student-led dialogue and problem-solving, it creates a safe space where learners can develop the life skills needed for peaceful coexistence and long-term relationship building (Adewuyi & Olatunji, 2023; Okolie & Odetunde, 2022). As such, peer conflict-mediation is an effective alternative dispute resolution technique that not only resolves disputes but also strengthens peer bonds and improves the overall relational climate within schools.

Restorative Dialogue

Restorative Dialogue is a form of alternative dispute mediation that focuses on repairing harm caused by conflict, restoring relationships, and rebuilding trust among individuals in a school or community setting. It involves facilitated, structured conversations between the parties involved in a conflict; including the person(s) who brought harm, those exaggerated by it, and, in some cases, observers or stakeholders; with the goal of fostering mutual understanding, accountability, and reconciliation (Thorsborne & Blood, 2022). Unlike punitive approaches that emphasize punishment and blame, restorative dialogue centres on empathy, reflection, and collective responsibility.

Restorative dialogue typically occurs through formats such as restorative circles, community conferences, or restorative justice meetings, where participants are guided to discuss what happened, how it affected them, and what can be done to make things right (Morrison, 2020). These dialogues create safe spaces where students are encouraged to express emotions, listen to others, and jointly agree on steps to repair relationships and prevent future harm. Research has shown that restorative practices in schools contribute to reduced disciplinary referrals, improved school climate, enhanced peer relationships, and stronger social-emotional skills (Wong et al., 2021; Gregory et al., 2018).

In the context of Nigerian secondary schools; where tensions may arise from socio-cultural diversity, overcrowding, or peer aggression; restorative dialogue offers a culturally adaptable, non-violent, and inclusive conflict resolution approach. By promoting empathy, accountability, and collaborative problem-solving, restorative dialogue not only addresses interpersonal disputes but also contributes to a more peaceful and relationally healthy school environment (Adewuyi & Olatunji, 2023). As such, it is a vital alternative dispute mediation technique for improving peer relationship quality in contemporary educational settings.

Peer Relationship Quality

Peer Relationship Quality refers to the overall health, strength, and positivity of social interactions and bonds between individuals of similar age, particularly in adolescence. High-quality peer relationships are typically marked by trust, empathy, shared activities, emotional support, fairness, and effective conflict resolution (Wentzel et al., 2022). These relationships are central to adolescent development and influence academic motivation, emotional regulation, identity formation, and social adjustment (Jones et al., 2022). In contrast, poor peer relationship quality; characterized by hostility, exclusion, bullying, or frequent conflict; can lead to increased anxiety, depression, and disengagement from school (Espelage et al., 2020). In the context of schools, fostering positive peer relationships contribute to a more inclusive, safe, and supportive learning environment. Effective peer relationship quality is both an outcome and a driver of broader school climate, which includes how students relate to one another, to teachers, and to the school's norms and values (Hilton et al., 2021). Tools such as peer mediation (PEM), social-emotional learning (SEL), and conflict resolution training are widely recognized as effective in improving peer interactions and strengthening relational bonds among students (Ferrer-Wreder, Kroger & Wangqvist., 2021).

Empirical Review

Sherman and Momani (2024) examined the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) within civil and commercial frameworks, highlighting it as a modern legal approach designed to achieve fair and balanced outcomes. Their research involved an extensive analysis of up-to-date scholarly sources, with particular emphasis on mediation as a viable substitute for traditional dispute resolution. The study employed qualitative methodologies to assess the practical effectiveness of mediation principles in managing and resolving civil and commercial disagreements. It also included comparative assessments across multiple legal systems to derive valuable perspectives. Findings revealed that mediation is highly effective, particularly in promoting quicker and more cost-efficient resolutions, while also fostering mutually agreeable outcomes.

The function of mediation in the legal system as a successful and efficient settlement technique was examined by Jayadi et al. (2024). Normative legal research is the research

methodology employed, which centers on analyzing legal theories and norms contained in legal texts such as laws, court decisions, legal literature, and other related documents. The findings indicated that mediation plays a constructive role in conflict resolution by fostering open communication, uncovering underlying issues, and advancing fairness. Key elements influencing its success include the competence of the mediator, the durability of the mediation process, and the meaningful involvement of all parties. The study also incorporates viewpoints from participants, highlighting their general contentment with the results achieved through mediation.

Pablo (2024) assessed the efficiency of mediation and arbitration as methods of alternative dispute resolution. The study employed a desk research approach, collecting data from existing sources a cost-effective method compared to field research. The research drew on available published materials, including journal articles and library resources. The results showed that mediation and arbitration are cost-effective, efficient alternatives to litigation. Mediation uses a neutral facilitator for guided negotiation and tailored solutions, while arbitration involves a neutral arbitrator issuing a binding decision. Both methods ensure confidentiality, expert handling, and legal enforceability, highlighting their significance in resolving conflicts outside the courtroom.

Theoretical Background

Theory of Social Interdependence by Johnson and Johnson (1989)

The study is grounded in the Theory of Social Interdependence, originally proposed by Morton Deutsch (1949) and later expanded by Johnson and Johnson (1989). This theory suggests that the structure of social goals shapes how individuals interact and affect each other. It states that positive interdependence occurs when individuals realize their goals are linked to others' success, encouraging cooperation, effective conflict resolution, trust, and mutual support. On the other hand, negative interdependence promotes competition and adversarial relationships, while no interdependence leads to individualism and disengagement.

The theory has been widely applied in educational and conflict resolution research. In PEM programs, students are often trained to develop skills that promote positive interdependence; such as active listening, joint problem-solving, and empathy. These skills align with the theory's assertion that cooperative goal structures enhance interpersonal relations and reduce hostility (Shon & Smith, 2019).

For instance, Wentzel et al. (2022) applied the theory to investigate how peer collaboration and cooperative learning affect academic motivation and social relationships in adolescents. Similarly, McGrath and Noble (2023) used the theory to underpin their study on conflict resolution programs in schools and found that fostering cooperative group goals among students improved emotional regulation and peer support. In Nigeria, Adewuyi and Olatunji (2023) adopted a social interdependence framework to explore peer interaction patterns among secondary school students and found that collaborative interventions considerably enhanced trust and reduced conflict in classroom settings.

The Theory of Social Interdependence is particularly relevant to this study because alternative dispute mediation techniques; especially PEM; are grounded in the principle of cooperation over competition. PEM creates structured opportunities for students to experience positive interdependence as they work together to resolve disputes. By fostering shared responsibility and mutual understanding, these techniques naturally align with the theoretical assumptions of cooperative goal structures. Therefore, this study applies the principles of Social Interdependence Theory to examine how alternative dispute mediation techniques, particularly peer conflict-mediation and restorative dialogue, influence peer relationship quality among in-school adolescents.

Statement of the Problem

The importance of conflict resolution in a conflict ridden environment cannot be overemphasized. Despite the critical role that healthy peer relationships play in adolescent development, many Nigerian secondary schools experience frequent student-to-student conflicts, which often escalate into bullying, hostility, and exclusion. These interpersonal issues may be typically addressed through punitive disciplinary actions such as suspension, corporal punishment, or detention; measures that fail to resolve the underlying causes of conflict and often aggravate resentment among students. Moreover, in communities such as Ahoada West, where ethnic, socio-economic and communal tensions may further complicate school dynamics, there is a heightened need for alternative conflict resolution approaches that are student-centered and restorative in nature. The absence of structured conflict mediation frameworks in schools may result in persistent tensions, fractured relationships, and declining levels of emotional safety within the learning environment.

These challenges directly impair peer relationship quality, undermining students' capacity to build trust, cooperate, and thrive socially and academically. Low peer relationship quality not only affects individual wellbeing but also erodes the general climate of the school, reducing engagement, increasing absenteeism, and heightening behavioural issues (Espelage, Low, & Polanin, 2020). Without deliberate interventions that equip students with relational and conflict resolution skills, the school system may continue to produce learners who struggle to navigate interpersonal differences. Therefore, it is essential to assess the effectiveness of alternative dispute mediation techniques; particularly peer conflict-mediation and restorative dialogue; as viable tools for improving peer relationships.

Purpose of the Study

This study explored the effectiveness of alternative dispute mediation techniques on peer relationship quality among Senior Secondary School students in AWALGA, Rivers State. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Determine the effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups.

2. Examine the effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups.

Research Questions

1. What is the effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups?
2. What is the effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups?

Hypotheses

1. There is no noteworthy effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups.
2. There is no noteworthy effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups.

Methodology

This study utilized a quasi-experimental design featuring a non-equivalent, non-randomized comparison group. The features of this design included a baseline, post-test and the use of an intact class. By implication, the choice of this design was to enable a comparison between the treatment and comparison group in terms of their peer relationship quality after participating in the alternative dispute mediation exercise.

The study's population consisted of 4,215 students, drawn from 18 Public Senior Secondary Schools in AWALGA, Rivers State, Nigeria (Source: Rivers State Senior Secondary Schools Board, 2023, Port Harcourt Zonal Office). This study used two intact classes with a sample of 220 SS II students, comprising 85 students in the treatment group and 135 students in the comparison group. The school and the classes used were purposive because the school is known for high rate of bullying, fighting and display of aggressive behaviour.

Peer Conflict-Mediation and Peer Relationship Quality Scale (PCPRQS) was used to collect the required data. The instrument was designed using a four-point scale rated: Strongly Agree (4 points), to Strongly Disagree (1 point). The questionnaire was reviewed for accuracy and relevance by experts in conflict resolution, Measurement and Evaluation and Psychologist. The reliability coefficients of PCPRQS = 0.841, was determined using the Cronbach Alpha; suggesting that the questionnaires had acceptable internal consistency. The study's results were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to address the research questions, while Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was employed to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level.

Treatment Procedures

The treatment procedure involves 3 phases. Before the commencement of the study the researchers sought for the permission of the principal to conduct research in the selected school.

Following this, a two-day training session was held to educate and prepare research assistants (the school teachers) on the procedures and protocols of the study. The teachers were assigned to monitor the comparison group this decision was made to prevent any potential Hawthorne effect from influencing the students' behaviour during the study. A suitable place was also assigned for the treatment.

Phase 1: At the first stage the outcome measure PCPRQS was administered to both the comparison and treatment group for baseline data, this was done one week before the commencement of the experiment.

Phase 2: the researchers carried out group counselling with students in the treatment group using a structured PEM programme. Participants in the experimental group underwent a six-week training program that focused on developing skills in active listening, non-violent communication, and collaborative problem-solving. In contrast, members of the comparison group were not exposed to any form of intervention during this period.

Phase 3: After a period of six weeks for the experiment the researchers waited for a period of two weeks to elapse before re-administering the outcome measure PCPRQS to students in both comparison and treatment groups in order to ascertain the effectiveness of alternative dispute mediation techniques (peer conflict-mediation and peer relationship quality).

Treatment stages for the treatment group

Treatment period was for 6 weeks and 1 session was held per week and each session ran for one hour.

Treatment stages were divided into three.

Stage 1: This stage lasted for one week, during which the researchers established rapport with the students. Activities included self-introduction by both the students and the researchers, setting ground rules for participation, and agreeing on the time and venue for subsequent meetings.

Stage 2: Consolidation Stage, real counselling took place at this stage where students were exposed to techniques of peer conflict mediation and peer relationship quality. And this lasted for 4 weeks.

Stage 3: This stage lasted for one week, during which all counselling activities were brought to a close. The students were thanked and appreciated for their participation and commitment throughout the programme. They were encouraged to continue upholding the principles of conflict mediation and to serve as ambassadors of peace within the school environment and in their interactions with others.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups?

Table 1: *Mean and Std. Dev of baseline and post-test scores of the comparison and treatment group on peer conflict mediation*

Group	n	Pretest		Posttest		Mean Gain
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	
Treatment	85	22.05	5.75	32.4	2.59	10.35
Control	135	18.04	2.98	22.4	3.99	4.36

The result presented in Table 1 showed that the treatment group, which received training and exposure to peer conflict-mediation techniques, had a baseline mean score of 22.05 (SD = 5.75) and a post-test mean score of 32.4 (SD = 2.59), resulting in a mean gain of 10.35. In contrast, the comparison group, which received no such intervention, recorded a baseline mean score of 18.04 (SD = 2.98) and a post-test mean score of 22.4 (SD = 3.99), yielding a mean gain of only 4.36.

The marked increase in the treatment group's mean score suggests that students who participated in the mediation intervention developed stronger relational skills, such as empathy, trust, and effective communication; key components of high-quality peer relationships. The relatively lower improvement in the comparison group implies that, without the intervention, students made only minimal progress in their peer interactions, possibly due to continued reliance on unstructured or punitive methods of conflict resolution.

Research Question 2: What is the effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups?

Table 2: *Mean and Std. Dev of baseline and post-test scores of Restorative Dialogue on Students' Peer Relationship Quality in the Treatment Group and Comparison Group*

Group	n	Pre-test		Post-test		Mean Gain
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	
Treatment	85	23.32	5.70	39.11	3.97	15.79
Control	135	19.41	3.51	23.57	3.45	4.16

The result in Table 2 revealed that for the treatment group, which participated in the restorative dialogue intervention, the baseline mean score was 23.32 (SD = 5.70), while the post-test mean score increased significantly to 39.11 (SD = 3.97), resulting in a mean gain of 15.79. In contrast, the comparison group, which did not receive any restorative dialogue intervention, had a baseline mean of 19.41 (SD = 3.51) and a post-test mean of 23.57 (SD = 3.45), yielding a mean gain of only 4.16.

The increase in the treatment group's scores suggests that students who engaged in structured

restorative dialogue experienced noteworthy improvements in conflict resolution abilities, empathy, mutual respect, and emotional communication; all essential elements of healthy peer relationships. Meanwhile, the minimal increase observed in the comparison group reflects the limited impact of conventional school practices on enhancing peer interaction quality without the intervention.

Hypothesis 1: There is no noteworthy effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups.

Table 3: *Summary of ANCOVA on the effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups*

Dependent Variable: Peer Relationship Quality

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	5246.86 ^a	1	5246.86	423.65	0.00	0.66
Intercept	156466.50	1	156466.50	12633.78	0.00	0.98
Group	5246.86	1	5246.86	423.65	0.00	0.66
Error	2699.88	218	12.39			
Total	159488.00	220				
Corrected Total	7946.75	219				

a. R Squared = .660 (Adjusted R Squared = .659)

Table 3 shows that there is a noteworthy effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in the treatment group and those in the comparison group ($F_1 = 423.65$, $df = 218$, $P < 0.05$, Partial Eta Sq. = 0.66). Hence, the null hypothesis one was rejected at the 0.05 alpha level. The finding implied that the difference in the comparison and treatment mean rating of students' peer conflict-mediation before and after exposure to intervention differs significantly.

Hypothesis 2: There is no noteworthy effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups.

Table 4: Summary of ANCOVA on the noteworthy effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in both the treatment and comparison groups

Dependent Variable: Restorative Dialogue

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	3800.05 ^a	1	3800.05	283.79	0.00	0.57
Intercept	161685.10	1	161685.10	12074.62	0.00	0.98
Group	3800.05	1	3800.05	283.79	0.00	0.57
Error	2919.13	218	13.39			
Total	165537.00	220				
Corrected Total	6719.18	219				

a. R Squared = .566 (Adjusted R Squared = .564)

Table 4 shows that there is a noteworthy effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in the treatment group and those in the comparison group ($F_1 = 283.79$, $df = 218$, $P < 0.05$, Partial Eta Sq. = 0.57). Hence, the null hypothesis two was rejected at the 0.05 alpha level and the alternate hypothesis accepted which means there is a noteworthy effect of restorative dialogue on students' peer relationship quality in the treatment group and those in the comparison group based on their baseline and post-test mean scores.. The finding implied that the difference in the comparison and treatment mean rating of students before and after exposure to restorative dialogue technique differs significantly.

Discussion of the Findings

The finding of the study is found in Tables 1 and 3 which answers research question one and tested hypothesis one showed that the effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in the treatment group and those in the comparison group was substantial. Furthermore, the result of hypothesis one revealed that there is a noteworthy effect of peer conflict-mediation on students' peer relationship quality in the treatment group and those in the comparison group. The findings align with those of Sherman and Momani (2024), who highlighted mediation's effectiveness in dispute resolution, emphasizing its advantages in saving time and costs, as well as its contribution to achieving amicable settlements. The researchers believe that this finding may be attributed to the nature of the peer conflict-mediation process itself. The training exposed students to important social and interpersonal skills such as active listening, empathy, respectful communication, and collaborative problem-solving. These skills likely helped students understand one another better, manage disagreements constructively, and build mutual trust. As adolescents spend a considerable amount of time interacting with their

peers within the school environment, equipping them with these mediation skills may have significantly improved how they respond to interpersonal conflicts and relate with one another.

The second finding is found on table 2 and table 4 which answers research question 2 and tested hypothesis 2, the result of research question two showed that for the treatment group, which participated in the restorative dialogue intervention, the baseline mean score was 23.32 (SD = 5.70), while the post-test mean score increased significantly. These results are consistent with the study by Jayadi et al. (2024), which revealed that mediation contributes positively to conflict resolution by creating open dialogue spaces, identifying root problems, and promoting justice. The researchers believe that this improvement may be attributed to the nature of restorative dialogue, which provides a structured platform for students to openly express their feelings, listen to one another, and understand the consequences of their actions. Through guided discussions, students were able to reflect on their behaviour, acknowledge harm caused during conflicts, and collaboratively develop solutions that promote reconciliation. This process likely encouraged empathy, mutual respect, and emotional understanding among the students, which are essential components of healthy peer relationships.

Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of alternative dispute mediation techniques has a noteworthy and positive effect on peer relationship quality among senior secondary school students in Rivers State. The study concluded that alternative dispute mediation techniques have a positive effect on promoting peaceful peer interactions and improving the overall relational climate among students.

The marked improvement observed in the treatment group compared to the comparison group implies that structured PEM not only enhances students' ability to manage interpersonal conflicts but also fosters a more inclusive, respectful, and cooperative school environment. This underscores the potential of school-based conflict resolution programmes to serve as proactive tools in building peaceful learning communities and improving students' social interactions and emotional well-being.

Counselling Implications

1. Based on the study and conclusion drawn, below are some implications for counselling:
Counselling units should be established in all secondary schools in AWALGA Rivers State, Nigeria to help students resolve their conflicts amicably.
2. School Counsellors should organise seminars on conflict resolution strategies where alternative dispute mediations such as PEM, restorative dialogue and peer conflict mediation will be discussed aimed at helping students to resolve crises situations. Peace in the school will foster learning and higher academic performance and emotional wellbeing of students.

Recommendations

The study recommended as follows:

1. School administrators and counselling units in secondary schools in Rivers State should institutionalize peer conflict-mediation programmes by training selected students as peer mediators.
2. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with school heads, should integrate restorative dialogue frameworks into the existing disciplinary policies of public secondary schools.

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