

Availability and Perceived Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Peace and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Secondary School Students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria

Chirmikat Livala SUNSUWA¹, Justina Ingiaga REAMEN², Dauda Livala SUNSUWA^{3*} and Queen Abah PETER⁴

¹Department of Guidance and Counselling, College of Education, Kwara University, Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.

²Department of Guidance and Counselling, College of Education, Kwara University, Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.

³Department of Physical and Health Education, Federal University Wukari Taraba State, Nigeria.

⁴Department of Guidance and Counselling, College of Education, Kwara University, Wukari, Taraba State, Nigeria.

Corresponding author's Email: livalauda@gmail.com, queenpeter655@gmail.com

Received 18 July 2026, Accepted 20 August 2026, Published 19 October 2026

Direct Research Journal of Education and Vocational Studies



Vol. 8(1), Pp. 25-33, October 2026

Author(s) retains the copyright of this article

This article is published under the terms of the

Creative Commons Attribution License 4.0.

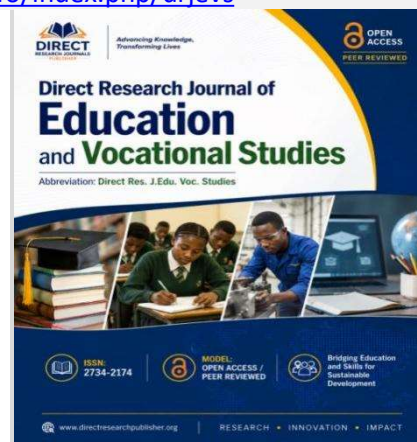
<https://journals.directresearchpublisher.org/index.php/drjevs> ; <https://www.ajol.info/index.php/drjevs>

Research Article

ISSN: 2734-2174

ABSTRACT

Conflict is inevitable in schools, and unmanaged conflict undermines teaching, learning, and peaceful coexistence. This study examined the availability and perceived influence of guidance and counselling services on peace and conflict resolution strategies among senior secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. Four objectives, four research questions, and one null hypothesis, tested at the 0.05 level of significance, guided the study. A descriptive survey design was adopted. The population comprised 30 school counsellors and 1,388 senior secondary school students in 30 public secondary schools. Twelve schools were selected through multistage stratified sampling, 12 counsellors and 249 students using Taro Yamane formula. Data were collected with two researcher-developed questionnaires, the Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Peace and Conflict Resolution Questionnaire for Counsellors (IGCSPCRQC) and for Students (IGCSPCRQS), which four experts validated and which yielded a Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.857. Data were analyzed with percentages, means, and independent-samples t-tests. Placement services were the only services rated unavailable ($M = 2.08$), while referral ($M = 3.10$), orientation ($M = 2.79$), follow-up ($M = 2.58$), and appraisal services ($M = 2.50$, borderline) were available to varying degrees. Students rated the influence of the services on peace-related outcomes as high (cluster $M = 2.95$), and all five conflict resolution strategies were reported in use (cluster $M = 2.94$). Urban schools scored significantly higher than rural schools on mediation, collaboration, compromising, accommodation, and avoidance (all $p < .01$). The findings implied that rural schools need more equitable counselling provision and strategy-specific training. Government, school managers, and counsellors should ensure full provision of counselling services, especially placement and follow-up, and extend conflict management training to rural schools.



Keywords: Guidance and counselling services; peace building; conflict resolution strategies; secondary school

Citation: Sunsuwa, C. L. Reamen, Sunsuwa, D. L., & Peter, Q. A. (2026). Availability and Perceived Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Peace and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Secondary School Students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State, Nigeria. *Direct Research Journal of Education and Vocational Studies* Vol. 8(1), Pp. 25-33. <https://doi.org/10.4314/drjevs.v8i1.3>

INTRODUCTION

In every organisation comprising individuals with diverse interests, beliefs, and values, disagreements are inevitable. Such disagreements arise as a result of differences in needs, convictions, perceptions, and expectations, and are commonly referred to as conflicts. Conflict is an inherent aspect of organisational life and human interaction. According to Nosarara (2022), no aspect of society is entirely free from conflict, including the educational system (Crossfield & Bourne, 2018). Consequently, conflict is regarded as an integral component of organisational behaviour. This presupposes that all human interactions possess the potential for conflict, as they involve individuals with diverse personalities, backgrounds, and perspectives, which may threaten peaceful coexistence if not properly managed (Orishade & Agbor, 2024). Peace is viewed as a condition of harmonious relationships among individuals, characterised by mutual respect, trust, understanding, and effective communication (Rukman, 2019). Within the school system, peace serves as a vital instrument for promoting unity, cooperation, and sustainable development. It creates an enabling environment in which students and teachers can work collaboratively towards the achievement of common educational objectives. Conversely, the absence of peace within a school environment creates opportunities for conflict and hostility, resulting in psychological trauma, strained interpersonal relationships, and disruption of teaching and learning process among both staff and students. Elem (2021) defined conflict as a disagreement or disharmony between two or more individuals that arises when opposing views, interests, or positions are adopted in a particular situation. Conflict may be expressed verbally or through actions, and it can range from minor disagreements to complete breakdowns in relationships or the delivery of educational services within schools and other organisations. In the context of this study, conflict is viewed as a state of incompatibility between individuals or groups whose values, interests, goals, and perceptions are irreconcilable. Oboegbulem and Alfa (2023) asserted that conflicts can be effectively managed through mediation, compromise, concession, cooperation, avoidance, adaptation, accommodation, and coercive strategies. Within the context of this study, mediation involves the intervention of a neutral third party who facilitates constructive dialogue between conflicting parties with the aim of resolving the dispute. Mediation is a conflict resolution strategy that employs the services of an impartial third party, known as a mediator, to assist individuals in resolving their differences (Livala, 2024; see also Adeniyi et al., 2023; Johnson & Johnson, 2016). For mediation to be effective, the mediator must remain unbiased, while the parties involved must be willing to accept the mediator's intervention and actively participate in the resolution process. Avoidance is another conflict resolution strategy that involves deliberately staying away

from the source of conflict or avoiding interactions with the individual involved. It may also involve temporarily withdrawing from a situation to prevent further escalation of the disagreement. This strategy is based on the assumption that the conflict may eventually resolve itself without direct confrontation. Compromise, on the other hand, is a strategy in which each party willingly gives up part of its demands or expectations in order to achieve peace and restore harmonious relationships. It requires mutual concessions, with each party accepting some level of loss for the benefit of both sides.

Collaboration is a conflict resolution strategy that encourages individuals to work together in order to achieve a mutually beneficial or win-win outcome. It focuses on identifying opportunities and developing solutions that satisfy the interests and needs of all parties involved. It involves individuals working collectively to establish common ground and arrive at solutions that promote successful outcomes, whether within rural or urban school settings. Urban secondary schools in Nigeria are pivots of diverse cultures, ideas, and perspectives, which can sometimes lead to conflicts among students, teachers, and administrators. Effective conflict resolution strategies like dialogue are indispensable to sustaining a peaceful and conducive learning environment. Dialogue is an approach that involves encouraging open communication to resolve disputes and build trust among secondary school students in urban areas of Nigeria (Ilfiandra, 2022). This can be achieved through regular meetings, and one-on-one interactions between students and teachers in order to achieve the desired peace in the school. The rural secondary schools in Nigeria are also confronted with distinct challenges that can precipitate conflicts amongst students, teachers, and the wider community. To maintain a serene and supportive learning environment, effective conflict resolution strategies are crucial.

Elem (2021) revealed that mediation is an approach that involves leveraging the influence of community leaders, senior colleagues, and elders in conflict resolution by tapping into their respect and credibility (see also Ogbanga & Bukie, 2024). It is perceived that the secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone may stand a chance of building trust and promoting a sustainable reconciliation and peaceful environment if the aforementioned conflict resolution strategies are adequately utilized. The dichotomy between rural and urban secondary schools in Nigeria is a significant factor in determining the conflict resolution strategies employed in these institutions. According to Ovia (2019), negotiation, compromise, and conflict management training are effective conflict resolution strategies that can be applied across both rural and urban secondary schools. These strategies enable schools to foster a culture of dialogue and problem-solving, thereby reducing the likelihood of conflicts escalating into full-blown crises.

In rural areas, where access to resources and expertise may be limited, negotiation and compromise can be particularly effective in resolving conflicts and promoting peaceful relationships. In contrast, urban secondary schools may require more formalised conflict resolution structures, such as mediation and arbitration, to manage the complex and diverse needs of their students.

Preliminary observations by the researchers in some public secondary schools in Wukari and Ibi Local Government Areas indicated conflict situations among students, such as quarrelling, fighting, bullying, tribal and religious conflict, and disobedience to school rules, which many stakeholders consider responsible for poor teaching and learning and low academic achievement of students. Temitayo, Nayaya, & Lukman (2014) reported that it is common to see Students in Taraba State disobey school rules and regulations with impunity. They opined that in many cases students have little or no respect for their teachers and the school administration. Their study also revealed that conflict cases such as verbal abuse, offensive language, harassment, threat and intimidation of teachers and other students are common in most schools, and these misconduct among are capable of interfering with teaching and learning activities. Hence the need to examine the role of guidance and counselling services in curbing the situation. Adekola and Islamiyyah (2024) described guidance and counselling services as a form of assistance or relevant information provided to help individuals gain self-understanding in order to help themselves or overcome certain difficulties in life.

Guidance and counselling services are viewed as crucial tools for promoting quality teaching and learning and peaceful coexistence among students in Nigeria (Onyejiaku, 2020; Paiko & Maigida, 2021). The school counsellor is expected to employ various guidance services in resolving students' educational problems, and these services are the basic elements of guidance and counselling programmes. Reamen (2024) described guidance and counselling services as activities organised by the counsellor in an organisation, which include orientation, appraisal (inventory), counselling, placement, follow-up, referral, and information services, research and evaluation services, and liaison with the community. She further argued that these services are pertinent for effective school management and peaceful coexistence within the school system. The objectives of secondary education in Nigeria emphasise national unity and respect for the views and feelings of other citizens (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014); in this light, the provision of guidance and counselling services cannot be downplayed. The decline in peaceful coexistence among secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone may therefore be partly attributable to insufficient guidance and counselling services in the school system. Recent studies show that counselling provision in Nigerian secondary schools remains a challenge.

Adekola and Islamiyyah (2024) reported a significant relationship between the availability and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services and indiscipline among senior students in Ilorin South Local Government Area, while Onaolapo (2025) found that high learner-to-counsellor ratios, inadequate training, and insufficient resources limit counsellors' ability to manage learner discipline in Nigerian secondary schools. Learner indiscipline is also described as a growing concern in Nigerian secondary schools (Onaolapo & Makhasane, 2024). In the specific context of conflict, Ajudeonu and Ossai (2022) reported that avoidance and adaptation were among the strategies used to manage conflict in public secondary schools in Delta State.

Despite these contributions, existing Nigerian studies have largely focused on indiscipline, academic performance, or the strategies used by principals and teachers. Few have examined, within one study, the availability of specific guidance and counselling services, their perceived influence on peace-related outcomes, and differences in conflict resolution strategies between urban and rural schools, and evidence from Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State, is particularly scarce. Omumu et al. (2025) revealed that further empirical investigation is needed to establish the availability of specific counselling services, their perceived contributions to peace-related outcomes, and urban-rural differences in conflict resolution strategies in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. This study therefore seeks to address this context-specific gap and provide evidence to guide counsellors, school managers and policymakers in promoting peaceful coexistence in public secondary schools.

Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study was to determine the availability and perceived influence of guidance and counselling services on peace and conflict resolution strategies among secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. Specifically, the objectives of the study were to:

1. identify the guidance and counselling services available in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State;
2. assess the extent of the influence of guidance and counselling services on peace and conflict resolution among secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State;
3. determine the extent to which conflict resolution strategies (mediation, collaboration, compromising, accommodation, and avoidance) are used in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State; and

Research Questions

To achieve these objectives, the following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What guidance and counselling services are available in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?
2. To what extent do guidance and counselling services influence peace and conflict resolution among secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?
3. To what extent are conflict resolution strategies used in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?

Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance (Bonferroni-adjusted to .01 because five strategies were tested separately):

1. H01: There is no significant difference in the extent of use of mediation, collaboration, compromising, accommodation, and avoidance strategies between urban and rural secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study is anchored on Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT), propounded by Albert Ellis in the 1950s (Ellis, 1962; Ellis & Harper, 1961). The theory provides a practical framework for addressing the emotional and behavioural challenges that often lead to conflict among students and staff. REBT emphasises that thoughts, emotions, and behaviours are interconnected. The theory enables school counsellors to equip students with the understanding that conflicts can arise not only from external events but also from the irrational interpretations given to those events; through counselling, students are guided to identify, challenge, and replace such irrational beliefs with rational ones, thereby promoting emotional stability. The theory also equips counsellors and teachers with tools to de-escalate disputes and foster understanding. The principles of the theory strengthen problem-solving and communication skills, and encourage students to take responsibility for their reactions and to resolve differences through dialogue rather than confrontation. REBT is relevant to this study because it promotes better interpersonal relationships: when students and staff adopt rational thinking, they relate with greater empathy, tolerance, and respect. Ultimately, the theory aligns with the core mandate of guidance and counselling services, which is to foster self-understanding, healthy relationships, conflict management skills, and adaptive coping mechanisms that support academic success and social harmony in the school system.

Accordingly, guidance and counselling services are treated in this study as the independent variable, while peace and the use of conflict resolution strategies are treated as the outcomes the services are expected to influence.

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive survey research design, a quantitative approach that describes a population, situation, or phenomenon by collecting and analysing data from a sample of the population (Creswell, 2019; Johnson & Christensen, 2020). The design was chosen because the study sought to describe the guidance and counselling services available and respondents' perceptions of their influence without manipulating any variable. The study was carried out in Wukari Education Zone of Taraba State, which comprises schools in Wukari and Ibi Local Government Areas. The population consisted of 30 school counsellors and 1,388 senior secondary school students in 30 public secondary schools in the zone.

A multistage stratified sampling technique was used (Khan & Reddy, 2023). In the first stage, 12 of the 30 public secondary schools were selected (10 from Wukari and 2 from Ibi Local Government Areas) using Taro Yamane formula. In the second stage, the schools were stratified by location (urban or rural) using purposive sampling techniques and school counsellors were selected from each school, giving 12 counsellors. In the third stage, 249 students were selected from the sampled schools using the Yamane (1967) formula, $n = N/(1 + Ne^2)$ $N = 1,388$ and $e = 0.05$ the formula gives 249 students; state the margin of error used, or the number of questionnaires distributed and retrieved]. The 249 students, 152 were from urban schools and 97 from rural schools.

Two researcher-developed questionnaires were used: the Influence of Guidance and Counselling Services on Peace and Conflict Resolution Questionnaire for Counsellors (IGCSPCRQC) and the corresponding questionnaire for Students (IGCSPCRQS). The questionnaires used four-point response scales: Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (4) for the availability of services (Table 1), and Very Low (1) to Very High (4) for the influence of the services (Table 2) and the extent of use of conflict resolution strategies (Table 3). The instruments were face- and content-validated by two experts in Guidance and Counselling, and Research Measurement and Evaluation. Reliability was established using Cronbach's alpha (Cronbach, 1951), which yielded a coefficient of 0.857 through a pilot study in two schools outside the study areas.

The researchers administered the questionnaires in person with the help of research assistants, and the period of data collection lasted for 1 week. Data were analysed using percentages and mean scores for the research questions, with a criterion mean of 2.50 on the four-point scale: a mean of 2.50 or above indicated availability, high

Table 1: Guidance and counselling services available in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State (N = 249).

Statement	SD (%)	D (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	Mean
Referral services is one of the available Guidance services in my school	28 (11.2)	26 (10.4)	88 (35.3)	107 (43.0)	3.10
Placement services is one of the available Guidance services in my school	76 (30.5)	95(38.2)	60 (24.1)	18 (7.2)	2.08
Orientation services is one of the available Guidance and Counselling Services in my school	18 (7.2)	80 (32.1)	88 (35.3)	63 (25.3)	2.79
Appraisal services is one of the available Guidance and Counselling Services in my school	57 (23.0)	66 (26.2)	75 (29.1)	53(21.0)	2.50
Follow-up services are one of the available Guidance and Counselling Services in my school	72 (29.5)	31(10.1)	81 (33.6)	65 (26.7)	2.58
Cluster					2.61

Source: Field Survey (2026)

Table 2: Extent of the influence of guidance and counselling services on peace and conflict resolution among secondary school students.

Statement	VL (%)	L (%)	H (%)	VH (%)	Mean
Guidance and counselling services equip students with effective problem- solving skills	56 (22.8)	40 (16.6)	64 (25.7)	89 (34.9)	2.73
Guidance and counselling services equip students with peaceful communication skills	34 (13.7)	41 (16.5)	72 (28.9)	102(41.0)	2.97
Guidance and counselling services helps in reducing misunderstanding among students	40 (16.1)	25 (10.0)	56 (22.5)	128(51.4)	3.09
Guidance and counselling services helps to promote emotional awareness among students	23 (9.2)	34 (13.7)	97(39.0)	95 (38.2)	3.06
Guidance and counselling services helps topromote harmonious relationship among students.	49 (19.7)	26 (10.4)	80 (32.1)	94(37.8)	2.88
Cluster mean					2.95

Source: Field Survey (2026)

influence, or use, while a mean below 2.50 indicated the opposite. The hypothesis was tested with independent-samples t-tests. The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Head of Department, College of Education, Kwara University Wukari. The same letter was used to visit all selected schools in order to interact and seek the permission of the school principals. The support of the school counsellors and other teachers was sought for effective administration of the questionnaire.

A research assistant from each was trained, making the data collection process faster and easier. They were also trained in guiding the respondents appropriately and to also cross-check each of the IGCSPCRQC and IGCSPCRQS returned. The participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained (with parental or guardian consent for students under 18 years), and responses were anonymous and confidential

RESULTS

Research Question one

What guidance and counselling services are available in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?

Table 1 presents students' perceptions of the availability of guidance and counselling services in their schools. Referral services were the most available 88 respondents (35.3%) agreed and 107 (43.0%) strongly agreed, a combined agreement of 78.3% (M = 3.10). In contrast, placement services were largely unavailable: 76 respondents (30.5%) strongly disagreed and 95 (38.2%) disagreed, a combined disagreement of 68.7% (M = 2.08). For orientation services, 88 respondents (35.3%) agreed and 63 (25.3%) strongly agreed, a combined agreement of 60.6% (M = 2.79), which suggests that orientation services are fairly available but not universally implemented. Appraisal services were borderline: 81 respondents (28.7%) agreed and 62 (22.0%) strongly agreed (combined agreement 50.7%), while 139 (49.3%)

disagreed or strongly disagreed (M = 2.50, equal to the criterion mean). Responses on follow-up services were mixed: 81 respondents (33.6%) agreed and 65 (26.7%) strongly agreed while 31 (10.2%) disagreed and 72(29.5%) strongly disagreed (M = 2.58). The cluster mean of 2.61 indicates that guidance and counselling services are fairly available in the schools, with placement services the clear exception and appraisal services only marginally available. These results indicate gaps in the comprehensive delivery of guidance and counselling services in Wukari Education Zone.

Research Question Two

To what extent do guidance and counselling services influence peace and conflict resolution among secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State? Table 2 presents students' ratings of the extent to which guidance and counselling services influence peace and conflict resolution. On equipping students with effective problem-solving skills, 64respondents (25.7%) rated the influence as high and 89 (34.9%) as very high, while 40 (16.6%) and 56 (22.8%) rated it low and very low, respectively (M = 2.73). On equipping students with peaceful communication skills, 72 respondents (28.9%) reported high and 102 (41.0%) very high influence, while 41 (16.5%) and 34 (13.7%) reported low and very low influence (M = 2.97). On reducing misunderstanding among students, 128 respondents (51.4%) reported very high and 56 (22.5%) high influence, while 25 (10.0%) and 40 (16.1%) reported low and very low influence (M = 3.09). On promoting emotional awareness, 97 respondents (39.0%) reported high and 95 (38.2%) very high influence (M = 3.06). Finally, on promoting harmonious relationships among students, 80 respondents (32.1%) reported high and 94 (37.8%) very high influence (M = 2.88). The cluster mean of 2.95 exceeds the criterion mean of 2.50, indicating that, as perceived by students, guidance and counselling services have a high influence on problem-solving and communication skills, emotional awareness,

Table 3: Extent of use of conflict resolution strategies in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Statement	VL (%)	L (%)	H (%)	VH (%)	Mean
Mediation: The level at which the teachers in my school often meet the school counsellor or other colleagues to help resolve their differences	40(16.1)	55(22.1)	74(29.7)	80(32.1)	2.78
Collaboration: The level at which the teachers in my school always work together in resolving our difference	32(12.9)	26(10.4)	72(28.9)	119(47.8)	3.12
Compromising: The level at which the teachers in my school often shift ground among themselves in order to resolve their conflicts.	40(16.1)	48(19.3)	58(23.3)	103(41.4)	2.90
Accommodation: The level at which the teachers in my school often allow the wish of their colleagues to prevail in order to maintain peace.	42(15.3)	50(19.5)	62(24.9)	95 (40.9)	2.91
Avoidance: The level at which the teachers in my school often ignore unnecessary argument or comment that may lead to conflict	41(16.5)	26(10.4)	78(31.3)	104(41.8)	2.98
Cluster mean					2.94

Source: Field Survey (2026).

Table 4: Independent-samples t-test of differences in the use of conflict resolution strategies between urban and rural secondary schools.

School Location	N	Mean	SD	Df	t	P-value	Decision
Mediation							
Urban Schools	152	60.49	14.646	247	4.99	<0.001	Significant
Rural Schools	97	50.82	15.325				
Collaboration							
Urban Schools	152	61.55	14.780	247	3.25	0.001	Significant
Rural Schools	97	55.34	14.574				
Compromising							
Urban Schools	152	60.17	14.886	247	6.49	<0.001	Significant
Rural Schools	97	48.95	10.303				
Accommodation							
Urban Schools	152	63.12	13.806	247	4.97	<.001	Significant
Rural Schools	97	54.68	11.812				
Avoidance							
Urban Schools	152	58.20	13.362	247	3.55	<0.001	Significant
Rural Schools	97	51.34	16.947				

Source: Field Survey, (2026)

reduction of misunderstandings, and interpersonal relationships. Because the design is descriptive, these results show perceived influence and do not establish a causal effect on peace.

Research Question Three

To what extent are conflict resolution strategies used in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State?

Table 3 presents students' ratings of the extent to which teachers in their schools use five conflict resolution strategies. For mediation (teachers meeting the school counsellor or colleagues to resolve their differences), 74 respondents (29.7%) reported high and 80 (32.1%) very high use (M = 2.78). For collaboration, 72 respondents (28.9%) reported high and 119 (47.8%) very high use (M = 3.12), the highest mean among the five strategies. For compromising, 58 respondents (23.3%) reported high and 103 (41.4%) very high use (M = 2.90). For accommodation, 62 respondents (24.9%) reported high and 95 (40.9%) very high use (M = 2.91). For avoidance, 78 respondents (31.3%) reported high and 104 (41.8%) very high use (M = 2.98). The cluster mean of 2.94 shows that mediation, collaboration, compromising, accommodation, and avoidance are all in use in secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, with collaboration and avoidance the most used. Because Table 3 measures how often the strategies are used rather than their effect on

students, no conclusion can be drawn from it on their effectiveness in reducing violence.

Hypothesis One (H01): There is no significant difference in the extent of use of the conflict resolution strategies between urban and rural secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State.

Table 4 shows that urban schools (M = 60.49, SD = 14.65) scored higher than rural schools (M = 50.82, SD = 15.33) on mediation, $t(247) = 4.99$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.65$ (medium-to-large effect). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected for mediation. On collaboration, urban schools (M = 61.55, SD = 14.78) scored higher than rural schools (M = 55.34, SD = 14.57), $t(247) = 3.25$, $p = .001$, $d = 0.42$ (small-to-medium effect). The null hypothesis was rejected. On compromising, urban schools (M = 60.17, SD = 14.89) scored higher than rural schools (M = 48.95, SD = 10.30), $t(247) = 6.49$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.84$ (large effect). The null hypothesis was rejected. On accommodation, urban schools (M = 63.12, SD = 13.81) scored higher than rural schools (M = 54.68, SD = 11.81), $t(247) = 4.97$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.65$ (medium-to-large effect). The null hypothesis was rejected.

On avoidance, urban schools (M = 58.20, SD = 13.36) scored higher than rural schools (M = 51.34, SD = 16.95), $t(247) = 3.55$, $p < .001$, $d = 0.46$ (small-to-medium effect). The table reports mean scores ranging from 48.95 to 63.12 across the five conflict resolution strategies. These values suggest that the scores are composite (summed) scores

rather than mean scores per questionnaire item. Since the highest reported mean is 63.12, the questionnaire would need at least 16 items per strategy if the scores are summed on a four-point scale, assuming all items are scored from 1 to 4. The null hypothesis was rejected. It is therefore concluded that there is a significant difference between urban and rural secondary schools in the use of all five conflict resolution strategies, in favour of urban schools.

DISCUSSION

The finding on the availability of guidance and counselling services showed that referral services were the most available, orientation, follow-up, and appraisal services were available to a moderate or marginal degree, and placement services were largely unavailable. This uneven provision is consistent with Onaolapo (2025), who identified high learner-to-counsellor ratios, inadequate training, and insufficient resources as barriers to counselling delivery in Nigerian secondary schools, and it is in line with Adekola and Islamiyyah (2024), who found that the availability of services such as appraisal and information was significantly related to students' indiscipline. The quality of service delivery also depends on counsellors' competencies, including soft skills (Odeleye, 2017). The unavailability of placement services may reflect limited school-community and career linkages, a possibility that future studies should test. The finding on the influence of guidance and counselling services showed that students perceive these services as having a high influence on problem-solving and

communication skills, emotional awareness, reduction of misunderstandings, and harmonious relationships. This agrees with Adekola and Islamiyyah (2024), who reported a significant relationship between guidance and counselling services and students' indiscipline, and with REBT, which holds that counselling helps students replace irrational beliefs with rational ones (Ellis, 1962). However, because the present study is descriptive and based on students' perceptions, it cannot show that the services cause peaceful behaviour; future studies should use correlational or quasi-experimental designs and objective indicators such as disciplinary records.

The finding on the use of conflict resolution strategies showed that all five strategies are in use, with collaboration and avoidance the most used. The prominence of avoidance is consistent with Ajudeonu and Ossai (2022), who reported avoidance and adaptation among the strategies used in public secondary schools in Delta State. The finding also supports Chukwu (2019), who holds that when conflict resolution strategies foster a culture of dialogue, schools can prevent conflicts from escalating and promote a sense of community and understanding among students and educational stakeholders. This underscores the importance of adopting diverse conflict management approaches to promote a peaceful and inclusive school environment. The finding on urban-rural differences showed that urban schools scored significantly higher than rural schools on all five strategies, with the largest differences for compromising and mediation. This implies that urban schools use more conflict resolution strategies than rural schools, which is in line with Ovia(2019), who observed that negotiation, compromise, and conflict management training can be applied across rural and urban secondary schools, and that urban schools

Table 5: Comparison of the present findings with recent related studies.

Study	Context and design	Key findings	Relation to the present study
Adekola & Islamiyyah (2024)	Ilorin South LGA, Nigeria; correlational design; 150 senior students	Significant relationship between the availability and effectiveness of guidance and counselling services (including appraisal and information services) and students' indiscipline	Consistent: appraisal services were only marginally available here and perceived influence was high; the present study extends the focus to peace and conflict resolution strategies in Taraba State
Onaolapo (2025)	Ekiti State, Nigeria; qualitative case study; six counsellors in three schools	High learner-to-counsellor ratios, inadequate training, limited stakeholder awareness, and insufficient resources hinder counselling	Consistent with the uneven provision of services; the present study adds quantitative student data and an urban-rural comparison
Ajudeonu & Ossai (2022)	Delta State, Nigeria; descriptive survey; 50 principals and 250 teachers	Avoidance and adaptation were among the strategies used for effective management of secondary schools	Consistent with the prominence of avoidance and accommodation; the present study adds students' perceptions and location differences

Table 5 with further Web of Science-indexed studies published in 2024-2026 after verifying each in the database.

may require more formalised structures. Possible explanations, such as better access to trained counsellors, training opportunities, and administrative structures in urban schools, should be tested in future research.

Conclusion

This study examined the availability and perceived influence of guidance and counselling services on peace and conflict resolution among secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone, Taraba State. Guidance and counselling services are available in the schools, but unevenly: referral services were the most available, orientation, follow-up, and appraisal services were available to a moderate or marginal degree, and placement services were largely unavailable. Students perceived the services as having a high influence on problem-solving, communication, emotional awareness, and relationships. All five conflict resolution strategies were in use, and urban schools used each of them significantly more than rural schools. The findings underscore the importance of comprehensive guidance and counselling services, of adopting diverse conflict management approaches to promote a peaceful and inclusive school environment, and of closing the urban-rural gap in conflict management skills.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The study relied on students' self-reported perceptions, covered one education zone and public schools only, and used a descriptive design that does not establish causality; the number of counsellors ($n = 12$) was too small for separate inferential analysis. Future studies should include private schools and other education zones, use mixed-methods or quasi-experimental designs, include objective indicators of peace such as disciplinary records, and examine the remaining guidance services (information, counselling, research and evaluation, and liaison).

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Government and school managers should provide the resources needed for comprehensive guidance and counselling services in public secondary schools in Wukari Education Zone, giving priority to placement services and strengthening appraisal and follow-up services.
2. School counsellors, teachers, and school managers should encourage the adoption and improvement of diverse conflict management approaches (mediation, collaboration, compromising, accommodation, and avoidance) to promote a peaceful and inclusive school environment among secondary school students in Wukari Education Zone.

3. School administrators and school counsellors should encourage peace and conflict resolution strategies in all public schools in Wukari Education Zone and use guidance services to support conflict management.
4. School supervisors, administrators, and school counsellors should promote equitable support, including counsellor training and resources, for rural schools in order to close the urban-rural gap in conflict management skills.

REFERENCES

- Adekola, K. L., & Islamiyyah, O. I. (2024). The role of guidance and counselling services in addressing indiscipline among secondary school students in Nigeria. *Journal of Educational Management and Instruction*, 3(2), 86–94. <https://doi.org/10.22515/jemin.v3i2.8425>
- Adeniyi, M., Adedotun, K. O., & Abidogun, M. A. (2023). Effective strategies in counselling for conflict resolution and mediation in Southwest Nigeria. *Journal of Professional Counselling*, 8(1), 135–142
- Ajudeonu, H. I., & Ossai, A. G. (2022). Conflict resolution strategies and effective management of public secondary schools in Delta State, Nigeria. *Pinisi Journal of Arts, Humanities, and Social Studies*, 2(3), 146–153. <https://ojs.unm.ac.id/PJAHSS/article/view/43992>
- Chukwu, L. C. (2019). Strategies for conflict resolution in secondary schools in Enugu State. Global Academic Group Press.
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences* (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Creswell, J. W. (2019). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Cronbach, L. J. (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika*, 16(3), 297–334. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02310555>
- Crossfield, D., & Bourne, P. A. (2018). Management of interpersonal conflict between principals and teachers in selected secondary schools in Bermuda. *Insights Annapolis*, 2(1), 90–104.
- Elem, E. O. (2021). Conflict management in Nigerian schools: A review of strategies. *African Journal of Educational Management*, 23(1), 1–15.
- Ellis, A. (1962). Reason and emotion in psychotherapy. Lyle Stuart.
- Ellis, A., & Harper, R. A. (1961). *A guide to rational living*. Prentice-Hall.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria. (2014). *National policy on education* (6th ed.). NERDC Press.
- Ifiandra. (2022). Developing core values of peace in adolescents through conflict resolution counseling. *Journal of Peace Education*, 8(1), 1–12.
- Johnson, D. W., & Johnson, R. T. (2016). Conflict and mediation training in elementary school classrooms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 8(3), 388–395.
- Johnson, R. B., & Christensen, L. (2020). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches* (7th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Khan, M. G. M., & Reddy, K. G. (2023). Constructing efficient strata boundaries in stratified sampling using survey cost. *Heliyon*, 9(11), Article e21407. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e21407>
- Livala, S. D. (2024). Introduction to peace and conflict studies (GST 206) [Unpublished lecture note]. Federal University Wukari.
- Nosarara, N. (2022). Value-based conflict resolution counseling model for developing peaceful culture. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 6(2), 1–15.
- Oboegbulem, A., & Alfa, I. A. (2023). Conflict resolution strategies in non-government secondary schools in Benue State, Nigeria. *US-China Education Review B*, 3(2), 91–102.
- Odeleye, D. A. (2017). Engaging soft skills for superior counselling services delivery [Paper presentation]. Oyo State Conference of the Counselling Association of Nigeria (CASSON), Ladoko Akintola University of Technology, Ogbomosho, Nigeria.
- Ogbanga, M., & Bukie, F. B. (2024). Traditional institution and conflict resolution in Nigeria: A social work analysis. *International Journal of*

- Research*, 11(9), 245–258.
- Omumu, F., Chenube, O., Abidoye, A., Adekeye, O., & Aluede, O. (2025). The role of school-based counselling programs on social cohesion among secondary school students in Nigeria. *East African Journal of Education and Social Sciences*, 6(2), 105–116. <https://doi.org/10.46606/eajess2025v06i02.0440>
- Onaolapo, A. A. (2025). Counsellors' perspectives on managing learner discipline in some selected secondary schools in Nigeria. *Perspectives in Education*, 43(3), 174–187. <https://doi.org/10.38140/pie.v43i3.7865>
- Onaolapo, A., & Makhasane, S. D. (2024). Cultural significance of elderly guidance in shaping learner discipline management: A case of two secondary schools in Nigeria. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Sociality Studies*, 4, 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.38140/ijss-2024.vol4.03>
- Orishade, F., & Agbor, J. (2024). Conflict management from a stakeholder's perspective. *International Journal of Marketing and Business Development*, 4(1), 1–12.
- Ovia, S. E. (2019). Creating safe school environments in Nigeria. *African Journal of Educational Management*, 21(1), 1–12.
- Paiko, Y. A., & Maigida, B. W. (2021). The use of guidance and counselling services to minimise insecurity in Nigeria. *Journal of Arts and Education*, 4(5), 31–42.
- Reamen, J. I. D. (2024). Introduction to guidance and counselling in contemporary times. Davworld Print.
- Rukman, W. (2019). Conflict resolution counseling for building peaceful classroom climates. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 11(4), 531–541.
- Temitayo, O., Nayaya, M. A. & Lukman, A. A. (2014). Management of Disciplinary Problems in Secondary Schools: Jalingo Metropolis in Focus. *Global Journal of Human Social Science Linguistics & Education*. 13(14) 7-19. Publisher: Global Journals Inc. (USA) Online ISSN: 2249-460x & Print ISSN: 0975-587X
- Yamane, T. (1967). *Statistics: An introductory analysis* (2nd ed.). Harper & Row.