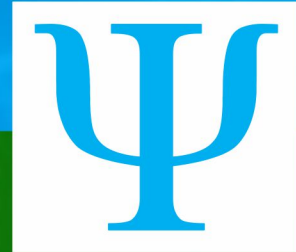


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## EDITORIAL NOTE

This is to welcome us to the Journal of Education and Applied Psychology after a brief break. The Journal of Education and Applied Psychology is a reputable and standard multi-disciplinary journal with high quality that accepts from researchers original theoretical and empirical articles that are inclined to advancement of knowledge, contemporary issues, findings, innovations, inventions and discoveries.

The current articles in this edition, volume 9, number 1, December, 2023 have satisfied the quality and spread in scholarship. A combination of education and psychology comes with a unique lace of intellectual challenge that the Department has brought to the academia. Hence, readers and invited researchers should find whatever issues that deserve intellectual discourse. It must be clear that adequate editorial assessment was carried out on the articles for publication. There is no doubt that the articles have been thoroughly researched, and documented along stipulated guidelines for high academic and professional standards. However, opinions, observations and citations are credited to the author(s) and the Editorial Board carries no responsibility.

The Editorial Board wishes to congratulate all the authors for finding time to share their worth of research and academic experiences in this publication. The Board remains indebted to its assessors and editorial members for a good job toward successful publication of the journal. We do hope that the readership will experience rewarding intellectual journey.

Consequently, further invitations are hereby extended to our esteem research and academic fellows for the next edition of the journal.

**Professor Frank C. CAREW, Ph.D (Iowa), Icon**  
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## CALL FOR PAPERS

VOL. 10, NO.1, 2024

The Editorial Board invites interested scholars and researchers to submit original research papers or manuscripts for publication in the 2024 series. The Journal of Education and Applied Psychology is a reputable and standard multi-disciplinary journal with high quality that accepts original theoretical and empirical articles that are inclined to advancement of knowledge, contemporary issues, findings, innovations, inventions and discoveries from counsellors, psychologists, educationists, educators, researchers, students, and individuals all over the country and abroad, for publication. The journal publishes twice in a year (June/July & November/December). Articles are accepted all year round. The articles could cover the following areas of interest:

- |  |  |
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3. The paper should be typed on A4 sized paper using Times New Romans font 12 with 1.15 line spacing, and not exceeding 15 pages including the main text, tables, figures and references.
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# PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

By

**Florence Toyin ADEYEMI (PhD)**

&

**Timileyin Bolaji OMOTOSO**

**Department of Educational Evaluation and Counselling Psychology**

**University of Benin, Edo State, Nigeria**

**08023365220 e-mail: mtstimileyin39@gmail.com**

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## *Abstract*

This study examined the relationship between psychosocial factors and psychological wellbeing of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria. It specifically sought to find out to what extent job motivation, work environment and personality styles of teachers correlate with teachers' psychological wellbeing in the study area. Four research questions were raised, research question one was answered while questions two to four were hypothesized and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a correlational survey research design. The population of the study comprised of all the 1036 teachers in the public secondary schools in Benin Metropolis while multistage sampling procedure was used to select 240 teachers from the population. Four research instruments were adapted and used for data collection. They include the IPIP Big-Five Factors Markers by Goldberg (1992), for Personality style; Employee Survey Questionnaire by Kinne (2023), for work environment; Employee Motivation Questionnaire by Kinne (2023), for job motivation; and Ryff (1989) scale, for psychological wellbeing. The generated data was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between teachers' psychological wellbeing and their job motivation. The findings also revealed that there is a significant relationship between the psychological wellbeing and work environment of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria. The study further reveals that significant relationship personality styles of the teachers and their psychological will being. Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that School Administrators should ensure healthy work environment for their teachers for improved wellbeing.

**Keywords:** Psychosocial factors, Psychological wellbeing, Secondary School Teachers in Edo State

---

## **Introduction**

As at 2021, it was estimated that there were about 85 million teachers throughout the world across all levels of education (World Bank, 2021). Teaching has been described as a noble profession that comes with so much responsibility and duty towards students. It is a profession where every teacher needs to play an important role in making a child to realize his or her life dreams. Teaching is recognized as one of the most respected but challenging career choices, absolutely vital to the social, cultural and economic health of any nation. Teaching has long been endorsed to be one of the most demanding and stressful job with high levels of tension, burnout, attrition, and low professional wellbeing (Benevene et al., 2020; Mercer, 2020).

Teacher wellbeing may play an important role in teachers' satisfaction and achievement. Teaching is a highly stressful and demanding career because teaching constitutes the centre-piece of any educational system; no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers is a general maxim. Research suggests that teachers are the builders of prosperous and successful societies, and to make learning possible, their emotions, needs, and psychological health must be assured (Zaki, 2018). Teachers whose basic needs have been met are more likely to enjoy positive psychological wellbeing and they are likely to be resourceful and productive. Teachers' psychological wellbeing may correlate with their effectiveness, thus leading to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction (Hongying, 2017; Judge and Kammerer-Mueller, 2019).

The concept of psychological wellbeing refers to an individual's level of mental satisfaction and feelings of accomplishment. According to the World Health Organization (2006), psychological wellbeing is a condition of complete physical, social, and mental wellbeing in the complete absence of diseases or infirmity. Psychological wellbeing encompasses the person's perspective of life, including not only perceptions of physical health but also of self-esteem, self-efficacy, relationship with others and satisfaction with life. It is related to the positive dimensions of mental health while the negative dimensions include psychological distress and psychological disorders. Working conditions have been described as an essential determinant of wellbeing. School teachers may face a lot of challenges, in the course of carrying out their primary assignments. These challenges may occur as a result of a sharp rise in job demand, multiple roles played by this set of employees, lack of motivation, family structure among others. Many workers face a lot of problems in the course of discharging their duties, which could result to work stress, emanating mostly from the tedious demands of their work, and of course, hamper their psychological wellbeing because of the struggle to cope with pressure from each angle (Saidu, 2013).

According to Emmanuel and Odusanya (2015), the challenges of psychological wellbeing among secondary school teachers still remain a serious issue that needs urgent attention, due to the rigorous work load, pressure and multiple roles assigned to them in their place of work which could make many of them unhappy. Most secondary school teachers may spend a longer time attending to students; and in the process infringe on their own health condition. The task attached to teaching profession coupled with the seemingly poor remuneration may make them unhappy, and could feel unsatisfied, thereby affecting their psychological wellbeing. The psychological wellbeing of teachers in Nigeria has continued to deteriorate on a day to day basis due to the economic downturn in the country (Ajala & Bolanriwa, 2015).

Psychological well-being of teachers in Nigeria is a core feature that should be emphasized in the teaching profession at all levels of governance. The psychological wellbeing of teachers is described as the judgment and satisfaction of an individual with his/her happiness, physical and mental health, as well as their profession (Huppert, 2009). The wellbeing of teachers goes beyond the simple absence of setbacks and stressors at work but rather refers to the capability of teachers to strike a positive and dynamic balance between their resources and professional challenges (Benevene, 2020).

Teacher wellbeing has been acknowledged to be crucial for teachers' lives as low level of teachers' wellbeing could constitute a threat to teachers' overall health (Gray, Grove, and Sutherland, 2017; School Mental Health Group, 2019). Psychological wellbeing is a major driver of teaching quality (Duckworth et al., 2009) and student achievement (Branand and Nakamura, 2017). High teachers' psychological wellbeing could help schools stabilize their functioning and increase the commitment of staff members. Teachers experiencing diminished wellbeing may not be able to provide high quality teaching and may leave the profession early.

The economic downturn in the country seems to have put a lot of teachers under a lot of hardship and this may adversely affect their psychological wellbeing. Many teachers may feel burned out, struggling with their job and stressed. This could lead to series of consequences on the schools, the learners, the society and the teachers themselves. Stress can negatively affect mental and physical health of humans. The stressors could be as a result of psychosocial induced factors like job motivation, work environment, and personality styles of the teachers among others. Psychosocial factors are characteristics or facets that influence an individual psychologically and socially which can lead to adaptive and maladaptive ways of perception, evaluation and action (Adeyemi & Uyigue, 2020). They are factors that describe individuals in relation to their social environment and how these affect physical and mental health.

Job motivation is one of the key elements in work performance and productivity. Even when people have clear work objectives, the right skills and a suitable work environment, they may not get the job done without sufficient job motivation to achieve work objectives. According to Mercer (2020), there are three major components of job motivation which are activation, persistence and intensity. According to him, activation has to do with the decision to initiate or begin behaviour; persistence has to do with the continuous effort toward a goal even though challenges may occur; and intensity has to do with the concentration and effort that goes into pursuing a goal.

Teachers' personalities may affect their productivity at work. Psychological characteristics can have behavioural manifestations; they should not exclusively be reflected in bodily expression, such as specific (facial) gestures or movements (Roisine & Joanne, 2016). Effective reward mechanism in a school system may improve teachers' motivation and increase their productivity and contribute to a better and enhanced psychological wellbeing (Adeyemi & Egbochuku, 2019). When teachers receive appropriate motivation, their psychological wellbeing may be increased. Such development could result into high productivity.

Dornyei (2005), Fernet (2016) and Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) highlighted specific dimensions of teachers' motivation that can influence and shape a healthy and productive learning environment for their students, engrossing work environment for their colleagues and an engaging professional setting for themselves to sustain their job interest and dedication as well as their attachment to their career. Teachers may be faced with a lot of challenges in the course of carrying out their primary assignments. These challenges may occur as a result of the sharp rise in job demands, multiple roles played by the teachers which may affect their psychological wellbeing. Teachers are concerned and connected with their work environment

for both personal comfort and better performance. If the working condition is pleasant, teachers may find it easy to carry out their job duties. Contrarily, if the working conditions are not good, it may lead to poor job dissatisfaction and consequently to poor job performance. Therefore, a pleasant work environment of teachers could be linked to a stable psychological wellbeing.

Personality styles reflect people's characteristic patterns of thoughts, feelings and behaviour. It is the combination of habitual behaviours, cognitions and emotional patterns that make up individual distinctive characters. An introverted teacher might be quiet and reserved while an extroverted teacher might be sociable and outgoing and this may affect the teaching learning process. Teachers' psychological characteristics such as personality may have significant outcome in relation to teacher's effectiveness, teachers' wellbeing and inter-personal relationship with students, parents, principals and colleagues.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Nowadays, the issue of teachers' psychological wellbeing has raised a lot of concern in Nigeria, as many teachers seem to be suffering from psychosocial challenges (Ajala & Bolarinwa, 2015). The wellbeing of teachers today may impact the wellbeing of the society in the future; and if the standards remain unchanged, the educational experience of students may suffer, with far-reaching financial, economic and social consequences for the nation. Many teachers could be facing some psychosocial problems which could emanate mostly from the tedious workload, lack of job motivation, family demands and structure, and poor personality disorder among others, which could influence their psychological wellbeing. This is because they could be struggling to cope with pressure from many angles.

It has been observed that many secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria could be facing low psychological wellbeing, which could be linked to various psychosocial challenges they may be facing in discharging their duties, and consequently leading to stressors. Such stressors could arise as a result of psychosocial induced factors like the state of job motivation, work environment, and personality styles of the teachers; which are the focus of this study. Psychosocial factors are characteristics or facets that influence an individual psychologically and socially which can lead to adaptive and maladaptive ways of perception, evaluation and action. They are factors that describe individuals in relation to their social environment and how these affect physical and mental health.

Such challenges remain a serious issue that need urgent attention due to rigorous workload, pressure and multiple roles assigned to them at their workplace which could make many of them unhappy and stressful, thus impacting on their wellbeing. The need to look into the relationship between psychosocial factors and psychological wellbeing of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria is significant as it could impact on their output and the overall achievement of the education goals.

The contention of this study therefore, is whether certain psychosocial factors could correlate with teachers' psychological wellbeing in Edo State, Nigeria. In other words, could there be relationship between psychosocial factors and teachers' psychological wellbeing in the study



area. Thus, this study investigated the correlation between psychosocial factors and psychological wellbeing of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

### **Research Objectives**

The following objectives guided this study:

1. To examine the relationship between job motivation and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.
2. To examine the relationship between work environment and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.
3. To investigate the relationship between personality styles and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

### **Hypotheses**

HO<sub>1</sub> There is no significant relationship between job motivation and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

HO<sub>2</sub> There is no significant relationship between work environment and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

HO<sub>3</sub> There is no significant relationship between personality styles and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted survey research design using correlational method. The population of the study comprised all the public owned secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria with a total population of one thousand and thirty six (1,036) in the three local government areas that made up the area of study. The sample for the research was selected using the multi-stage sampling procedure. At the first stage, the three (3) local government areas that made up the Benin Metropolis were purposefully selected for their homogeneity out of the eighteen (18) local government areas that made up Edo State. At the second stage, ten (10) schools were randomly selected from each local government area within the Metropolis. At the third stage, eight (8) teachers were randomly selected from each of the ten (10) sampled schools from each local government area, making up eighty (80) teachers from each of the three local government areas. A total of 240 teachers were therefore selected as the sample for the study.

The instruments used to collect data for the study were a questionnaire adapted from the IPIP Big-Five Factors Markers by Goldberg (1992) for Personality style, adapted Employee Survey Questionnaire by Kinne (2023) for work environment, Employee Motivation Questionnaire by Kinne (2023) for job motivation, and Ryff scale by Ryff (1989) for psychological wellbeing. The instruments were face validated while their reliability estimates yielded 0.753, 0.692, 0.701 and 0.730 coefficients for psychological wellbeing, personality styles, job motivation and work environment respectively; making use of the Cronbach alpha method. Research question one was answered directly using the descriptive analytical method while hypotheses one to three were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation and making use of the SPSS. The hypotheses were tested at an alpha level of 0.05.



## Results

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between job motivation and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Job Motivation and Psychological Wellbeing of Secondary School Teachers**

Variables	N	r	Sig. (2-tailed)
Psychological wellbeing			
Job Motivation	240	0.614	0.001

Table 1 showed the relationship between job motivation and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria. A total of 240 teachers responded to the instrument. The correlation coefficient obtained for this distribution is 0.614 with a p-value of 0.001 ( $P < 0.05$ ), which implies that there is a significant correlation between job motivation and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers. Thus, the stated hypothesis is rejected, which implies that job motivation and psychological wellbeing of teachers are significantly related. Therefore, there is significant relationship between job motivation and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between work environment and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation between Psychological Wellbeing and Work Environment of Teachers**

Variables	N	R	Sig. (2-tailed)
Psychological Wellbeing			
Work Environment	240	0.799	0.001

Table 2 showed the relationship between work environment and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria. A total of 240 teachers responded to the instrument. The correlation coefficient for this distribution is 0.799 with a p-value of 0.001 ( $P < 0.05$ ), implies that there is a between psychological wellbeing of teachers and work environment. Thus, the stated hypothesis is rejected, which implies that the work environment is significantly related to psychological wellbeing of teachers. Therefore, there is significant relationship between work environment and psychological wellbeing of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant relationship between personality styles and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State.

**Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation on Personality Styles and Psychological Wellbeing of Teachers**

Variables	N	R	Sig. (2-tailed)
Psychological wellbeing Personality Styles	240	0.781	0.001

Table 3 revealed the relationship between personality styles and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria. A total of 240 teachers responded to the instrument and the correlation coefficient obtained for this distribution is 0.781 with a p-value of 0.001 ( $P < 0.05$ ) which implies that there is a significant correlation between personality styles and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers. Thus, the stated hypothesis is rejected, which implies that the personality styles and psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers are significantly related. Therefore, there is significant relationship between personality styles and psychological wellbeing of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria.

### Discussion of Findings

The result obtained showed that the psychological wellbeing of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria is unhealthy and may be caused by the teachers' low psychosocial pedigree. The psychological wellbeing of teachers can be associated with teachers' job motivation, work environment and personality style.

The findings of the study also revealed that job motivation is significantly related to psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers. This finding agrees with the work of Abos et al (2018) that teachers who were high on motivation display a high level of psychological wellbeing. However, Khanal (2021) in his study reached a conclusion that teachers could be intrinsically and extrinsically demotivated due to lack of job motivation which could adversely affect the teachers' psychological wellbeing.

Increment in salary, loyalty of management, recommendations, training and retraining at workshops and seminars among others could be responsible for job motivation of teachers, which could consequently impact the psychological wellbeing of teachers. It is believed that good income not only helps employees meet basic needs, but also to higher needs in life (Luthans, 2006). Hung (2017) referred to the amount paid to employees, as well as employees' perceptions of pay equality and the pay mechanisms used to divide wages among employees as indices of staff motivation. Effective training can boost employee morale and loyalty to the organization; and businesses that offer great training opportunities are less likely to lose their employees to other organizations (Fernet, 2016).

Another finding of the study revealed that work environment is significantly related to the psychological wellbeing of teachers. This finding agrees with Abdurrahman et al (2015) which revealed that teachers rated their level of Quality of School Work Life moderately

and rated their level of psychological wellbeing relatively higher. This study showed that there is a positive correlation between the psychological wellbeing of teachers and their work environment. A study by Srivastava (2007) agreed that those teachers who perceived their work environment to be safer and more favourable may experience lower levels of psychosomatic distress and have fewer symptoms of somatization than those who perceived their work environment negatively. Moreover, Enrick (2012) proved that positive psychological wellbeing positively affects worker productivity.

Work relationship, job security, self-recognition, job characteristics among others could be those factors that facilitate a conducive work environment among teachers. Tran (2015) concluded that the more interesting the work, the more the employees will become enthusiastic and interested in focusing on the work. Nguyen (2021) in her study came to the conclusion that employees will feel more at ease if they have a positive working relationship with their coworkers and are valued. A study by Sabri, Mutalib & Hasan (2019) concluded that an organization with a good employee relation programme will provide fair and consistent treatment to all employees so they will be committed to their jobs and loyal to the organization. It is believed that employees' good relationship with the employer could help to motivate them in doing their work and keep them energised (Sabri et al., 2019).

According to Andriotis (2018), employee appreciation in the workplace is highly essential in the culture of any organization. Outstanding employees can be rewarded with a public commendation in front of all colleagues, or they can be rewarded with something as simple as a "thank you" message for their efforts or a warm welcome at work (Andriotis, 2018). Most employees have a desire to be recognized by their managers, colleagues, and customers. This need has been recognized by workers, and partly by social and organizational contexts (Brun & Dugas, 2008).

The last finding of the study revealed that personality styles of teachers significantly related to their psychological wellbeing. This may be because the key to success in life depends on individual personality traits and styles. This finding agrees with Mercer (2020), which stated that the key to success to creative teaching is to understand teachers' personality traits, pay attention to the resilience of the development of teachers' creative teaching, and provide required support. He asserted that the higher the awareness of a problem and the degree of school support in the resilience is, the higher the problem solving and the higher degree of teaching in the creative teaching tended to be. Similarly, the study of Arshad and Rafique (2016) agreed that increasing extraversion and conscientiousness among teachers can eventually help in enhancing psychological wellbeing.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that the psychological wellbeing of teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria is unhealthy. It is also concluded that job motivation is significantly related to the psychological wellbeing of secondary school teachers in Benin Metropolis of Edo State, Nigeria. Furthermore, the work environment and personality styles of teachers are significantly related to their psychological wellbeing in the study area.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Teachers should exhibit balanced personality styles and traits at schools to enhance healthy psychological wellbeing.
2. School administrators should ensure healthy work environment for their teachers for improved wellbeing.
3. School administrators should give commendation and appropriate rewards to teachers who had displayed exceptional qualities in the discharge of their duties.
4. Government should ensure periodic promotion and commensurate increment in teachers' salary and other emoluments to ensure motivation for higher performance; and consequently inducing their psychological wellbeing.

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## **GENDER DIFFERENCE IN COPING STRATEGIES AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ZARIA METROPOLIS**

**By**

**Yahaya Amina ISA**

E-mail: mummyamat@gmail.com

08033493504

**&**

**Haruna MUHAMMAD**

**Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Faculty of Education,  
Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria**

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### **Abstract**

This study examined gender difference in coping strategies and academic achievement among secondary school students in Zaria metropolis Kaduna state, Nigeria. Two objectives were formulated for the study. A survey research design was used with a population of the study comprising of all SS 3 students from senior secondary schools in Zaria metropolis totaling 9,249 out of which a sample of 250 were drawn based on the recommendation of Research Advisors (.2006). A multistage sampling procedure was adopted in selecting the sample of the study. Instrument used for data collection was self-developed Coping Strategies Inventory while Mathematics and English MOCK Examination results for 2022/2023 academic session was the measure of Academic Achievement. An inferential statistic of t-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of Significance. Findings revealed that no significant difference exists between coping strategies of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria metropolis,  $t = .885$ , and  $p = .379$ . The study also found that no significant difference in academic achievement of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria metropolis,  $t = -.122$  and  $p = .903$ . It was recommended that Psychologists and counsellors should educate students on the different coping strategies irrespective of gender. Learning should be made interesting and engaging to both male and female students to give room for a healthy competition which would enhance a greater academic achievement for both gender.

**Keywords:** Gender Difference, Coping Strategies, Academic Achievement

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### **Introduction**

It is the aspiration of parents that their children excel in all spheres of endeavour and most importantly academic pursuit. In daily academic life and rapid diversification of human activities, students are exposed to a wide range of potentially stressful academic and non-academic situations that could affect their achievements and psychological wellbeing. Stress can be associated with significant harm to the student's academic performance, reduced ability to pay attention, less dedication to studies, and lack of proper adjustments in school. And if not checked and the right coping strategies put in place, can degenerate into unhealthy and negative conditions. The quest for academic achievement poses enormous challenges, Stress and pressure on students' teachers, school management and in general the education system itself. Stress is defined as internal and external events that individuals appraise as important to their well-being and as taxing or exceeding their resources, (Melanie et al., 2013) Among

the factors that could cause stress among secondary school students could be adjustment and adaptation to a new context, insufficient time to do their academic tasks, inappropriate teaching and learning style, increasing and unhealthy competition among students, social and academic anxiety, biological and physiological changes in adolescents, lack of proper parental guide, not understanding the psychological state and personality type of their adolescent children, high expectation or parental pressure, and lack of proper counseling and guidance at the secondary school level. Therefore, the use of proper coping strategies becomes necessary to check these problems and proffer solutions to them for a sound scholastic achievement.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined coping as constantly changing cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage specific external or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of a person. From a transactional point of view, coping is defined as a process, basically as constituting individual differences in appraisals and ways of dealing with stressful demands and the emotions they generate. It can also be viewed as a fundamental human adaptive process that involves the regulation of multiple subsystems like emotion and attention that are activated by stress and that also shows regular age-graded developments in how such regulation is accomplished (Melanie et al., 2013).

Coping is outlined as a stage-wise process that functions as consistent assessment and re-assessment of an individual's environment or situation. Specific factors can influence an individual's ability to cope are labeled "coping resources", which we might refer to as protective factors. These protective factors include social support, social skills, problem-solving skills, positive beliefs, health and energy. On the flip, "constraints against coping resources" which we could also be labeled as risk factors include the influence of cultural values and norms around emotions and behaviors, environmental constraints such as material resources, and level of threat (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In response to these constraints, coping strategies should be predicted & exercised to overcome challenges, and students need to adopt the right coping strategies that work for them. Chowdhury (2020) maintained that Coping mechanisms vary from person to person and from time to time. No two individuals are likely to use the same strategies to get over a situation. Even the same individual can use two or more completely different coping strategies to adapt to similar stressors at different points in life. Coping strategies or mechanisms include any conscious or unconscious decision which causes relief or consolation in stressful situations. It is also the strategies used to manage a negative or stressful event or academic failure (Annakay & Diane, 2021).

According to Melanie et al. (2013), one of the most commonly known broad categorizations of coping is the differentiation of strategies that are primarily problem-focused from those that are more emotion- focused. Problem-focused coping is usually defined to include strategies enacted in an attempt to modify or directly confront the stressful event, such as problem solving and direct action. Emotion-focused coping is usually defined to include responses that serve the purpose of managing emotional reactions to stress, such as social withdrawal, distraction, and emotional venting.



However, Jacqueline and Stephanie (2022) maintained that the goal of emotion-focused coping is to help an individual stay hopeful and optimistic in the face of negative events. In contrast, problem-focused coping strategies are directed towards problem solving, rather than emotional avoidance. Problem-focused coping is considered an active coping style where an individual engages in specific activities to negate the problem or negative event. Oftentimes, problem-focused coping is used when an individual feels some sense of control over the outcome. A number of Studies that examine the association of problem-focused and emotion-focused coping categories with psychopathology have considered a wide range of outcomes, most frequently depression, anxiety, loneliness, suicidal ideation, self-esteem, and positive well-being. A small number of studies have assessed additional outcomes, such as stress reduction, physiological reactions, or physical health (Roberts et al., 2013).

Sarah et al. (2007) in some studies on Cross situational coping with peer and family stressors in adolescents categorized coping as general styles of approach (sometimes also called active or engagement coping) and avoidance (sometimes also referred to as disengagement coping). Approach coping, is seen as the cognitive or behavioral efforts to manage a stressor. These are usually measured as problem solving, cognitive reappraisal, information or support seeking, and taking concrete action. Avoidance coping includes both cognitive and behavioral responses that serve the function of avoiding the distressing event or circumstances. Most often this is measured as distraction from the stressor, ignoring the situation, denial or minimization, withdrawal, escape, and/or wishful thinking.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) in their coping model maintains that a successful coping mechanism depend on the emotional functions related to the problem. Eight functions form the bases for active coping and lies at the core of our behavior while experiencing stress. Such functions that most of us use for active coping include:

1. Self-Control – where we try to control our emotions in response to stress.
2. Confrontation – where we face the pressure and retaliate to change the situation and bring it back to our favour.
3. Social support – where we talk to others and look for social connections to help us survive a difficult time.
4. Emotional distancing – where we stay indifferent to what is going on around and prevent the distress from controlling our actions.
5. Escape and avoidance – where we deny the existence of stress as a coping response.
6. Radical acceptance – where one resorts to unconditional self-acceptance for adapting to adversity.
7. Positive reappraisal – where we seek to find the answer in the struggle and grow from it.
8. Strategic problem-solving – where we implement specific solution-focused strategies to get through the tough time and redirect our actions accordingly.

Surender (2021) defined academic achievement is an attained ability or degree of competence in school task, usually measured by standardized tests and expressed in grades or units based on norms derived from a wide sampling of students' performance. The most significant psychological factors for students' academic achievements is their self-viability, motivation,

stress and test nervousness for the subject they study. Academic achievement should be considered to be a multifaceted construct that comprises different domains of learning (Ricarda et al., 2020).

Sultana et al. (2017) maintained that good academic achievement is essential for fruitful requirement in life because it gives children opportunities for higher education, better occupational career and productive life. In contrast low academic achievement causes stress, hopelessness, depression, delinquency and substance abuse. low or moderate levels of stress can interfere with task performance and cognitive reactions of stress result in the inability to concentrate. Excessive stress hampers students' performance at all levels of education leading to physical, psychological, sociological imbalance. Academic Causes of Stress in students could be, work that is too hard, work that is too easy, learning style mismatch, homework problems, test anxiety, social causes of school anxiety, parental pressure, student teacher mismatch, friends, lack of family time, time schedule and time management, excessive workload, competition, poor diet, socio-economic status (Surrender, 2021). Therefore, the need for an appropriate coping strategies become evident for students' adjustment both in school and larger society

In a study conducted by Julia et al. (2006), gender is a key determinant in academic success, with females attaining at a significantly higher level than males. The differences between males and females were in terms of engagement in coping strategies and academic attainment. Specifically, males exhibited greater ability to detach themselves from the emotions of a situation. They were more inclined to demonstrate emotional inhibition or 'bottling up' of emotions and reported higher self-esteem. Such findings are consistent with findings of (Richardson & Woodley 2003), who found that significant differences were seen in females achieving higher learning outcomes than males because they were more persistent and committed than males. Graves et al. (2021) found that gender differences were evident in both coping dimensions and individual coping strategies used. Females were found to utilize the emotion-focused coping dimension and endorsed the use of four coping strategies more often than males. These included self-distraction, emotional support, instrumental support, and venting. On the flip, Ajai and Imoko (2015) found no significant difference in male and female achievements in Mathematics. Students taught algebra using PBL did not significantly differ in achievement and retention scores, thereby revealing that male and female students are capable of competing and collaborating in mathematics. In addition, this finding showed that performance is a function of orientation, not gender.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The researcher observed a persistent decline in academic performance of secondary school students' year in year out. Although, some of these students spend time and energy studying Many of them pay attention to other unnecessary distractions such as social media usage which may affect their concentration to learn in school and in turn affect their results. Consequently, they end up being frustrated as their goal is not realized. Academic demands expose students to numerous stressful experiences that could affect their achievement and psychological wellbeing if not managed effectively. Stress has potential harm to the students'

academic achievement because it reduced ability to pay attention, less dedication to studies and lack of proper adjustment in school. And if not checked, and the right coping strategies put in place to manage it, can degenerate into poor academic achievement, unhealthy academic experiences, drug abuse, school dropout and other social vices. In the long run, this may lead to inability of students to earn requisite credits in their final examination, thereby affecting successful transition into tertiary institution. It is against this background that the researchers seek to investigate gender difference in coping strategies and academic achievement among secondary school students in Zaria metropolis.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study was guided with the following objectives:

1. To determine the difference between coping strategies of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis.
2. To determine the difference between academic achievement of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in coping strategies of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis.
2. There is no significant difference in academic achievement of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis.

### **Methodology**

The study adopted a survey design. Population of the study comprised of all SS 3 students of 2022/2023 academic year in senior secondary schools in Zaria Metropolis which stands at 9,249. A sample of the study compresses of 240 based on the recommendation of Research Advisors (2006). A multistage cluster sampling technique was used to select four schools which were used. These schools include GSS Kufena, GSS Alhudahuda, GGSS Gyllesu and GGSS Fada. A self-develop Inventory was employed to collect data on coping strategies of the students. Mathematics and English Mock Examination 2022/2023 results collected from ERC; Zaria were used as measures of academic achievement. The coping strategies Inventory had 20 items each on a four-point Likert scale ranging from very true, true, untrue and very untrue. Instruments were validated by experts from the Departments of Educational Psychology and Counselling Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, and reliability was established using Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient with reliability of 0.790 for coping strategies. Instruments were administered by the researchers and data collected were analyzed using independent t-test with SPSS version 26.

### **Results**

- H01: There is no significant difference in coping strategies of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria metropolis.

**Table 1: An independent t-test Analysis comparing mean scores of Male and Female SS 3 Students on Coping Strategies**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	T	Df	P
Male	125	56.69	18.34	-.885	77	.379
Female	125	59.50	8.06			

Table 1 showed that the mean scores of coping strategies of Male and Female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis is not significantly different with  $t = -.885$  and  $p = .379$  which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in coping strategies of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria metropolis is hereby retained.

H02: There is no significant difference in academic achievement of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis.

**Table 2: t-test Analysis Comparing mean score of Male and Female on Academic Achievement.**

Variables	N	Mean	SD	T	df	p
Male	125	13.18	3.78	-.122	78	.903
Female	125	13.30	5.24			

Table 2 revealed that there is no significant difference in academic achievement of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis  $t = -.122$  and  $p = .903$  which is greater than 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference in academic achievement of male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis is hereby retained.

### Discussion of Findings

The study examines the gender differences in coping strategies and academic achievement among secondary school students in Zaria Metropolis. No significant difference was found between coping strategies among male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis. This finding suggests that both male and female secondary school students in Zaria metropolis handle stress using the problem focus approach, active and engagement strategies as oppose to other approaches. These findings are on the flip not in agreement with Graves et al. (2021) who investigated into Gender differences in perceived stress and coping among college students. Their findings suggest that gender differences were evident in both coping dimensions and individual coping strategies with females found to utilize the emotion-focused coping dimension and endorsed the use of other coping strategies like self-distraction, emotional support, instrumental support, and venting more often than males. The disparities may be informed as a result of instruments used, geographical location, cultural background and the that population and sample of this study were secondary school students while the former were university students.

Findings of the study also reveal no significant difference in academic achievements among male and female SS 3 students in Zaria Metropolis. This stands to be in agreement with the

findings of Ajai and Imoko (2015) who found no significant difference in male and female achievements in Mathematics. On the flip, this finding of the study is not in agreement with that of Julia et al. (2006), who found that gender is a key determinant in academic success, with females attaining at a significantly higher level than males. Male students exhibited greater ability to detach themselves from the emotions of a situation. They were more inclined to demonstrate emotional inhibition or ‘bottling up’ of emotions and reported higher self-esteem. The finding is equally not in line with the findings of Richardson and Woodley (2003), who found that significant differences were seen in Females achieving higher learning outcomes than males because they were more persistent and committed than males.

### Conclusions

It was concluded that no significant difference in academic performance and coping strategies found among male and female students of SS three students in Zaria metropolis. Impliedly, this indicates there isn’t any difference in the manner or strategies of coping with stress and academic performance among male and female students. However, a healthy gender competition is needed for better academic achievements in schools. In most researches on gender differences in academic performance, females were seen to have shown significant better achievements than male students. In the aspect of coping, males were mostly seen to have demonstrated emotional inhibition or ‘bottling up’ of emotions and reported higher self-esteem as opposed to female students who apply the emotion focused strategy. In the whole, further researches may bring to limelight why there isn’t significant difference found in gender on academic and coping strategies among male and female students in Zaria metropolis.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on findings of the study:

1. Psychologists and counsellors should as a matter of importance, educate students on the various coping strategies they can adopt in case of stress. In-depth explanation should be made to give room for students to understand what strategies suit them irrespective of gender.
2. A healthy gender-based competition should be encouraged among students because as it brings about better academic achievement.
3. Parents should spend quality time with their children and have emotional attachment with them. Create an enabling atmosphere where children feel free to voice out their problems, fears, and achievements. They should also understand their children emotional and psychological state, personality type and guide them accordingly.

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## SOME NOTES ON THE TRADITIONAL BELIEF SYSTEMS: THE CASE OF TRIAL BY ORDEAL IN GAWU DISTRICT, c. 1750-1940.

By

**Dr. Isa Nanbo BABA & Baba YAHAYA**

Department of History and International Studies, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, University,  
Lapai

[drisanabobaba@gmail.com](mailto:drisanabobaba@gmail.com) & [walin\\_gawu\\_isa@yahoo.com](mailto:walin_gawu_isa@yahoo.com)

### Abstract

The traditional belief systems of Gawu people was a great influencer to its ability in handling serious and heinous crimes through the used trial by ordeal. The practice brought discipline and instituted crime free society to the admiration of its neighbors. The practice may appear unorthodox and brutish but have to a great extent its advantages. The objective was to establish how this traditional practice was effectively applied and its attendant's results in the society. However, as a result of increased spread of orthodox religions, particularly Islam and Christianity, the traditional belief systems and trial by ordeal have drastically declined.

**Keywords:** Traditional Belief systems, Trial by Ordeal, and Gawu District

### Introduction

Gawu District belongs to a Gbagyi group commonly referred to as Gbagyi Yamma by the Hausa. The old site of Gawu town was located on a hilltop at about 2000 ft above sea level. It was located mid-way between Suleja town to the East and Lapai to the Southwest. The site was bounded by River Gurara to the east and River Jatau to the North-east.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, the District area consists of good land area covered with orchard and a number of swampy tracts conducive for human habitation.<sup>2</sup> In 1931, the old site was abandoned by the people due to increased population and request by the British Colonial Government for them to relocate to the plains towards the Northern part of the hill, referred to as Zango by Hausa people.<sup>3</sup> Sequel, to the creation of a new Federal Capital Territory at Abuja, Gawu and some of its Eastern areas came under the sphere of the Federal Capital, leaving some parts in Niger State.<sup>4</sup> However, due to the option the Federal Military Government gave the affected communities in the newly created territory to either leave or remain within the territory, the people of Gawu decided to join their kith and kin in Niger State. As a result, Niger State Government provided a new settlement for the people further north of the old site at Lambata in 1981, while some of the people remained at old Gawu in the Federal Capital Territory (FCT), since the relocation was made optional by Federal Government.<sup>5</sup>

1. Forde, D. ed Ethnographic Survey of Africa International African Institute, London, 1960 P.85 - P.86.

<sup>2</sup> Baba, Isa. History of the People of Gawu, Nanbo Investment Limited, Minna. 1998 P.2

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Supplementary to Official Gazette, Extra - Ordinary No.7 Vol. 63, 5th Feb. 1976, Federal Capital Territory Decree

No.6, 1976. Printed by Federal Ministry of Information printing Division, Lagos 1976 section 16.

<sup>5</sup> Interim Report of the Presidential AD-HOC Committee on Resettlement of the Inhabitants of Fed. Cap. Territory, Govt., Press Lagos 1980.

## Belief System

Generally speaking, the worship of ancestral gods at shrines, family cults and deity was a common practice among other Gbagyis, Koros, Kadaras, Kamukus and Bassas their neighbors. They believed in the Omnipotence of God, who punishes the wicked and reward the innocent but revered the worship of ancestral gods, cults and deities as supplementary to their belief in God. Similarly, in Gawu like most other Gbagyi communities, it believed in Zhiba cults. The Zhiba cult was regarded as the cradle of town, clan and family compound. Usually there were two Zhibas, family owned, placed at the entrance of the compound and the town owned planted outside the town made of small huts of stones. In a similar spirit, each family compound, clan and lineage in Gawu likewise in other Gbagyi land believe and venerate totem, mostly of wild animals which they believe protect members of the family. In Gawu, one of its suburbs called Fuka was regarded as the ancestral home of the ruling dynasty. It was reported that Fuka was the first place where the ruling dynasty first settled before ascending to meet the people of Gawu on the hill top at the beginning of the 18th century. Thus, Fuka was revered by the people and consequently all Gawu Chiefs were buried at Fuka and it was also regarded as the cradle of their powers. Until today, all appointed Chief of Gawu were confirmed into office from Fuka.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, it was considered a taboo for newly married couples to shave their hair until their first child was born. It was feared that if they cut their hair before the birth of the child, the woman would have a miscarriage. On the fifth day when the child was born, both couples and the new-born would have a clean shave. During pregnancy, the husband had to place little piles of beans, guinea corn, etc at the foot of a termite hill and pray to his ancestors to ensure that his children multiply. The husband was also forbidden from building a new house and the woman was forbidden from dyeing of woven cloth.<sup>7</sup> After the birth of a child, the umbilical cord was stretched to the child's knee, laid across a corn stalk and severed. Pounded leaves of the Sodom apple, mixed with shea butter was used as ointment to smear on the child's naval for it to heal.

The umbilical cord was expected to fall within two days and it was taken and sewn with some shaved hair of the child to make a charm, which was hung around his neck to drive off evil spirits.<sup>8</sup> On the fifth day, a name was given to the new-born by the father after due consultation with fortune Sayers called *Balle-da*. The fortune Sayers juggles few pebbles of cowry shells and stones gotten from River Gurara and sometimes from its tributaries called *Nuwafudna* and *Sudna*. The pebbles and cowry shells were thrown to the ground to suggest the name of a reputable ancestor, season, event, occasion and grandparents. However, it was left to the father of the child to accept any of the suggested names.<sup>9</sup> The circumcision of the male child

<sup>6</sup> NAK: Minprof M. 3463. *Op.cit* P.8-12. Isa Baba.

<sup>7</sup> Oral Interview, late Alhaji Musa Tukura, Pandaki of Gawu Interviewed on 26<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1988.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.* NAK, Min. Prof. M. 3467, Niger Province enquiry into the custom of the people 1939. P1

<sup>9</sup> Oral Interview, Late Alhaji Musa Tukura *Op.cit*



used to take place between the third and the fifth month after birth, it may lapse to three years.<sup>10</sup>

There were various forms of creating harmony among the people through social gathering at different occasions principally aimed at fostering a common sense of belonging in the community. This type of social gathering includes *Sallah* dance, which was performed during the Month of Muslim *Id-Kabir* festival, *Egu* dance held to mourn the death of an elder or traditional title holder and *djangede* dance organised to mourn the death of custodians of the grave yard of Gawu Chiefs at Fuka.<sup>11</sup> Masquerades such as *Kuche-Nago*, *Kuche Ashama* and *Kuche wagu*, were found in Gawu. The last two, appeared to be of Koro origin and were organised separately by *Tse-tsigan* and *Gbitipe* compound in Dawaki wards to entertain the Public during marriage and naming ceremonies.<sup>12</sup> The big masquerade of the town commonly referred to as the *Etsu's* masquerade *Kaka Mangiwa* was organised by the people of *Mko*. It used to make its appearance in the Month of July on the request of the *Etsu*. If there was peace in the town, it appears on the third day of the request amidst music and never to be sighted by women. If there was no peace, it appeared of the fifth day with no music played before it retired to its cult. The masquerade was purposely organised to usher in prosperity during the rainy season.<sup>13</sup>

*Gbenu* fetish was referred to as the rainmaker because it was organised in the Month of May when rainy season was about to set in there were signs of draught by the people of *Kitipka* and *Tando*. Before the festival commenced, the *Etsu* was required to make sacrifice of goat and cock at the grave yard of his ancestors at Fuka after which the pot drums *Nyaki* was played for five days before it rained.<sup>14</sup> Other known forms of cultural practices among the people could be found in their farming method and crafts such as pottery making, mat weaving, wood carving, leather work, black smith and local cloth weaving. However, it is not the intention of this paper to discuss any of these cultural practices not to lose focus of the topic.<sup>15</sup>

## Trial by Ordeal

The procedure of administering justice and settling disputes in Gbagyi communities varied and depended largely on the nature of the dispute and offence committed by an individual or groups of people.<sup>16</sup> Similarly, all criminal acts committed by an individual were looked upon as being the affairs of the family or clan rather than that of individual responsibility. This practice had a restraining influence on the individual life and how he conducted himself in the society, since the family or clan was involved in the payment of fines that might be imposed

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* There were three wards in Gawu; Mko/Kaura, Kopati and Dawaki Wards. The two-ruling dynasty in the town comes from the first two wards while the last ward produces the Madaki

<sup>13</sup> Oral Interview, late Mal. Shuaibu Nkoche of Gawu, Interviewed on 7<sup>th</sup> June 1989.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> See details in Baba, Isa. "Cloth wearing in Gawu District in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries" M.A. Thesis, Department

of History, Bayero University Kano. 1991 and Isa Baba, *History of the people of Gawu* Nanbo Investment Ltd. Minna, 1989.

<sup>16</sup> Forde, D *Op.cit* P.85 – P86

on its member and would suffer indignation, stigmata and negative repercussion.<sup>17</sup> In Gawu, minor cases such as fighting, cheating, quarrel and disputes over property were usually referred to the *Etsu* (Chief) who in the presence of his councilors called *Sakis* who usually recommended payment of cowry shells or canning of the guilty in the *Etsu's* palace or at the market square.<sup>18</sup> Major cases such as a theft, murder, fornication, adultery, witchcraft were referred to the Chief priest *Eshadagai/Akuchidagai*. Here the suspect was obliged to choose from the two forms of trial, to either swear with the fetish administered by the chief priest in the public or in his cult.<sup>19</sup> It depends where such crimes were committed, the priest's cult was strategically located within the suburbs of the town. In *Yinpa* Compound in *Dawaki* ward, the cult was organized by the masquerade called, *Kuche*, *Yinpa*. In Tando, towards the Southwestern flank of the town, the people were in charge of *Kuche Barwa* while on the Eastern side of the town, *Kitipka* the people were responsible for *Kuche Bome*. A suspect that wished to swear with any of this fetish in the public was required to produce a full gourd of local beer to the Chief priest, who would then recite incantations and pour some prepared concocted powder of ground lizard and toad for the suspect to drink. If a suspect vomits the concoction, he was hailed by members of his family, and if found guilty of the crime committed, the substance remains with him.<sup>20</sup>

In a situation where a suspect wished to take an oath in secret, he was required to produce the same quantity of local beer and a cock. The cult was made of a small hut with a black stone inside it where the suspect was stripped naked with his hands placed on the stone before the oath was administered to him. This time, the oath was made from the same substance as in the case of the public oath taking except that ground henna leaves, *lale* was added to it. The suspect was required to stand and remain naked and warned by the Chief priest that if he lies, he would die within a week.<sup>21</sup> After the oath had been administered to the suspect and without spilling out any substance of the concoction, he was required to abstain from eating in the same bowl with members of his family for seven days so that he would not stain them of the oath. If after seven days nothing happened, the suspect was pronounced innocent and hailed by members of his family. However, if the suspect dies before the expiration of seven days, his property and wealth was forfeited to the Chief priest.<sup>22</sup> The priest would keep the property in his cult and select valuable ones for himself. It was believed that any member of the deceased that inherited his property would die. After the event blood of a slaughtered cock was poured over the stone in the cult, which was followed with a feast and the consumption of local beer. A suspect that survived from the oath was required to give a ram and seven bowls of local beer to the priest.<sup>23</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Oral Interview, Late Alhaji Musa Tukura *Op.cit*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>20</sup> Oral Interview, Late Mal. Shuaibu *Op.cit*

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>22</sup> Baba, Isa. "Cloth weaving *Op.cit* P.17

<sup>23</sup> NAK: Min. Prof M. 3467 Niger Province: *Op.cit* P.6 – P8.

## The Repercussions

The repercussion of the oath taken by the deceased continued to haunt the rest members of his family left behind to wherever their live. If a family lost its member to the oath, the consequences were grave. The Community looked at such a family with disdain, stigma and disregard to a point that some family members may decide to leave the town and relocate to a neighboring Gbagyi towns to avoid the embarrassment caused to them by their deceased member. In some instances, the family may choose to remain in Gawu and continuously withstand the worst of humiliation from the public.<sup>24</sup>

In a situation where some members of the deceased family relocated to other Gbagyi towns, after an interval of one to two years the Chief priest or any member of his cult would trace the new abode during communal interactive activities such as marriages, burial and market sessions in the region. The priest operates indirectly and in secret through the *Balle* fortune teller in the new town, in order to get to relations of the deceased that left Gawu. He would give some of concocted herbs to the fortune teller to administer to the relations of the deceased in their new found towns, in order to cleanse themselves from the sins of the deceased relations. In most instances, the fortune teller might encourage the relations of the deceased to return to Gawu. It was left for him to heed to such advice. Whatever were the decisions of the deceased relations, they were already trapped to the same treatment of the cult either at Gawu or their new found towns by being hallucinated to believe that they were being haunted by the sins of their deceased relation.<sup>25</sup>

Under the hypnotic condition, the fortune teller called on the relations of the deceased and disclosed to them the reasons behind their migration from Gawu and demand each family member to come over to his cult and take some concocted herbs to cleanse themselves in order to avoid been haunted by the sins of their deceased relations. Paradoxically, few days after the herbs were administered the family members of the deceased would also die one after the other. In the event the relations of the deceased heeded the advice of the fortune teller and returned or remained in Gawu, after the death of their family member, the same fate would still befall the family.<sup>26</sup>

## Similar Traditions

It should be noted that similar tradition existed in parts of the region among the Gbagyi, Koro, Bassa and Hausa, though with some variation.<sup>27</sup> The Gbagyi of Kwali whose origin claimed to have come from a village near Gawu in 1744 AD had similar tradition.<sup>28</sup> In Kwali, there were two types of oath, *agunu* and the fetish oath. *Agunu* oath was taken in the public and was less effective while the fetish oath was taken in the secret. In either case, after the oath was administered to the suspect, he was required to eat alone and not to shave his head for three

<sup>24</sup> Oral Interview, Late Alhaji Musa Tukura and late Mal. Shuiabu Naibi—Op.cit

<sup>25</sup> Ibid

<sup>26</sup> Mal Naibi, Shuiabu and Alhaji Hassan Gwari Gade and Koro University of Ibadan Press 1969.

<sup>27</sup> NAK: SNP/10/651P/1913 Nassarawa Province, Abuja Division Barden Sarki District (Dikko) Assessment Report by W.M. Morgan 1913 P.18-P25. NAK:SNP/10/410P/1919 Nassarawa Province koton Karfe Division, Jinjiri District, Assessment report by W.M. Morgan 1919 P.31.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid

years. If the suspect did not die within the period, it meant he was innocent of the allegations against him. He was given a cock and a he-goat to sacrifice before shaving his head. However, if he died, his relations would sacrifice the he-goat to prevent been stained by the oath. The deceased would be buried outside the village by the priest and his property thrown away.<sup>29</sup> Among the Gbagyi of Dikko, the oath taking was referred to Mama cult. The effect was that the guilty would swell-up immediately and drop dead.<sup>30</sup> Similarly, among the Koro people in the Kafin Koro area, after a suspect had taken the oath, a line was drawn on the ground or string was laid on the ground for the suspect to cross in order to attest his innocence depending on which of these methods was used by the priest. The effects of the penalty on perjury was not directly exacted on the perjurer, but on the entire members of his family who later would die one after the other, until the suspect confessed his guilt, after which the curse was removed.<sup>31</sup> The Bassa had a varied tradition, suspects were given a spoonful of boiling shea butter in the public, if the mouth of the suspect burns, he was considered guilty and if not he was considered innocent.<sup>32</sup> This may not be considered as an effective means of establishing the truth among suspects, since naturally all hot substance was bound to be painful and hurt the mouth of any person, suspect or the innocent. Among the Hausa of Abuja (now Suleja), the oath was administered by the Sarkin Gwaska. The oath was made from sasswood, a poisonous tree and administered to a suspect to prove his innocence. If he vomits the substance, the complainants' property was forfeited to the priest and if the suspect was guilty of the crime committed, he dies.<sup>33</sup>

On a comparative note, it was clear that the import of the tradition to Kwali was from Gawu and not the other way around. Similarly, it was likely that the two communities share the same origin, more so that they belong to the same Gbagyi group and two communities were not distantly far from each other. As for the Koro and Bassa traditions, suspects were subjected to poisonous substance, which in most cases resulted in disastrous death. In both Gawu and Koro traditions, death did not only consume a member a family that committed such crime but the entire family perished one after the other with time for being relations of the latter, since they were individually required to undergo the same ordeal later to purify themselves from the crime committed by their relations.<sup>34</sup>

It was not certain from where and how the tradition of trial by ordeal came to Gawu. According to Gawu tradition, the practice was inherited from their ancestors and had been in existence ever since.<sup>35</sup> It was difficult to state whether this claim was true or not, however it was likely that the Hausas of Abuja, now Suleja would have borrowed the tradition from Gawu or came along with it to the region at the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the tradition appeared more elaborate and better organized in Gawu than in Abuja. On the whole, the essence of the trail by ordeal was to punish serious and heinous cases and to instill discipline

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid* P.24

<sup>30</sup> NAK: SNP/10/651P/*Op.cit* P.8

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid* P.25

<sup>32</sup> NAK: /SNP/10/410P/*Op.cit* P.31

<sup>33</sup> Mal Naibi, Shuaibu and Alhaji Hassan *Op.cit* P.23

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>35</sup> Oral Interview, late Alhaji Musa Tukura and late Mal. Shuaibu Nkoche *Op.cit*

and peace in the community. It should be pointed out that Gawu use by ordeal was wide spread among the neighboring regions. In 1927, a special enquiry into the customs of the people in the Niger Province, reported that a whole household from Ebbo in Lapai area died one after the other for taking the Gawu fetish oath.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, in 1936, a man from Lapai town who wanted to prove his innocence for committing perjury died after taking the Gawu oath.<sup>37</sup> In 1937, the Emir of Lapai sent a household of Ganagana people in his domain to Gawu to take the oath, and the result was death on all that took it.<sup>38</sup> However, due to the increased spread of both Islam and Christian faith among the people, especially as from the 1930s, these practices gradually disappeared from the culture of the people.

## Conclusions

Gawu belief system was unique compared with what was obtained in other Gbagyi societies, starting from the worship of idols, ancestral shrines, marriage system, child birth, naming of the child to adulthood. It was this organized state system that gave birth to how the society handled its minor to very heinous crime. Thus, the Trial by Ordeal in Gawu was a reflection of some of the rich cultural values of the people that demonstrated how most African Societies handled any unwarranted behavior among its citizens. The trial methods were not limited to Gawu alone however the practice was distinct in Gawu and better organized than what was obtained in other societies in the region.

As demonstrated in the explanation above, the essence of the trial was to punish most serious and heinous cases and of course to instill discipline in the society as a whole. The society had a restraining influence on the life of its members and their conduct in the society. Consequently, the punishment and its repercussion were a great deterrent to committing crime in the society. In any case, since all anti-social behavior committed by an individual had a holistic responsibility on the family, it was the responsibility of the family to ensure proper upbringing of their family members. The relevance of this value judgement to our present-day Nigerian society may be enormous. If the virtue of administering the ordeal to suspect should be adopted, it may go a long way in eradicating heinous crimes, such as armed robbery, kidnapping, killings and all other anti-social behaviors that had continuously pervaded the Nigerian society today without necessarily going through the stress of our law courts.

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<sup>36</sup> NAK: Min: Prof. 3467 Op.cit P.6

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

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## A REVIEW OF ECOLOGICAL ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY LITERARY STUDIES

By

**Aishatu ABDULSALAM**

English Department, IBB University, P. M. B. 11, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria

E-mail: [aeeshapeace19@gmail.com](mailto:aeeshapeace19@gmail.com), [a.aishatu@ibbu.edu.ng](mailto:a.aishatu@ibbu.edu.ng)

+2348036344852, +2347081112637

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### Abstract

Over the years, literary writers and critics have contributed immensely on several topical issues of literary values like feminism, postmodernism, classicism, Marxism and so on. But down the ages, issues of environmental concerns are not fully integrated into emergent literary discourses; given that the term eco-criticism may not have been popular before the nineteenth century. In recent times, ecological issues have become sensitive to the literary artists. In this article, the role of prose narratives in creating environmental consciousness (eco-conscious) is examined. The article demonstrates how literary writers imagine change in the context of pollution-related crises and collapse. The methodology used is textual and thematic exposition of selected literary masterpieces which are analysed in order to relate them to environmental presence. It is recommended that the study eco narrative be encouraged in our educational institutions. It is superficial that eco-critics lend their voices in protest against ecological injustices in their works.

**Keywords:** Review, Ecological Issues, Contemporary Literary Studies

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### Introduction

Adamu and Barau (2008) remark that Nigeria has entered another significant phase of its national development when the impacts of environmental neglect are clearly visible and felt all over the country's landscape. From north to south, and west to east, the checklist of ecological failures is long and awesome. Interestingly, each region has its peculiar pressing environmental woes. The consequences of ecological crises in our towns and villages cause internal displacement of population as the situation is with dam failures or drought occurrence. Conflicts between nomads and farmers are growing with increasing desertification and land desiccation. Poverty and poor health may all be a direct corollary of ecological dismemberment. To fence the failures of natural resources in Nigeria, environmental experts advocate for application of scientific knowledge, land reform, land use control, resource management and environmental education. In spite of such suggestions the pathetic environmental problems remain in the state of flux. But of course, the cited recommendations of the experts remain instructive though need to be complemented by our common heritage - the literature resources. This paper overviews the major ecological challenges in the discourses of Nigeria writers. It also offers a prognosis of the effects of such ecological disasters on national development. In addition, also, it highlights some of the potentialities of the regional literature in the promotion of public sensitization towards environmental



protection, enhancement and in achieving the overall goals of sustainable development in the region and Nigeria as a whole

Ecocriticism was hoisted as a branch of Anglo-American literary studies. Development in this literary subfield over the years is demonstrated in previous studies in form of journal articles, newspaper reports, and edited collections, special issues of journals, monographs and conference papers which focused on the relevance of ecocriticism in literary studies. Eco features mostly evolve unconsciously in African literature as mere conventional nature writing, bucolic backgrounds, motifs or orientation. Only a handful of literary works properly address the loss of rustic serenity in literary context. The African society is built on nature and preservation of environment is a daily practice. Key writers like Niyi Osundare, Nardine Gordimer, Amos Tutuola, Ferdinand Oyono, Ngugi Wa Thinog'o, Helon Habila, Isidore Okpewho, Chinua Achebe and a host of others were highly inspired by nature. These writers directly or indirectly advocated for eco-consciousness and contest/protest against nature degradation by addressing the issue of nature havoc in their themes.

In contemporary African/Nigerian literary discourses, there is an increase in ecological writing or environmental literature which is gradually replacing the average conventional nature writing. This development is the result of ecological movements like Green Studies, Romantic Ecology, Political Ecology, Conservation Ecology and Environmental Humanities. Ecology has been the muse of humanity on account of man's affinity to nature. The task of ecologists and eco-critics is to develop ways or strategies of preventing human activities from wreaking havoc and recklessly or indiscriminately destroying the natural environment. The act of destroying nature is dangerous to humanity. The environment and nature co-exist, whilst the environment is harnessed for man's existence. The literary artist and ecological ideas aim at sustainable development of a society.

In recent times, ecology has come in contact with dominating ideologies/philosophies like colonialism, capitalism, patriarchy and imperialism which become a nick in nature preservation. Nature and literature are interdependent; nature writing is quite promising for future developments as well expressed by Thomas J. Lyon in his book *A Taxonomy of Nature Writing*. Lyon presents three dimensions of nature writing: information of natural history, personal response to nature and philosophical interpretation of nature. These dimensions provide the different directions in which eco writing revolves. Ecocritics and Environmental literature underscore the significance of nature in their works and invariably providing eco-consciousness to the community and humanity in general.

According to Aswin Prasanth (2016:5), the most notable aspect of nature writing is the concern for non-humans in literature. Many postmodern texts are implicit lessons on ecological awareness and activism. The earth and its myriad forms of life remains a puzzle, still mystifying writers and philosophers. Nature is gifted with adaptive strategies far more complex than any human being can imagine. The greatest challenge of ecological writing is to examine the complexity of human life in the context of the complexity of nature.



This implies that environmental literature expresses human feelings in terms of the components of nature. In African literature the celebration of nature and wildness is more dynamic than in any other literatures. The reasons for these are stated below.

Nigerian and African natural environments constitute dominant features/tropes/motifs in imaginative writings. Nigeria is endowed with good geographical features and climatic conditions. These dominant natural characteristics are reflected in Nigerian literature. The writings of key literary artists like Soyinka, Osofisan, Osundare, Achebe and others clearly demonstrate these attributes. This further establishes that there is symbiotic relationship between nature and humanity. On the other hand, South Africa as one of the leading countries in Africa explores its geographical landscape and wilderness in her literature. Coetzee in his work *Disgrace* expresses his personal encounter of alienation through the eyes of David Lurie, the protagonist. Gokhale (2000:9) asserted that ‘The most important function of literature today is to redirect human consciousness to the predicament of man in a threatened natural world.’ And ‘Nature writing has therefore emerged as a “literature of hope” in its assumption that the elevation of consciousness definitely leads to wholesome political change’.

The understanding that human and non-human species had shared the same fate under a variety of colonial and postcolonial regimes, and that any ecological literary or artistic inquiry should begin from that perspective, had given rise to a new genre: postcolonial ecocriticism within the wider field of environmental humanities. Postcolonial ecocritics such as Graham Huggan, Helen Tiffin, Anthony Vital, Byron Caminero-Santangelo and Rob Nixon had all emphasised the need for ecocriticism to take as its object not only the struggles and aspirations of nature but also of people who feel closely related to nature in postcolonial societies bedevilled by ecological hazards, many of them caused by despotic governments in collaboration with multinational institutions. There had therefore been attention to the fate of the poor in zones of ecological degradations, what in current scholarship is referred to as the environmentalism of the poor (see Nixon’s *Slow Violence and Environmentalism of the Poor*). Most journalists and writers, in their reportage, description, and study of environmentally diseased areas, had always focused on the effect of such environmental sickness on the life of the poor people, of the poor animals, and other biodiversity (Okuyade, 115-131). However, while this was certainly the case in many African nations, postcolonial ecocritics (Anthony Vital, Byron Caminero-Santangelo and Garth Myers) had tended so far to focus on the southern parts of the continent; there had been a general neglect of West Africa.

This article is an attempt to redress the balance by focusing on the interactions between human beings and the environment as these were presented in a wide range of contemporary, environmentally oriented Nigerian literary works and personal narratives. While early Nigerian writing such as Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* foregrounded the environment as having a harmonious relationship with the people who inhabited it, especially in the period before Western incursion, more recent writing such as Kaine Agari’s *Yellow Yellow* and Nnimmo Bassey’s *We Thought It Was Oil But It Was Blood* focused on the sociological tensions and dislocations caused by the exploitation of the environment for economic ends. In Nigeria, a greater awareness was created about the adverse effects of oil exploration by the activism of

Ken Saro-Wiwa, also an accomplished writer—and Saro-Wiwa's execution by a military junta in 1995 led to an avalanche of literary works on soil, water and air pollution. In the northern part of Nigeria, there was the problem of desertification which is also being represented in literary narratives, such as Aliyu Kamal's *Fire in My Backyard* (Egya, 6). However, the efflorescence of writing on the environment in Nigeria had failed to produce a matching critical response.

In this article, we undertook an in-depth analysis of recent environmentally oriented literary works and personal narratives that draw attention to the valuable contributions made by Nigerian creative writers to ongoing public debates around the humanitarian and ecological crises brought about by environmental degradation, both in their own immediate region and elsewhere. More importantly, we compared the literary situation of depicting the environment with the realities of the environment which we got to know as we travelled across Nigeria. The project therefore afforded us the opportunity to place the literary side by side with the real and to see the point at which the writers intervened in order to save the environment.

### **The Literary Artist and Environmental Justice**

Over the years, there has been a considerable literary work within and outside the Nigeria literacy spectrum that venture on ecological crises. Helon Habila's *Oil on water*, Isidore Okpewho's '*Tides*', Kaine Agary's '*Yellow-Yellow*' and Bina Nengi-Ilagha's '*condolence*' all demonstrate the catastrophic degradation and exploitation of the Niger-Delta ecosystem. Hitherto, environmental crises continue to escalate in the region. This attitude is demonstrated in Okpewho's novel '*Tides*' where the minister of petroleum categorically states that "the Federal Government is committed to petroleum as the mainstay of the nation's economy, its chief source of wealth (126).

In the same vein, Zeki, a character in Ilagha's novel *Condolence* laments that "with the rivers polluted and the delicate ecosystem damaged, fishing had become unattractive, what could be happening". (153). This demonstrated a continued environmental wreckage in the region. Further, Okpewho's protagonist Bickerbug laments over the cause of the environmental problem. Now let's look at the various sources of pollution. First the Wellhead is fitted with what's known as blowout preventer... But the preventer is never able to stop a blowout.... The only effort made so far is to reduce the volume of oil blown out, from someone or two thousand homes to about six hundred tonnes per rig. So, there is always an overspill (144).

The character further laments on how the oil drifts to their fishing enclaves and their farms. The character further complains on how the oil escapes to the water as a result leaking or fractured pipes. Overloading, blown gaskets, corrosion from chemical processes all drifts to the waters (145).

A similar experience is recorded in Helon Habila's '*Oil on water*'. It is a testimony of how environmental pollution via exploitation of oil leads to human social crises characterized by disease, poverty, violence, corruption and illiteracy connected to energy problem. On page 41 of the Habila's masterpiece, the writer laments on how environmental exploitation endangered the lives of the people of the community, where it is stated thus:

One of the patrols (local vigilantes or militants) came upon two oil workers piling soil samples into a speedboat. There was a brief skirmish... one of the oil workers escaped with a swollen jaw, the other with a broken arm... the next day the soldiers came chief Malabo was arrested, his hands tied behind his back as if he were a petty criminal, on charges of supporting the militants and plotting against the Federal Government and threatening to kidnap foreign oil workers.

Helon Habila's *Oil on Water* centres on the consequences of oil exploitation demonstrated by the act of kidnapping of some British women, petroleum engineer and two other journalists. Consequently, Helon Habila draws the attention of the society to the consequences of environment pollution which could be disastrous.

Literature and the literary artists accurately reinvent reality of nature. Apart from personifying the natural elements in form of literacy in Nigeria, literature expresses the beauty of nature and humanity will recognize the importance of nature.

Indigenous knowledge and traditional practices here have a tradition of nature conservancy. Both history and biometric records have demonstrated that cultural practices in different societies have the affinity with their environments for ages. Communities frown at deforestation and activities that can cause damages to natural resources. However, in contemporary cultural societies, environment degradation is on the increase due to rapid and growing urbanization and intense or rigorous cultivation, as well as depleting ground resources. In addition, the rapid population explosion and the increase on human natural activities for food, constitute a threat to environmental safety. The present state of per-capital income is increasing on a daily basis leaving more than 60% of the population (Nigeria) still living below poverty line. This generated environmental infected activities like trees cutting and burning for conversion to charcoal for commercial purpose, corruption and underdevelopment do not allow technological alternation for the exchange of firewood for daily domestic chores thereby depleting the natural resources meant for human health benefits.

Notwithstanding, research has shown that rural communities still engage in activities that preserve the natural environment. Sutherland (1998), Gokhale (2000), Negic (2010:44), Mehta (2016) and Shashi Mehta (2017) revealed in their studies that communities via indigenous knowledge and traditional/cultural practices which encourage natural resources conservation include;

- i. Conservation of ponds,
- ii. Preservation of watershed,
- iii. Conservation of soil,
- iv. Preservation of trees,
- v. Preservation of medicinal plants and shrubs,
- vi. Digging of small ponds, and
- vii. Taming and saving birds and other wildlife.

### Theoretical Framework

The theory of eco-criticism is adopted for the study. It relates the relationship between literature and nature or the environment. Eco-criticism discourses expound on environmentally related themes, ideas, issues or subject matter with the aim of bringing about environmental sustainability. To critically examine environmental justice and sustainability in the prose narratives of literary artists, a diversified method of eco-criticism, energy humanities, environmental humanities and other sub-theories are employed in the textual analysis of various eco-writers in Nigeria. The relationship between nature and literature is the primary concern of eco-criticism (Cheryll Glotfelty, 19). Energy humanities according to Szemen and Boyer (107) relates to the methods or ideas that human sciences can contribute to the analysis of natural sciences.

William Rueckert (107) also contributes on the idea of ecological concern, the linking of science and literature (Arts) as ecological subject of considering the environment as all-embracing for human achievement. These theories are very essential to this study because they are all concerned with creating an ecological balance where all living things coexist in the environment.

Regardless of what name it (ecocriticism) goes by, most eco-critical work shares a common motivation: the troubling awareness that we have reached the age of environmental limits, a time when the consequences of human actions are damaging the planet's basic life support systems. 'We are there. Either we change our ways or we face global catastrophe, destroying much beauty and exterminating countless fellow species in our headlong race to apocalypse.

The need for the investigation of the relationship between the natural world and humans in literature is, thus, central to ecocriticism. The purpose is to raise the conscious level of people that man's existence on earth is heavily dependent on the sustainability of the environment as Glotfelty has stated that this consciousness raising is ecocriticism's most important task.

Surprisingly, Literature has not always been seen as an important tool in this regard. However, recent scholarship has shown that quite a number of writers have always tucked in ecological concerns in their writings, as part of their engagements, while many others have made them the central focus of their narratives. Unlike in the past (if at all), African writers can no longer be said to be found wanting in this noble endeavour, and as such supports Slaymaker's (2007:690) prediction that the green revolution will spread to and through communities of readers and writers of African literature, "ecoing" the booming interest (in eco-criticism just like) in other parts of the world. In Nigeria, for example, writers like Niyi Osundare, Tanure Ojaide, Helon Habila, Sophia Obi-Apoko and Ogochukwu Promise have demonstrated that they are not oblivious of the ecological implications of man's exploitative tendencies on earth's resources, proving in the process that the issue of environment and its preservation are not an exclusive preserve of the western world or those in the sciences.

### Selected Empirical Review

Sule E. Egya in *Nature, Environment, and Activism in Nigerian Literature* looks at environmental writing, covering a range of genres and generations of writers in Nigeria. The author studied the Nigerian experience in postcolonial ecocriticism, with attention to textual strategies as well as distinctive historicity at the heart of the ecological force in contemporary writing, focusing on nature, the environment, and activism. According to the author, the study decentres African ecocriticism, affirming the eco-social vision that differentiates environmental writing in Nigeria from those of other nations on the continent. The author further demonstrates how Nigerian writers, beyond connecting themselves to the natures of their communities, respond to ecological problems through indigenous literary instrumentalism. Anchored on the analytical concepts of nature, environment, and activism, the study is definitive in foregrounding the contribution of Nigerian writing to studies in ecocriticism at continental and global levels.

In another research terrain, Sule E. Egya in a study titled *Eco-human engagement in recent Nigerian poetry in English* referenced the work of Nnimmo Bassey and Ogaga Ifowodo, where he discusses the ongoing engagement of Nigerian poets with issues of ecology. The study argues that, for these poets, issues of ecology are largely bound up with the fate of the human beings who depend for their survival on their environment, through fishing and farming. These poets emerged in the 1980s with a strong sense of commitment to their immediate environment, which, in their view, had been brutalized by the national government and corporate bodies, and so their concerns are identified as part of a larger crisis over leadership.

The poetry of environmental excoriation, otherwise known as ecocritical poetry, which has subsisted over the last two decades in Nigeria, appears to be overtaken by a new kind of eco-sensitive writing, but this time by ecotopian poetry. The problem with ecocritical poetry on the one hand is that it draws attention to ecological problems without suggesting solutions to them, leaving the reader with the sense of hopelessness, fear and defeat. Ecotopian poetry, on the other hand, rekindles the hope for environmental reclamation, resuscitation and in fact, redemption. This essay, analytical and prescriptive, explores ecotopianism in recent Nigerian eco-poetry with the aim of demonstrating the new consciousness in eco-sensitive poems.

The poems of Niyi Osundare and Nnimmo Bassey are examples eco narratives as they are contained in Osundare's *The Eye of the Earth* and Bassey's *I Will Not Dance to Your Beats*. The essay exploits the critical theory of Ecotopianism to interrogate Osundare and Bassey's presentation of their eco-vision on the environment. Equipped with this theoretical insight, the essay concludes that Osundare and Bassey propagate environmental protection, eco vigilance and eco-activism as positive responses to eco-challenges confronting Nigerians.

Clement eloghosa odia in a research titled *Ecotopianism in Recent Nigerian Eco-Poetry The New Threshold in Niyi Osundare and Nnimmo Bassey's Eco-Poems*, the author studies the poetry of environmental excoriation, otherwise known as ecocritical poetry, which has subsisted

over the last two decades in Nigeria and appears to be overtaken by a new kind of eco-sensitive writing, but this time by ecotopian poetry. The author also state the problem with ecocritical poetry where it draws attention to ecological problems without suggesting solutions to them, leaving the reader with the sense of hopelessness, fear and defeat.

J.P. Clark looks at the rich ecological imagery in research titled *the 'Pepper' of the Niger Delta activism stew*. Clark's exploration of the intersection between our natural environment and literature is an inspiration to writers and critics. He often found ways to accommodate nature, even when he addressed the mundane issues within politics and academia. His viewpoints can be found in his poetry collections *The Casualties* and *Incidental Songs for Several Persons*. His poem, *The Usurpation*, is a great example of what Clark's constant ecological imagery shows great knowledge of, and strong attachment to, natural entities. In all their dealings, human beings operate within the natural realm, interacting with other non-human entities.

Furthermore, J.P. Clark's *Bekederemo: Nigeria's bard, playwright and activist*, also discusses the exploration of nature in his poems and stimulates a romantic awareness of the African ecosystem, which goes beyond the current agitations for environmental justice in Nigeria. They project 21st century African literary traditions beyond the domains of activism. Clark's works are multifaceted. His attachment to his home region, coupled with his training in the arts and the humanities may have conditioned him towards exploring nature in his works. And he did so alongside other nagging socio-political and economic themes that he equally projected.

Also, critical works on Nigerian writing with an overriding focus on the environment have begun to emerge. Ugwu's 'Ecological Degradation in Selected Niger Delta Novels' (2014) brings to the front burner the issue of wanton environmental devastation in the Niger Delta region. Using Nengi-Ilagba's *Condolences*, Abagba's *The Children of Oloibiri*, Okpewho's *Tides* and Agary's *Yellow-Yellow* to foreground the worsening environmental hazards in the region, Ugwu analyses the attendant consequences of man's misuse of his natural endowments, and, therefore, recommends adoption of ecological friendly methods and practices while exploiting natural resources, as well as the need to exercise care and responsibility while doing so. In 'Eco-poetics and Contemporary Nigerian Poetry: A Study of Nnimmo Bassey's *We Thought it was Oil but it was Blood*' (2011), Aliyu analyses Bassey's collection to further accentuate the global clamour for a careful handling of the environment in view of emerging environmental challenges. Aliyu avers that humane exploitation of the environment and readiness on the part of government to combat ecological damage are possible solutions to unavoidable violence in the affected region.

Again, Dawodu, in 'Eco-critical Reading of Selected Poems of Niyi Osundare and Tanure Ojaide' (2011), explores how Niyi Osundare and Tanure Ojaide have used their poetry to interrogate the socio-cultural and political dilemma of the Nigerian nation in regard to the issue of environmental degradation. His interrogation makes him conclude that there is a growing consciousness in the literary arts regarding environmental degradation in the Third World countries like Nigeria, and that the poets, under study, have exploited images, models and paradigms found in their locale to comment on the sustainability of their environment. Owhofasa in 'The Woman, the Earth and the Environment in Recent African Novels' (2011) is



more explicit in her description of environmental degradation and women's efforts in environmental preservation. The author's study of Vincent Egbuson's *Love my Planet*, Maathai Wangari's *Unbowed* and Lisa Fugard's *Skinner's Drift* affirms that efforts of women in this regard have yielded some desired results. She, thus, indicates the need for the discouragement of all activities that can result in environmental degradation, even as she calls for appreciation and encouragement of eco-literature.

Similarly, Nwagbara in 'Poetics of Resistance: Ecocritical Reading of Ojaide's *Delta Blues* and *Home Songs* and *Daydream of Ants and Other Poems*' (2010) analyses Ojaide's poems as illustrations of eco-critical literature geared toward exposing, reconstructing and negating the realities of environmental degradation in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. He submits that Ojaide attempts to use his poetry, not only to resist further environmental despoliation of the Niger Delta region, but to also reclaim the history of the people therein.

### **Terrorism and Human Ecology: The Way forward**

Eco-education also plays a role in environmental awareness. It is a necessity in our contemporary surety, people need to acquaint themselves with the knowledge, values and skills required for environmentally sound decisions and actions. We have to be ecologically alert and be nature stewards by playing a vital role in improving and protecting our cities, village, forests and other nature elements. This will help humanity to take responsibility for her actions and to contribute their aspirations for an environmentally sustainable future.

Literature has played and it is still playing environmental awareness. Given that literature has great affinity to nature, literary criticism in recent times has expressed concern to global ecological crises. The term 'ecocriticism' was first introduced by William Rueckert in 1978 when he published his prose work titled: *Literature and Ecology: An Experiment in Ecocriticism*. As quoted in Sandip and Itishri (2017), Rueckert's ecocriticism means "the application of ecological concepts to the study of literature because ecology has the greatest relevance to the present and future of the world" (Rueckert, 107). Believing that natural science or technology is not adequate enough in creating eco-consciousness among humanity Cheryl Glotfelty and Harold Fromm contribute their visions to Ecocriticism by making the movement take a form academic discipline towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ecocriticism does not concern itself with ecological disorder alone rather it plays a critical role of mediating an ecological understanding between humanity and its environment. Sandip and Itishri (2017:281) asserted that ecocriticism initially started as the celebration of nature, but via recent times, it has advanced and emerged as a revisionist movement.

It aims at correction of our anthropocentric attitude which harbors the notion exploitation of nature for human interest. Our global crisis is not because how ecosystems function it is because of how our ethical system functions. Getting through the crisis requires understanding our impact on nature. It requires understanding those ethical systems and using that understanding to reform them (Sandip & Itishri, 2017: 281-82).

Finally, literature at its best has demonstrated the anthropocentric behaviours of human beings in relation to nature. Through literary works, nature disorders are unveiled and also solicit for



better relationship with nature. There is need to cortical human activities via development, industrialization and civilization that are actually destroying environmental health.

In conclusion, it is not debatable that nature and literature are interdependent; nature writing is quite promising for future developments as well expressed by Thomas J. Lyon in his essay *A Taxonomy of Nature Writing*. Lyon presents three dimensions of nature writing: information of natural history, personal response to nature and philosophical interpretation of nature. These dimensions provide the different directions in which eco writing revolves. Ecocritics and Environmental literature underscore the significance of nature in their works and invariably providing eco-consciousness to the community and humanity in general. The article demonstrates that Imaginative writers are in the vanguard of nature preservation and environmental justice.

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# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SELF-EFFICACY AND SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT AMONG SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PAIKORO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, NIGER STATE, NIGERIA

BY

**Abbas Paiko YAKUBU (PhD)**

Department of Counselling Psychology, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University

P. M. B. 11, Lapai, Niger State

[abbapaiko260abas@gmail.com](mailto:abbapaiko260abas@gmail.com)

08066123458, 08051362435

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## Abstract

This study examined the relationship between Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment among senior secondary school students in Paikoro Local Government Area of Niger State. Three objectives and three hypotheses guided the study. The population of the study was seven thousand one hundred and forty one (7,142) senior secondary school students and a sample of three hundred and seventy (370) male and female SSII students was proportionately selected. A correlational design was used. Two research instruments were used to collect data: Self-efficacy Scale (SES) and School Adjustment Scale (SAS). Face validity was used to ascertain the validity of the instruments. The reliability of the instruments was tested using the test re-test methods. The index obtained was 0.82 for SES and 0.78 for SAS. To analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics was used as inferential statistics to measure the relationship between Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment. The finding of hypothesis one revealed that there was a significant positive relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ( $r = .543$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The finding of hypothesis two showed that there was significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ( $r = .613$ ,  $p = .001$ ) and the finding of hypothesis three indicated that there was significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ( $r = .281$ ,  $p = .021$ ). The study concluded that significant positive relationship exists between self-efficacy of students and their social, academic and emotional adjustments. Based on the findings, it was recommended that teachers and school administrators should encourage students to seek for counselling services to enhance their self-efficacy. Also, teachers, school psychologists, school counsellors and school administrators should provide conducive and enabling environment and facilities to facilitate proper adjustment of students in their academic, social and emotional atmospheres of life in the school setting.

**Keyword:** Relationship, Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment and Senior Secondary School

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## Introduction

School Adjustment is a very important aspect of student's life. Human beings have the capacity to adapt to new situation, they do not only adapt to physical demands, but also adapt to social pressure. Secondary school students' adjustment is a phenomenon that is of great concern to educationists. Educationists need to know what they can do to help their students adjust and benefit from school (Mildred & Adhiambo, 2011). School adjustment is a broad

construct which consists of many different aspects such as academic adjustment, social adjustment and emotional adjustment. Well-adjusted students usually value what they are learning; they are positively involved in classroom activities and receive high grades (Kiuru et al., 2009). School adjustment, for the purpose of this study is defined in relation to a child's ability to develop social, emotional and academic competencies that facilitate the achievement of school success. It is characterized by quality social relationships with peers and teachers, feeling of emotional security, less aggressive behaviors, pro-social behaviors, longer retention in educational system and better academic performance.

Self-efficacy can simply be defined as information about the learners provided by the learner themselves, about their abilities, the progress they think they are making and what they think they can or cannot do yet with what they have learned in a course (Blanche & Merino, 1989). Self-efficacy should also be continuous and not related to the students' grade (Sullivan & Hall, 1997). It is useful because it has been considered that rather than giving a comprehensive diagnostic test to have a glimpse of possible problem areas for the students, it is much faster to ask students directly what problems they feel they have (Harris & McCann, 1994). Practice at self-efficacy or evaluation encourages student to become self-correcting learners, not passive ciphers awaiting orders on what to do next. In another understanding, Self-efficacy refers to the involvement of learners in making judgments about their own learning, particularly about their achievements and the outcomes of their learning. It is an essential component of formative assessment. When a student is trying to learn, feedback about the effort has three elements: recognition of the desired goal, evidence about present position, and some understanding of a way to close the gap between the two. All three must be understood to some degree by anyone before he or she can take action to improve learning. If formative assessment is to be productive, students should be trained in self-efficacy so that they can understand the main purposes of their learning and thereby grasp what they need to do to achieve (Black & Wiliam, 1998).

Students' self-efficacy/evaluation is a form of educational assessment that has direct benefit to students and their learning. It is an assessment process, "during which students reflect on the quality of their work, judge the degree to which it reflects explicitly stated goals or criteria, and revise accordingly" (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009, p. 13). In other words, Students self-efficacy or evaluation allows and encourages students to participate in the process of judging, evaluating, and reflecting on their own work or abilities (Andrade & Valtcheva, 2009). Practice at self-assessment encourages student to become self-correcting learners, not passive ciphers awaiting orders on "what next"? Becoming more self-aware and self-critical will improve your performance in any course. The ability to self-assess accurately and constructively judge the work of peers is an essential learning skill that teachers have the responsibility to develop during their students' school years. Once students understand the goals and criteria, they must have opportunities to evaluate their own performance and make adjustments in their academic, social, emotional and personal life.

### Statement of the Problem

Self-efficacy has gained much more attention in recent years owing to the growing emphasis on learner independence and learner autonomy. One of the heated controversies in this field is whether a student self-assessment works in the school system or not? Similarly, challenges surrounding adjustment of students in secondary schools have become subject of research among counselling and educational psychologists today. Numerous scholars have carried out researches on school adjustment among tertiary education students. However, little researches as well have been conducted on poor school adjustment among secondary school students in relation to self-efficacy, or the relevance of students' self-efficacy in relation to their school adjustment, academic, social and personal life.

A general observation by the researcher revealed that some students are faced with poor school adjustment mechanisms especially secondary school students in the areas of academic, social and emotional adjustment. When children move from primary schools to secondary schools and they progress from one class to another, they are faced with certain adjustment problems in their academic, social and/or emotional life. Thus leading to challenges in the academic outcomes.

When examinations are used to assess students learning, the implicit assumption is that they have submitted work that reflects their understanding of the material after their genuine attempt to learn it. Some students do diligently prepare for examinations and some do not. Additionally, when in reality their efforts are not adequate for the grades they are targeting. When you self-evaluate students, it gives them opportunity to self-reflect and help them to adjust in areas they think they are not performing well. Therefore, it is based on the above premises that the researcher examined the relationship between self-efficacy and school adjustment among senior secondary school students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State, Nigeria.

### Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to determine:

1. The relationship between self-efficacy and social adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.
2. The relationship between self-efficacy and academic adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.
3. The relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

### Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested in the study:

1. There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and social adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.
2. There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and academic adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

3. There is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

### Methodology

The study used correlational design. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010), a correlational design is a research design in which information on two or more variables are collected in order to investigate the relationship between the variables. This research design was considered relevant because it permits the researcher to examine the relationship between self-efficacy and adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. The population of the study was SS II Senior Secondary Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. The total number of SS II students is seven thousand one hundred and forty-two (7,142) students selected from sixty-seven (67) schools. A sample of three hundred and seventy students (370) was drawn from the population as suggested by Research Advisors (2006). In drawing the sample, simple random sampling was used. In this research, two instruments were used for data collection. The two instruments were Self-efficacy Scale (SES) and School Adjustment Scale (SAS). Face validity was done to ascertain the validity of the instruments. The reliability of the instruments was tested using test re-test method. The index obtained was 0.82 for SES and 0.78 for SAS. To analyze the data, both descriptive and inferential statistics were used. Mean and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics while Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistics was used as inferential statistics to measure the relationship between Self-Efficacy and School Adjustment. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha levels of significance.

### Results

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

**Table 1: Analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	df	P-value
Self-Efficacy	370	39.97	4.856	.533	369	.000
Social Adjustment	370	34.045	4.572			

Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Result of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation in Table 1 revealed that there is significant positive relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ( $r = .533$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). This means that the higher the students' self-efficacy, the higher their social adjustment. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area of Niger State is rejected.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

**Table 2: Analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	df	P-value
Self-Efficacy	370	39.97	8.476	.623	369	.002
Academic Adjustment	370	32.206	4.570			
Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)						

Result of the Pearson product moment correlation in Table 2 indicated that there was a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ( $r=.623$ ,  $p= .002$ ). This means that the higher the students' self-efficacy, the higher their academic adjustment. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State is rejected.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State.

**Table 3: Analysis of Pearson Product Moment Correlation on the relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students**

Variables	N	Mean	Std. Dev	r	df	P-value
Self-Efficacy	370	39.97	4.876	.291	369	.023
Emotional Adjustment	370	33.314	4.77			
Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)						

Result of the Pearson product moment correlation in Table 3 revealed that there was a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Emotional Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students ( $r=.291$ ,  $p= .023$ ). This means that the higher the students' self-efficacy the higher their emotional adjustment. Thus, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State is rejected.

### Discussion of Findings

The finding of hypothesis one stated that there was significant positive relationship between Self-efficacy and Social Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local



Government Area, Niger State. Thus, the finding agreed with Turingan and Yang (2009) who opined that students who perceived themselves as socially competent obtained higher grades. In contrast, students with negative perceptions about their social capabilities shy away from academic tasks because they view themselves as personal threats with low aspirations and weak commitments to task-related goals (Woolfork & Woolfork, 2010). Zimmerman and Martinez-Pans cited in Woolfork and Woolfork (2010) also explained that once these beliefs are formed, they affect students' performances through their influence on choice of activities, the amount of efforts applied, the levels of persistence, and the kinds of meta-cognition and learning strategies invoked. Bouffard et al. (2005) examined how self-efficacy belief affects self-evaluation strategies and its relationship with performance on a cognitive task. They found that students with high efficacy reported greater confidence and more expectations than students with low efficacy. Students with high efficacy performed better than students from the low efficacy group when striving to achieve learning goals.

The finding of hypothesis two revealed a significant relationship between Self-efficacy and Academic Adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. A similar study by Dereje (1997) found that there was a strong relationship between the use of cognitive strategies and academic Adjustment, and also between self-regulation and academic adjustment among students. Bing (2016) also found that students made significant progress within the period which the practice of self-evaluation has been carried out. Furthermore, Brown and Harris (2013) posited that students' self-efficacy have been linked to benefits for students, such as greater critical thinking ability, and improved test scores examination grades (Colliers, 1998). Other studies showed that students' self-efficacy can be helpful across subject areas including: improvement in students' music performances (Bruce, 2001), higher quality science project reports (Olina & Sullivan, 2002), mathematics achievements (Ross et al., 2002), and improved writing ability and skills (Andrade et al., 2008). Although previous studies generally reported a positive impact of self-efficacy on students, some recent studies on students' self-assessment showed little or no academic improvement (Brown & Harris, 2013). Vargas (2012) examined the relationship between self-efficacy and academic adjustment in University of Port-Harcourt, Nigeria and found that self-efficacy is significantly related to academic adjustment among senior secondary school students. Furthermore, a study conducted by Bamidele (2014) in Adekunle Ajasin University on the effect of self-evaluation strategies on school adjustment among secondary school students agreed with the current study that self-efficacy is related to school adjustment among senior secondary school students. This confirmed that students with enhanced self-efficacy academically become highly brilliant, develop higher mental abilities, and are creative in their affairs, and at general public activities at large (Cheng, 2011).

Similarly, finding of hypothesis three indicated that there was a significant relationship between self-efficacy and emotional adjustment among Senior Secondary School Students in Paikoro Local Government Area, Niger State. This finding corroborated the study of Swaklander and Taube (2007) who found that students who are self-regulated adjust emotionally easily. Renierose and Hernandez (2017) also found that students with high self-esteem have higher levels of adjustment in college activities. Pape and Wang's (2003) findings suggested that the

middle school students from high and low achievement groups differed in the use of self-regulated strategies, how confident they felt about the strategies being used and how often they use the strategies.

### Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that significant positive relationship existed between self-efficacy of students and their academic, social and emotional adjustment. Therefore, it is concluded that positive relationship exists between self-efficacy and school adjustment among senior secondary school students in Paikoro Local Government Area of Niger State.

### Recommendations

The following recommendations have been provided on the basis of findings of the study:

1. Teachers and school administrators should encourage students to engage in positive self-efficacy.
2. Teachers, school psychologists, school guidance and counsellors and school administrator should encourage students on how to adjust properly to the academic, social and emotional problems in school.
3. School guidance and counselling unit should organize orientation services and sensitization programmes to students on how to enhance their self-efficacy and adjustment in the school setting.

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# THE ROLES OF COMMUNITY LEADERS, PARENTS AND TEACHERS IN TACKLING EXAMINATION MALPRACTICE IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

By

**Aminu Aliyu WUSHISHI (PhD)**

Education Foundations Unit, Faculty of Education and Arts, IBB University, Lapai

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## Abstract

It is glaring that the cases of examination malpractice have been on the increase in various institutions of learning across the nation, the consequence of which has put a serious dent on the image of our educational system nationally and internationally. Some measures have been put in place to curtail this menace but all to no avail. This study identified common forms of examination malpractice which include impersonation, smuggling of foreign materials, copying during examinations, and so on. Community leaders, parents and teachers are key stakeholder in the educational system with a major role to play in tackling this ugly trend. The paper largely employed literature review to examine the roles of stakeholders in tackling examinations malpractice in our Institutions. In conclusion, the study recommended government funding to our educational institutions, Community leaders should provide support for the schools and examination bodies and sensitize community on the effects of examination malpractice. School principals should be firm in making sure that all measures are taken during examinations and penalties impose on whoever is found wanting. Teachers should always sensitize the students on the consequence of exam malpractice by organizing seminar and workshop/conferences.

**Keywords:** The Role, Community Leaders, Parents, Teachers Examination Malpractice

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## Introduction

Is uncontestable that examination constitutes an important aspect of the education process, as it is the stage at which the learner's knowledge, skills, ability and competencies are assessed, and judgement made about them. The outcome of such judgement is used for diagnosing as well as placement of students based on their performances (Abdulkareem & Alabi, 2012). An attempt to subvert the due process of examinations eventually leads to examination malpractices. Examination malpractice is as old as examination itself. However, the rate at which examination malpractices occur in the Nigerian educational system is highly disturbing and, therefore, needs prompt attention by all stakeholders. Evidence has shown increasing incidents of examination malpractices by students at schools and colleges which conflict with the core purpose of education-the training of the mind and character for the practical and theoretical skills, knowledge and functional ideas for development (Aaron, 1992).

## Meaning of Examination Malpractice

Examination malpractice is an act or arrangement from which an examinee plans to derive illegal and illicit advantage over and above other candidates (students) in respect of some given examinations. Onokerhoraye (1993) and Maduabum (2001) defined it as an improper practice carried out before, during or after any examination by an examinee(s) or others with a view to obtaining good results. Malpractice therefore, is the use of unconventional behaviour or methods

before, during and after examination to aid, assist and attain underserved desired success in examination.

Oko and Adie (2016) defined Examination malpractice as any deliberate act of wrong doing, contrary to the rules of examinations designed to give a candidate an undue advantage. Examination malpractice also known as cheating is the illegal action that students take during their examinations to try to make good grades by cutting corners.

### Forms of Exam Malpractice

The followings are the common forms of exam malpractice in our educational institutions;

1. **Impersonation:** This is one of the well-known forms of examination malpractice in Nigeria. Impersonation is simply the act of pretending to be another person for the purpose of helping that person writes an examination. The reason why this form of examination malpractice is rampant in Nigeria is because the country has not attained the kind of technological advancement that is needed to avoid any type of impersonation. Take for instance, before some examinations are taken in Nigeria, there is usually no scrutinizing of students before the examination starts. Thus, many engage in examination malpractice through Impersonation just to pass the examination.
2. **Smuggling of Foreign materials:** Another form of examination malpractice in Nigeria that is used by those engaging in it is the bringing of extraneous materials into examination hall. Nowadays, students who cannot pay the money required for impersonation, usually come into the examination hall with extraneous materials to aid themselves in the examination. This could be by bringing notebooks, papers, mobile phones or laptops into the examination hall to source for information. This is perhaps the most common form of malpractice. It relates to the introduction of unauthorized material such as; notebooks, "crib notes", charts, and answer booklets complete with answers) into the examination hall. Material is frequently smuggled in pants, shoes, hems, and bras, or information is written on parts of the body. Generally speaking, bringing extraneous materials into examination hall is prohibited in most of the examinations conducted in Nigeria. But even at that, many students still engage in this form of examination malpractice, not minding what will be the punishment or outcome of their actions.
3. **External assistance:** This form of examination malpractice is seen as normal in examinations like JAMB UTME, WAEC and NECO. In this form of examination malpractice, it is actually the exam officers that come to rescue students who did not prepare for the examination in return for some money. Sometimes, the exam officers can also threaten students to pay money so that they can be helped or else, they will fail. In this case, both students who prepare very well for the examination and those who did not must engage in examination malpractice since that is the only way they can pass the examination. This form of examination malpractice is rampant in Nigeria.
4. **Substitution of script:** Replacing answer sheets handed out during the course of the exam with ones written outside the center before, during or after the exam. This usually

involves examination office officials, invigilators and sometimes teachers working outside the examination room.

5. **Copying during examination:** This is a general form of examination malpractice common at primary, secondary and tertiary education levels in Nigeria. Students in Nigeria who did not prepare very well for their examination end up copying from their classmates or friends just to pass the examination. In Nigeria, the act of coping during examination. This is known to be done by smart students because it is only a smart student that can copy from his classmates without being caught by their teacher/lecturer.
6. **Collusion:** Unauthorized passing of information between candidates, usually by exchanging notes or scripts, or collusion with an officer of the examination setting body, allowing them to get a copy of the questions in advance.
7. **Magic Centers:** These are centers that are fully involved in aiding students pass Exams, either through writing the answers on the board or allowing the students to enter the examination halls with materials. These kinds of centers usually record high rate of passes at the end of the Examination.

#### **Agents of Examination Malpractice**

It was discovered that the following have contributed in one way or the other to the rise of examination malpractice in the country: These include; parents, the students, the teachers, school Principals/proprietors of private schools and the government.

**Parents:** Some parents usually dictate what their children will do in life in term of academic pursuit, as such, they tend to facilitate that through whatever means just to make sure that their child/ward pass the exams and proceed with the career of interest. Parents tend to commit the following:

1. pay people to sit for examinations on behalf of their children/ward.
2. bribing supervisors/invigilators to write or solve on-going examinations; and
3. encouraging/buying leaked examination questions.

**Teachers:** some teachers tend to perform the following forms of malpractice during an examination:

1. serve as agents who always watch the arrival of examination monitoring team and alert his colleagues who are assisting the students.
2. solve questions/write on the board for students to copy.
3. allow students to copy from text/note books.

**School Principals/Proprietors of private schools:** Below are the various forms of exam malpractice carried out by some school proprietors/principals:

1. appointment of choice invigilators.
2. leaking information about question papers.
3. using subject teachers to assist in solving questions.
4. bribing external supervisors in order to have their ways.



**Government:** it has been observed that education is an expensive social service and requires adequate financial provision from all tiers of government for a successful implementation of the education programmes. It is an acceptable but bitter fact that government over the years has been playing politics with education, which led to the springing up of many private schools at every nook and cranny in major cities and towns in the country, to meet the cravings of parents seeking qualitative education for their children and wards. Also, poor teacher motivation has led to countless strikes that water down the quality of education in the country. Government at all levels have looked away from education and is far from meeting the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recommendation of twenty six percent (26%) of annual national budgets to the education sector and the little amount mapped out for it, is grossly mis-used and un-accounted for. All these, with other factors, contributed to involvement of some stake holders in exam malpractices.

### **Causes of Examination Malpractice**

1. **Poor Educational System:** In the past, Nigerian educational system was solid with qualified teachers who are committed to the success of their students, the required facilities for learning were readily available and all the necessary incentives are provided. Unfortunately, the situation has changed. The kind of schools we have now in our society and bad educational policies made by the government is affecting the standard of our educational system. Most of these schools are run by business men that are only interested in making money and not what their school can impact on the students. The kind of teachers employed by these schools is of low quality and Education Ministries that are supposed to check standards are compromising. These attitudes will definitely affect the performance of students in any exam.
2. **Much emphasis on Certificate:** One of the major causes of exams malpractice in Nigeria is the emphasis placed on school certification. The way Nigerian educational system lay emphasis on making good grades from school has actually caused many students to engage in examination malpractice just to make sure that they reach up to the required marks. For example, a student seeking admission into Nigerian Higher Institutions must have five credits including Maths and English even if that student is going to study Hausa/Igbo/Yoruba in the University. It is now a policy in most Nigerian Universities that whoever is seeking admission into Postgraduate Studies will have to produce O level credits in Maths and English.
3. **Over population in schools:** This can be found commonly in our public schools, a situation whereby over 100 students will be congested in classroom to write an examination. Obviously, the environment is already encouraging examination malpractice in the first place. You will discover five students sitting on a bench that is meant for two students and are writing the same examination. The overpopulation or overcrowding is a serious threat to successful examination in Nigeria.
4. **Lack of preparation for examination:** Majority of our students nowadays do not prepare for examination. Students that are expected to write an examination the next day



will be busy with their smartphones chatting through WhatsApp and other social media. You do not expect the students to pass when they do not even know what to write.

5. **Poor parental upbringing:** This is undoubtedly one of the causes contributing to examination malpractice in Nigeria. As it is rightly said, charity begins at home. Anything a person displays in the public is what he was taught at home. If a child uses any of the forms of examination malpractice just to pass an examination, it is apparent that his actions are as a result of the kind of morals built in him/her as a child. This is why poor parental upbringing is seen as one of the causes of examination malpractice in Nigeria today.

### Effects of Examination Malpractice

The followings are the effects of examination malpractices on our educational system:

1. **Increase in corruption:** This is one of the biggest problems Nigeria is confronted with today. In fact, it can be opined that corruption is the major problem in Nigeria as it affects almost all sectors in the country. One of the likely consequences of examination malpractice in Nigeria is an increase in corruption rate. If students cheat in their exams, it is likely they will believe they can get away with any form of corruption afterwards.
2. **Underdevelopment:** One of the primary reasons why most underdeveloped countries find themselves in precarious situations is the lack of qualified personnel in various economic and other sectors. It is glaring that one of the reasons why Nigeria is still underdeveloped is because our education system has not been able to produce enough qualified people in different fields of study. It seems as if our education system is more concerned about producing people who can write examination and pass very well, than those who can actually put into practice what they have been taught.
3. **Lowering the Profession Standard:** Professions such as engineering, medicine, law, and teaching have standards, in attempt to compromise the standards, the end receivers will suffer the consequence. Imaging a quack Doctor, product of examination malpractice coming to handle a patient or an Engineer who cheats in examination and bagged his qualification coming to handle a construction, the end result will be disastrous.
4. **Affect Nation's Integrity:** In recent times, students prefer to study abroad than in Nigeria. The reason is because people who studied in Nigeria are valued less than those who study abroad. The funniest part of it is the fact that, Nigerian students now prefer to study in less developed countries like Ghana, South Africa and even Gambia. This point to the fact that Nigeria's education system is gradually declining and the nation's integrity is affected.

### Stakeholders Roles in tackling examination malpractice

The followings are the stakeholders' roles in tackling examination malpractice in schools:

## The Roles of Teachers

**Commitment:** To curtail exam malpractices in our schools, teachers need to be committed in their teaching, develop new skills and improve on the instructional process. This gives students/learners confidence to face examination as opposed to when they are discouraged as a result of not being properly taught by their teachers. It is a clear fact that the success of every examination starts from effective teaching. In addition, as the world is rapidly advancing technologically, teachers should be equipped and updated with the major advancement so that they can guide their students with the skills of contemporary world.

**Honesty:** A teacher is considered as a model as what he does serves as a reference point to the students. A teacher needs to be honest with his students, he needs to enlighten them on the consequence of exam malpractice and encourage them to be honest throughout their academic career.

**Maintain and enforce the integrity of the examination process:** The teachers are critical elements in the examination circle. They not only teach but are exam administrators, invigilators, and supervisors. It is therefore their professional role to maintain the integrity of examinations.

## The Role of Parents

**Periodic checks:** Parents are expected to periodically check the learning progress of their children. They should make sure that their children's notes are up to date, so that they will have what to rely on during the period of an examination.

**Provision of learning materials:** It is the responsibilities of the parents to make sure that they provide all the needed Textbooks and other learning materials which will be helpful to their children during the examination period.

**Moral training:** Sociologically, family is said to be the first agent of socialization where the child learns all the positive attitudes that will make him a good and acceptable member of the society. A child that is morally trained from the family will not exhibit unusual character such as engaging in exam malpractice.

## The Roles of Community Leaders

**Sensitization:** It is expected that at the period of examination. The community should organize sensitization campaigns on the dangers of engaging and aiding exam malpractice. This will help in discouraging parents and teachers who are inclined to support students' indecent act.

**Identify School problems and proffer solution:** The community leaders through school visitation can identify challenges such as lack of learning materials, inadequate learning environment which may be contributing factors to exam malpractice. Through communal efforts, they can proffer solutions to the identified problems.

**Support punishment for offenders:** Some communities may want to protect people caught in an act of exam malpractice, particularly when the offender hails from the community. This practice will always affect the integrity of the examinations. A community leader can play a

vital role in tackling exam malpractice by allowing the proper penalties impose on any offender caught on the act to be carried out.

## Conclusions

Considering the importance of education as the bedrock of societal development, any factor or vice that tarnishes the outcome of the learning process must be fought by all stakeholders and well-meaning Nigerians. From the discussion so far, examination malpractice which has remained an issue in education sector requires a multidimensional approach for total eradication. Development of any nation relies solely on its human resources, and human resources are refined to be productive through education, hence eradicating examination malpractice which destroys human resources development should be taken seriously by stakeholders.

## Recommendations

1. Government needs to provide the necessary funding to our educational institutions and make learning materials available so that teaching will becoming effective for our students which can be a sure way to reducing examination malpractice.
2. Community leaders should provide support for the schools and examination bodies and sensitize community on the effects of examination malpractice.
3. School principals should be firm in making sure that all measures are taken during examinations and penalties impose on whoever is found wanting.
4. Teachers should always sensitize the students on the consequence of exam malpractice by organizing seminar and workshop/conferences.

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## TEST ANXIETY, SOCIAL ANXIETY AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS IN NORTH-WEST ZONE, NIGERIA.

By

**Yawa Abubakar WAKEH**

**Maimalari Cantonment, Maiduguri, Borno State**

**yawawakeh@gmail.com 07034242582**

**&**

**Martina IJALE (PhD)**

**Deparment of Counselling Psychology Okwaodibe@gmail.com 08036248843**

**&**

**Julius SAMSON (PhD) Department of Educational Psychology 08036619634**

**Federal College of Education, Zaria**

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### Abstract

This paper investigated the relationship among Test Anxiety, Social Anxiety and Academic Achievement of University Students in North-West Zone Nigeria. This research employed correlational design. The population of this study is made up of 11,225 300 level students. The sample of this study is 370 students from three selected universities. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the subjects of the study. Two instruments were used for data collection. The instruments are Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale, and Social Anxiety Scale (SAS). Students' CGPA was used as measure of academic achievement. Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale had an internal consistency of .804 while Social Anxiety Scale had an internal consistency of .768. The data collected were analyzed using inferential statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 levels of significance. The findings of the study revealed that a significant negative relationship exists between test anxiety and academic achievement ( $r = -0.575$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ). The result also revealed that significant negative relationship exist between social anxiety and academic achievement ( $r = -0.469$ ,  $p = 0.002$ ). It was recommended that: psychologists and counsellors should be encouraged to use various counselling techniques in managing students with test anxiety issues as it affects their academic achievement; and university management should provide a functional guidance and counselling center that will cater for students with test anxiety and social anxiety issues in order to improve their academic achievement.

**Keywords:** Test Anxiety, Social Anxiety and Academic Achievement

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### Introduction

Test anxiety is an overwhelming feeling of disturbance and distress among the students around the world. It is a type of performance problem just like when some people get nervous speaking to large crowds or trying something new. Test anxiety can be a devastating problem for many college and university students, because it may impair their academic achievement and well-being in the long run. According to Porto (2013), test anxiety produces psychological symptoms that build up in students before a test which include restlessness, unusual body movements, difficulty in concentration, insomnia, fatigue, muscles contraction, abdominal pain and tremor (Parviz & Alemi, 2010). According to Linnenbrink (2007), there is evidence that negative cognitive process strongly relates to academic achievement, this evidence that

negative emotion are linked to this process is constant with the motion of mediation. Both anxiety and anger may drop student ability to recall relevant information or material.

Social anxiety is a situation whereby an individual is afraid of interacting socially, appearing incompetent and being negatively judged by others. These include fear of public speaking, eating or taking a test in the presence of others, talking to authority figures, interacting with opposite sex, making complains, becoming the centre of attraction, entering room where others are already seated, expressing disagreement or disapproval to strangers and using public bathroom (Siegel & Dickstein, 2011). It is considered as a chronic pathology capable of affecting the individual negatively and promoting the development of other psychological disorders such as depression, generalized anxiety disorder and agoraphobia. It is the most common anxiety problem and the third most frequent psychiatric disorder. Low socioeconomic status, being unmarried, unemployment, low level of education, and poor social support are to be identified as risk factor for social anxiety. Society's attitude towards shyness and avoidance as a measure of politeness is also an important factor associated with students' ability to build social interaction. Other factors that cause social anxiety include genetic factor, social experience, cultural experience and psychological factors.

Social anxiety affects individuals mostly at the adolescent period and may continue into adulthood if not taken care of. It may also affect various aspects of human lives. Social anxiety, if not treated or addressed, is capable of creating difficulties in the individual's interpersonal relationship (family and social interaction) and can lead to, low self-esteem, impairment in memory, perception and thinking processes. Students with social anxiety have difficulty of speaking in front of a group of people and fail or drop out of school due to fear. Students' attention to academic information may be distracted by an excessive focus on their social anxiety. The ability to monitor and modify communication with colleagues and teachers may be vague by fear of negative evaluation and when participating in a seminar, socially anxious students judge their competence poorly, which leads to academic underachievement. The individuals with early onset of social anxiety are also at risk of developing depression or alcoholism (Wibowo, 2017). It also affects the occupational, educational and social affairs of the individual. Strahan (2014) averred that social anxiety strongly relates with adolescents' social adjustment, social interaction skills, social performance and social competence.

Academic achievement is the attainment obtained by a child in the lesson taught, which may include experience, knowledge, skill and the likes. The knowledge and skill are measured in student's Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA), the child's good or poor performance does not depend solely on attribute the child is born with, but his family background, social contacts, teachers and overall climate in his school and assessment procedure. Academic achievement may be defined as excellence in all academic disciplines, in class as well as co-curricular activities. However, excellence in sport activities, communication skills, punctuality, arts, culture, and the likes, which can be regarded as good performance only when an individual is well adjusted and motivated. Cohen and Garcia (2006) define academic achievement as knowledge attaining ability or degree of competence in school. Tasks are usually measured by standardized test and expressed in a grade or unit based on students'

performance/ achievement. Cohen and Apfel (2009) refer to academic performance as “the knowledge obtained or skill developed in the school subjects usually designed by the test scores or marks assigned by the teacher.

Achievement of students in the classroom and university takes a central role in the academic development of the students. Parents, teachers and school administrators alike take cognizance of the academic well - being of the students. Yardsticks are set by school authorities to measure performance, the standard set by the university will determine whether a student is performing well or not. In the assessment of performance, Pekrun and Elliot (2006) argued that achievement is the behaviour of an individual that can be directly observed by another individual. Therefore, academic achievement has been seen as a term used for student based on how well they are doing in studies and classes. Academic achievement for university students is also seen as the extent to which a student has achieved his educational goals. This means that, the student's academic performance is measured by the extent to which he/she has reached the educational goal he has set for himself. The university measures academic achievement in several ways which include Continuous Assessment Test (C.A.T) and a number of standardize test and examination (Pekrun & Perry, 2007).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Every human being in one interaction or the other have experienced anxiety, hence anxiety occurs when our bodies secrete hormones and adrenaline that eventually overload our physical and emotional responses. The prevalence of both social and test anxieties can be witness throughout in an academic institution like universities. University is an open system where all members including students, teachers and administrators interact with one another. There is the need, therefore, to establish conducive social environment, a healthy school environment where there is collective responsibility and effective interpersonal relationship among the different groups of members of the university community (teachers, students and administrators). Several factors have been identified as contributory to students' academic achievements which include anxiety, motivation, home background, personality and intelligence, social environments and societal norms, while poor physical, psychological and social aspect of school environments may have effects on academic achievements of students. Social and test anxiety among university students may be a function of many factors which include fear, worry of not performing well, expectation of parents, teachers, counselors and peer groups among others. Consequently, with these issues, the goals of university may be jeopardized. However, teaching staff and other stakeholders are known to strive hard in providing enabling school atmosphere to stimulate good academic achievement of students.

In this regard, there is the need to establish a qualitative social and motivating environment, where there is collective responsibility and effective interpersonal relationship in the schools. However, it is observed that social and test anxiety is increasing on daily basis among university students and this may be as a result of mutual distrust and suspicion among various diversities of students, poor recreational facilities in the institutions to help cope with the anxiety events of life among others. This situation may in turn have effect on students' academic achievement, especially at universities where level of collectiveness and cordial



academic relationship are to be created so as to enhance learning among students. It is against this background that, there is need to find out the relationship among test anxiety, social anxiety and academic achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Universities, Nigeria.

### Objectives

The following objectives guided this study:

1. To examine the relationship between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement Among undergraduate students in North-West Zone Universities, Nigeria.
2. To determine the relationship between Social Anxiety and Academic Achievement Among undergraduate students in in North-West Zone Universities, Nigeria.

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement Among undergraduate students in North-West Zone Universities, Nigeria.
2. There is no significant relationship between Social Anxiety and Academic Achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Zone Universities, Nigeria.

### Methodology

This research employed correlational design. The population of this study was made up of 11,225 300 level students of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Federal University, Gusau, Zamfara State and Federal University, Kebbi State. The sample of this study is 370 students from the three selected universities. Out of seven (7) federal universities in the north-west, the researcher employed balloting technique to arrive at three (3) universities, namely; Ahmadu Bello Universities, Zaria, Federal University, Gusau, Zamfara State and Federal University, Kebbi State. Simple random sampling technique was used to select the subjects of the study. Two instruments were used for data collection. The instruments are Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale and Social Anxiety Scale (SAS). Students' CGPA was used as measure of academic achievement.

Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale was adapted from Taylor (2002) while Social Anxiety Scale was adapted from Yahya and Nyarko-Sampson (2016). The instruments were face validated by experts in the Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The instruments were pilot tested in order to determine their reliability. Zung Self-Rating Anxiety Scale had an internal consistency of .804 while Social Anxiety Scale had an internal consistency of .768. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) statistics to test the null hypotheses which measured relationship among the variables at 0.05 alpha levels of Significance.

### Results

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Universities, Nigeria

**Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on relationship between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Universities, Nigeria**

Variables	N	Mean	Std	r	df	P-value
Test anxiety	370	50.2593	8.92115		369	
Academic achievement	370	18.7920	2.06869	- 0.575		0.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Findings reflected in Table 1 showed that a significant relationship exists between test anxiety and academic achievement. This is because the calculated significant (p) value of 0.000 is lower than the 0.05 alpha levels of Significance at a correlation index r value of - 0.575. This implies that there was a significant negative relationship. That is, the higher the level of test anxiety the lower the academic achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Test Anxiety and Academic Achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Universities, Nigeria is rejected.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between Social Anxiety and Academic Achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Universities, Nigeria

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics on relationship between Social Anxiety and Academic Achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Universities, Nigeria**

Variables	N	Mean	Std	r	df	P-value
Social anxiety	370	165.4243	11.6842			
Academic achievement	370	18.7920	2.06869	- 0.469	369	0.002

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Results of Table 2 revealed that a significant relationship exist between social anxiety and academic achievement. This is because the calculated significant (p) value of 0.002 is lower than the 0.05 alpha levels of significance at a correlation index r value of - 0.469. This implies that significant negative relationship, that is, the higher the level of social anxiety the lower the academic achievement and vice versa. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Social Anxiety and Academic Achievement among undergraduate students in North-West Universities, Nigeria is rejected.

### Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study revealed that significant negative relationship exists between test anxiety and academic achievement. This implies that the higher the level of test anxiety and

lower the academic achievement. This finding agreed with that of Linnenbrink (2007) who emphasized that there is evidence that negative cognitive process strongly relates to academic achievement, this evidence that negative emotion are linked to this process is constant with the motion of mediation. Both anxiety and anger may drop student ability to recall relevant information or material. Also, the finding is in line with the view of Porto (2013) who indicated that test anxiety produces psychological symptoms that build up in students before a test which include restlessness, unusual body movements, and difficulty in concentration, insomnia, fatigue, muscles contraction, abdominal pain and tremor.

Finding of this study also revealed that significant negative relationship exists between social anxiety and academic achievement. This implies that the higher the level of social anxiety the lower the academic achievement and vice versa. This finding agreed with the view of Chagas (2017), the author revealed that individuals with early onset of social anxiety are also at risk of developing depression or alcoholism. It also affects the occupational, educational and social affairs of the individual. The finding also goes in line with that of Aletan and Akinso (2014) who found that social anxiety strongly relates with adolescents' social adjustment, social interaction skills, social performance and social competence.

### **Conclusions**

Results from this study revealed an inverse relationship exists between test anxiety and academic achievement, as test anxiety increases, academic achievement decreases. The result also revealed an inverse relationship exists between social anxiety and academic achievement as social anxiety increases, academic achievement decreases and vice versa.

### **Recommendations**

From the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

5. Psychologists and Counsellors should be encouraged to use various counselling techniques in managing students with test anxiety issues as it affects their academic achievement.
6. University authority should provide a functional guidance and counselling center that will cater for students with social anxiety issues as it affects their academic achievement.

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## IMPACT OF GUIDANCE SERVICES ON ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

By

**Hussain Kehinde GARBA (PhD), Babaji Adamu TANKO (PhD) & Abdulsalam IS-HAQ (PhD)**

Department Educational Foundations, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi

E-mail: [garbahussain555@gmail.com](mailto:garbahussain555@gmail.com) 08082061832

[tankobest@gmail.com](mailto:tankobest@gmail.com) 08023632880

[ishaqabdulsalam67@gmail.com](mailto:ishaqabdulsalam67@gmail.com) 08080800021

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### Abstract

This study assessed the Impact of Guidance Services on Senior Secondary School Students' Academic Achievement in public schools of Kwara State. Four research objectives and four hypotheses were formulated and tested in the study. The study adopted correlation research design. The population of the students comprised of 102,112 senior secondary school students from three educational zones of Kwara State. Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the sample from the study. A sample of 384 respondents was randomly selected out of the population. A 40-item structure questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three (3) experts, one from Measurement and Evaluation and two from Guidance and counselling unit from the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Technology Education ATBU Bauchi. Cronbach Alpha coefficient of reliability was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The data collected were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and Pearson Moment Correlation (PPMC). The results revealed that there exists significance relationship between orientation, information counselling and referral services and academic achievement of senior secondary school students of public schools in Kwara state with  $r=.026^*$  for orientation service,  $r=.015^*$  for information service,  $r=.036^*$  for counselling service and  $r=.035^*$  for referral service respectively. Based on the findings, it was recommended that guidance and counselling programmes should be strengthened in order to improve the academic achievement of secondary school students in public schools of Kwara state. Also, Kwara State government should endeavour to establish Guidance and Counselling Departments in all the secondary schools in the state to enable counsellors provide guidance services to students on how to develop, build, and promote their future career.

**Keywords:** Impact, Guidance Services, Academic Achievement, Public Schools

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### Introduction

As individuals develop through stages of life in educational attainment, they encounter problems, challenges and conflict situations. These individuals also need to develop value systems, make decisions, set goals and work towards them. All these cannot be achieved without self-understanding and decision-making skills, which are not innate, but need to be developed. The need to address these challenges and to promote educational success and healthy life therefore, call for exposure to guidance services programs by individuals/students. Guidance and counselling is a term usually used together which focus on assisting individuals

to attain self-understanding and direction, although attempts have been made by various authors to define the term separately. Counselling is defined according to Eze (2012), as an inter-personal relationship between a professionally trained individual (counsellor) and a troubled individual (counsee) or individuals (counsees) whereby the former utilizes his professional skills to help the latter to be able to solve his educational, vocational and person social problems. Bark (2003) stated that guidance and counselling are the assistance made available by qualified and trained persons to an individual of any age to help him/her to manage his/her own life activities, develop his/her own points of view, make his/her own decisions and carry his own burden.

Consequently, Secondary school education is the engine room of knowledge acquisition, a stage at which students come in contact with various subjects, which determine the field of study they will like to pursue in higher institution, secondary school education is a level after the primary education and before higher education. Its position in educational system also speaks of its importance (Umar, 2014).

Achievement is the glittering crown which reflects a sense of sincerity, candidness and perseverance on the part of achievers and also parents, teachers and all those helping to achieve it and thus a result of bidirectional results. Achievement behaviour may be defined as any action directed of gaining approval where public standards of excellence are applicable. Crow and Crow (2009) defined academic achievement as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instructions in a given area of learning. That is, achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill or knowledge has been imparted to him. Aremu and Sokan (2003) submit that the search for the causations of poor academic achievement is unending and some of the factors they put forward are motivational orientation, self-esteem/self-efficacy, emotional problems, study habits, teacher consultation and poor interpersonal relationships.

Academic achievement is the general term for achieving outcomes in intellectual domains taught at school, college and University. By confining the definition to intellectual domains, fields such as music and sport are excluded for which certain motor abilities are more important than intellectual abilities. Academic achievement indicates the level of intellectual education of a person, a group or a whole nation. Academic achievement was defined by two terms. Academic pertains to school subjects or to fields of liberal arts or to the sphere of ideas and abstraction, while achievement is denoted by knowledge attained or skills developed by pupils usually in the schools, measured by test scores or by marks assigned by teachers (Chaudhary, 2004). In other words, an academic achievement is defined as knowledge acquired and skills developed in school subjects, generally indicated by marks obtained in tests in an annual examination. Academic achievement was once thought to be the most important outcome of formal educational experiences and while there is little doubt as to the vital role such achievements play in student life and later (Kell et al., 2013).

Academic achievement refers to how well a student is accomplishing his or her tasks and studies (Scotts, 2012). According to Ward, Stocker and Murray-Ward (2006), academic achievement refers to the outcome of education; the extent to which the student, teacher or institution have achieved their educational goals. Academic achievement is the ability to study



and remember facts and being able to communicate one's knowledge verbally or written on paper (Answers, 2010). So also, Academic achievement refers to the extent to which students have achieved mastery of the objectives of the subjects they are exposed to in school. According to Aremu and Sokan (2003), academic achievement has been observed in school subjects especially mathematics and English language among secondary school students.

Guidance programmes for secondary school students are designed to address the physical, emotional, social and academic difficulties of adolescence. By resolving physical, emotional, social and academic difficulties of the students and by helping students understand their learning strengths and weaknesses; their study habits can be improved. Better study habits and study skills lead to better achievement scores. The guidance programmes promote academic, vocational, personal-social and career development. Guidance programmes foster positive attitude towards school learning and work and hence, improve academic achievement.

Guidance services have become an essential programme in schools and this cannot be done in isolation. Guidance is therefore designed to help individuals/students in their different problems and concerns, so that they grow up well-adjusted individuals capable not only of living productive lives, but are also prepared to contribute their quota to the development of their society. Gibson (2018) stated that guidance services prepare students to assume increasing responsibility for their decisions and grow in their ability to understand and accept the results of their choices.

In schools, success is measured by the level of the students' academic achievement. Student's achievement remains a top priority for educators. Stakeholders in education have affirmed that the goal of education cannot be achieved without the input of professional counsellors. Though, many school administrators are yet to embrace the programme because they do not see the benefit of appropriate counselling services due to their ignorance and hatred for guidance and counselling programme, not minding concerns/problems students encounter. Students face a lot of academic and personal social challenges which they find difficult to cope with except with assistance of a professional counsellor.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is no gain saying that poor academic performance of secondary school students in Kwara state can be traced to lack of effective counselling services or non-existent of guidance programme in some schools which in turn affect academic achievement of the students negatively. Guidance and counselling programme cannot be over emphasized in our education sector most especially senior secondary schools, being an integral part of education system that assist student with challenge or concern with their education which can be resulted from many factor ranging from students attitudes and disposition towards academic pursuit, attitudes of teacher that handle some subjects, lack of financial backing to procurement of education material or peer pressure and so on. It on this note that present study sought to investigate the impact of guidance services on senior secondary school students' academic achievement in public schools in Kwara state, Nigeria.

## Objectives of the Study

The study sought to determine the impact of:

1. Orientation services on academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Kwara State.
2. Information services on academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Kwara State.
3. Counselling services on academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Kwara State.
4. Referral services on academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Kwara State.

## Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance

**H01:** There is no significant relationship between orientation services and students' academic achievement in public senior secondary school students in Kwara State

**H02:** There is no significant relationship between information services and students' academic achievement in public senior secondary school students in Kwara State

**H03:** There is no significant relationship between counselling services and students' academic achievement in public senior secondary school students in Kwara State.

**H04:** There is no significant relationship between referral services and students' academic achievement in public senior secondary school students in Kwara State.

## Methodology

This study adopted correlation research design in investigating the impact of guidance services on students' academic achievement among public senior secondary school students in Kwara State. The population of the study comprised of 102,112 students from three Educational Zones of Kwara State, Nigeria. Proportionate sampling technique was used in selecting 384 students; with 154 from Kwara central, 122 from Kwara south and 108 from Kwara north respectively. Guidance Services Questionnaire (GSQ) was used as the instrument for data collection. The GSQ has sections A and B. Section A contained information on bio-data information of the respondents while section B has 40 items on information about impact of guidance services on academic achievement of students. The instrument was validated by three (3) experts, one from Measurement and Evaluation and two from Guidance and Counselling unit in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Technology Education, Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi. Test re-test method of reliability was employed and an index of 0.87 was obtained which was considered relevant for use in the study.

## Results

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between orientation services and students' academic achievement in senior secondary school students in Kwara State.

**Table 1: Relationship between Orientation Services and Students' Academic Achievement**

		Orientation Services	Academic Achievement
Orientation services	Pearson	1	.026*
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.614

\*. Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2-tailed)

Table 1 indicated that there is positive correlation between orientation services and students' academic achievement ( $r = .026^*$ ,  $N = 384$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the research concludes that there is positive relationship between the orientation services and student's academic achievement is accepted.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant relationship between information services and students' academic achievement in senior secondary school students in Kwara State.

**Table 2: The Relationship between Information Services and Students' Academic Achievement**

		Information Services	Academic Achievement
information services	Pearson	1	.015*
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.756

\*. Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2-tailed)

Table 2 indicated that there is positive relationship between information services and students' academic achievement ( $r = .015^*$ ,  $N = 384$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is positive relationship between information services and student's academic achievement is accepted.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant relationship between counselling services and students' academic achievement in senior secondary schools students in Kwara State.

**Table 3: The Relationship between Counselling Services and Student's Academic Achievement**

		Counselling Services	Academic Achievement
Counselling services	Pearson	1	.036*
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.487

\*. Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2-tailed)

Table 3 showed that there is positive relationship between counselling services and student's academic achievement ( $r = .036^*$ ,  $N = 384$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis which states

that there is positive relationship between counselling services and student's academic achievement is accepted.

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant relationship between referral services and students' academic achievement among senior secondary school students in Kwara state.

**Table 4: The Relationship between Referral Services and Student's Academic Achievement**

		<b>Referral Services</b>	<b>Academic Achievement</b>
Referral services	Pearson	1	.035*
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.494

\*. Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2-tailed)

Table 4 revealed that there is positive relationship between referral services and student's academic achievement ( $r = .035$ ,  $N = 384$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is positive relationship between the referral services and student's academic achievement is accepted.

### Discussion of Findings

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of guidance and counselling services on senior secondary school students' academic achievement in public schools in Bauchi state, Nigeria. According to the results, there is great impact of guidance services on students' academic achievement in public senior secondary school in Bauchi state.

The findings of hypothesis one shows that there exists impact of orientation services on students' academic achievement, this is because the correlation of significant of ( $r = .026^*$ ,  $N=384$ ) was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between orientation service and students' academic achievement is accepted. This implies that given students' orientation at entry assist them to achieve academically. This finding corresponds with Tokunbo et al (2018) they carried out study on the factors influencing students' academic achievement. The result showed that there is strong positive relationship between the two variables ( $r = .026$ ,  $N=384$ ,  $p, < 0.05$ ). Based primarily on their empirical research, students' usually gain from orientation service provided at the beginning of their academic pursuit.

Similarly, the findings of hypothesis two shows that there exists impact of information services on students' academic achievement, this is because the correlation of significant of ( $r = .015^*$ ,  $N=384$ ) was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between information service and students' academic achievement is accepted. This implies that given students' information on how to go about pursuing the studies assist them to achieve academically. This finding corresponds with Abid (2013) who carried out study on the factors influencing students' academic achievement. The result showed that there is strong positive relationship

between the two variables ( $r = .015^*$ ,  $N=384$ ,  $p, <0.05$ ). Based primarily on their empirical research, students' usually gain from information service provided by counsellor to the students' during their academic life. Alemu (2018) had claimed that guidance services have significant effect on the students' study attitude, study habits and academic achievement.

Likewise, the findings of hypothesis three shows that there exists impact of counselling services on students' academic achievement, this is because the correlation of significant of ( $r = .036^*$ ,  $N=384$ ) was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between counselling service and students' academic achievement is accepted. This implies that given students' counselling on how to go about pursuing the studies assist them to achieve academically. This finding agreed with MeenuDev (2016) who carried out study to investigate and analyses the relationship of general mental ability as the factors influencing students' academic achievement. The result showed that there is strong positive relationship between the two variables ( $r = .036^*$ ,  $N=384$ ,  $p, <0.05$ ). Based primarily on their empirical research, students' usually gain from counselling service provided by counsellor to the students' during their academic endeavour. Ogunsanmi (2017) had claimed that guidance services have significant effect on the students' study attitude, study materials and academic achievement.

Furthermore, the findings of hypothesis four shows that there exists impact of referral services on students' academic achievement, this is because the correlation of significant of ( $r = .035^*$ ,  $N=384$ ) was found to be lower than 0.05 alpha level of significance. Therefore the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between referral service and students' academic achievement is accepted. This implies that given students' referral at the end of the learning activities assist them to achieve academically. This finding corresponds with Sink (2013) who carried out study on improving academic achievement in primary schools through a systematic approach to guidance and counselling services. The result showed that there is strong positive relationship between the two variables ( $r = .035$ ,  $N=384$ ,  $p, <0.05$ ). Based primarily on their empirical research, students' usually gain from referral service provided at the end of their academic pursuit.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that guidance and counselling programme should be strengthened in order to improve the academic achievement of secondary schools Students in Kwara state public schools. Relevant information pertaining choice of fields of study and choice of vacancies among others is presented to students. Students should help to become aware of the many occupations to consider after graduating from school. Students should receive information on the best ways to develop and manage effective friendships with peers and other members of the society.

## Recommendations

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

1. Guidance and counselling programme should be strengthened in order to improve the academic achievement of secondary schools Students in Kwara state public schools.

2. Guidance and counselling units need to sensitize both public and private secondary schools in Kwara state the advantages of shun cultism, truancy, rascality and all forms of juvenile delinquencies.
3. Counsellors should guide students properly on how to choose relevant fields of study so as to enable them to be gainfully employed either by themselves or by someone else.

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# **EFFECTS OF GUIDED INQUIRY INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGY ON MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT AMONG DYSCALCULIC DISABILITY STUDENTS IN ABIA STATE, NIGERIA**

**BY**

**Chilee Charity ONWUKWE**

Department of Educational Foundation, Nasarawa State University, Keffi  
g-mail: chilecarson@gmail.com (+234) 0703 846 8465

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## **Abstract**

This study investigated the effects of guided inquiry instructional strategy on mathematics achievement among dyscalculic disability students in Abia state, Nigeria. Quasi-experimental research design was adopted. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. The population of the study comprised of 110,712 SSII students. Purposive sampling procedure was used to select 120 dyscalculic students. Two schools were selected using simple random sampling technique and an intact class of one arm was purposively selected in each of the schools. Mathematics Achievement Test was designed by the researcher. Data obtained through the instrument were analyzed using inferential statistics of ANCOVA at 0.05 levels of significance. The finding of the study revealed a significant difference in the mean achievement score of students taught using Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method among dyscalculic students. The result of the study further showed that there was a significant main effect of gender (male and female students) on the treatments. The study concluded that guided inquiry instructional strategy is effective in teaching dyscalculic disability students. It is recommended that seminars and workshops should be organized for teachers on the application of guided inquiry method of teaching to assist students with learning disabilities overcome their learning challenges.

**Keywords:** Effects, Guided Inquiry, Instructional Strategy, Mathematics Achievement, Dyscalculia Learning Disability Students

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## **Introduction**

Students' academic performance is one of the top priorities for schools. It is the outcome of education, that is, the extent to which a student, teacher and institution have achieved their educational goals. Research have shown that the behaviour of students, especially in relation to sciences, generally and Mathematics in particular, is greatly influenced by the method of instructional delivery. According to Wordu and Iwok (2018), Mathematics gratifies a wide range of interest and abilities, in making crucial contribution to our understanding and appreciation of the world we live in. Sulaiman and Abdullahi (2015) observed that Mathematics involves activities such as formation of concepts, abstraction, generalization, and problem solving skills. Mathematics is one of the core subjects that is taken very serious in the school system irrespective of country or level of education. Mathematics is an indispensable tool in the study of science, humanities and technology (Edoho et al., 2020).

As stipulated in the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014), Mathematics is a mandatory subject for all Primary and Secondary School students, and a compulsory entry requirement into all courses in tertiary institutions. Mathematics is considered the gateway subject for academic development related to the fields of Sciences, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) (Roberts, 2014). The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) (2019) in the 2016-2018 WAECSSCE for private and public candidates revealed the differences in students' performance. The West African Examinations Council Results Statistics 2016-2018 reflected that a total of 1.57 million candidates sat for WAEC in 2018 as public students as against 1.56 million candidates in 2017. 849,069 of the candidates had 5 credits and above including English Language, 1.06 million had 5 credits and above including Mathematics while 756,726 of the candidates had 5 credits and above including Mathematics and English Language. The percentage of candidates with 5 credits and above including Mathematics and English Language is put at 48.15%.

The American Psychiatric Association (2018) submitted that Specific Learning Disability (SLD) means a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, or to do mathematical calculations or any other activity. According to Panicker and Chelliah (2016), SLD is a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by significant difficulties in learning and using academic skills and typically begins during school-age years. McDowell (2018) also submit that students with SLD may experience difficulty analyzing materials presented during instructional time and organizing information in their minds, leading to poor understanding of the material taught and difficulty remembering instructions. One challenge that is faced by students in numerical ability is known as dyscalculia. Dyscalculia is characterized by difficulties with number sense, memorizing math facts, math calculations, math reasoning and math problem solving. This is also named as specific learning disorder with impairment in mathematics (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Dyscalculia can range from an inability to order numbers correctly and extend to limited strategies for problem solving.

Students' performances have continues to generate debate on the factors or reason (s) that impedes success in Mathematics. Mathematics disorders may have trouble performing basic Mathematics calculations, or they may have difficulty with concepts like time, measurement or estimation. Dyscalculic learners may have difficulty in understanding simple number concepts, lack an intuitive grasp of numbers, and have problems learning number facts and procedures (Onwukwe, 2021). Raja and Kumar (2012) investigation into the learning difficulties of simple fractions of Indian children in secondary schools shows that one third of all the mistakes in division of fractions were due to the student's negligence to invert the divisor before the process of multiplication.

Effective teaching method is keys towards improved performance in Mathematics. The method used in any teaching and learning situation is very important because the way a teacher presents the subject matter to students may make the students to like or dislike the subject. The application of Guided Inquiry Instructional Teaching Methods in teaching Mathematics has

proven as an effective means of instruction. Amos in Adeuya (2020) submitted that guided Inquiry means careful planning, close supervision, on-going assessment and targeted intervention by an instructional team of teachers through the inquiry process that gradually leads students toward independent learning. Guided inquiry approach is a teaching strategy which attempts to help students ask questions and discover answers to their questions. Inquiry methods permits to observe an event, recognise relevant and irrelevant questions, search out data and take complete responsibility for an entire process of obtaining, organising and interpreting data. Guided inquiry according to Perry et al. in Wokocha (2021) involves students in every stage of learning using a variety of sources under the guidance of the teacher. The teacher provides materials and problems to investigate, students device their own procedure in solving the problems. It is students' centered-activity oriented teaching strategy. The teacher guides the students to discover answers to a problem. The teacher may even explain or give clue or procedure in solving the problem.

Guided inquiry is a student-centered method of teaching whereby students participate actively, question assumptions and provide their viewpoints on any area of subject matter. The view (Kanselaar et al., 2019) is that Guided Inquiry-Based Strategy involves change in the organization of the manner in which the content is taught. It is an approach to teaching and learning that places students' questions, ideas and observation at the center of the learning experience. Guided Inquiry-Based Strategy draws on constructivist ideas of learning in which learners construct new ideas or form concept based upon their experience or prior knowledge. A teacher using the guided inquiry method gives minimal lectures to introduce ideas and to provide overviews but uses more of questioning and interactive class activities to stimulate and to share ideas. The teacher's role in guided inquiry is that of a facilitator, coach, mentor and motivator, rather than dispenser of all the right knowledge (Johnston et al. in Onwuachu & Chukwurah, 2015).

Gender is incorporated in this study as a moderator variable. It is therefore seen as the allocation of roles based on sex in a given society. Gender stereotypism is fixing roles as a result of bias resulting from socio-cultural orientations over the years. These stereotypes affect one's sense of self-worth, behaviour and choices. According to Obih, in Agugum and Okoro (2020) gender is associated with the belief, attitude and societal perception of being a male or female vis-à-vis what each should do, how each should behave, and social functions as well as position they can attain in the society. The release of results from the West African Examination Council (WAEC) and National Examination Council (NECO) is always followed by public outcry as students' performances in both examinations do not match the government and parental expectations. Research has shown that certain teaching methods contribute greatly to students' academic success in sciences and other subjects (Ugwuadu, 2014; Wokocha, 2021; Agugum & Okoro, 2020; & Onwukwe, 2021). It is in light of the foregoing that this study investigated the effects of guided inquiry instructional strategy on Mathematics achievement among dyscalculic students in Abia state, Nigeria.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of guided inquiry instructional strategy on Mathematics achievement among dyscalculic disability students in Abia state, Nigeria. The specific objectives are:

1. To determine the differences in the pre-test and post-test mean scores of treatment on achievement among dyscalculic disability students taught Mathematics using guided inquiry instructional strategy and those taught using lecture method in Abia state.
2. To find out the differences in the mean achievement scores treatment among dyscalculic disability students taught Mathematics using guided inquiry instructional strategy and those taught using lecture method in Abia state.
3. To determine the differences in the mean achievement scores treatment among male and female dyscalculic disability students taught Mathematics using guided inquiry instructional strategy and those taught using lecture method in Abia state.

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant main effect of treatments (Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method) on dyscalculic students' achievement Mathematics in Abia state.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant main effect of gender on dyscalculic students' achievement in Mathematics in Abia state.

**H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatments (Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method) and gender on dyscalculic students' achievement in Mathematics in Abia state.

### Methodology

The study adopted non-equivalent pre-test, post-test quasi-experimental design. This design was adopted because intact classes were used as it was not possible to have complete randomization of the subjects. Two groups were created for the study. The first group (Experimental Group I) received treatment on Guided Inquiry, the second group served as the control group which was exposed to conventional method (Lecture Method). The pre-tests for the students' performance were administered before treatment. Also, the post-tests for the performances were administered after the treatment. The design for the study is presented schematically below:

Experimental Group I: O<sub>1</sub>    X<sub>1</sub>    O<sub>3</sub>

Control Group:        O<sub>2</sub>    X<sub>2</sub>    O<sub>4</sub>

Where:

O<sub>1</sub> O<sub>2</sub> = Pre-test for Exp. Group I & Control Group respectively

O<sub>3</sub> O<sub>4</sub> = Post-test for Exp. Group I & Control Group respectively

X<sub>1</sub> = Treatment using Guided Inquiry Strategy

X<sub>2</sub> = Control group (taught using Lecture method)

Independent variables include treatments used for the study which are Guided Inquiry strategies. The dependent variable was students' performance. The research design used validated the effectiveness of the variables and helped in the evaluation of Independent variables' effectiveness on academic performance in studying Mathematics.

The target population comprised 12,650 students of Senior Secondary School II in Abia State. The sample for the study consisted of 120 Senior Secondary School II (SSS 2) students of Ukwa-West Local Government Area (LGA) in Abia South Senatorial zone. Purposive sampling procedure was used to select the sample for the study in identifying dyscalculic students. From the three senatorial district of Abia state, one senatorial district was selected using simple random sampling technique. One-Local Government Areas (LGA) was then sampled from the selected senatorial district using simple random sampling technique. Furthermore, two schools were selected using simple random sampling technique to select one (1) school in Ukwa-West LGA and Aba North LGA respectively. An intact SS2 class of one arm was purposively selected in each of the schools. The purpose was because only Science classes are compelled to take Mathematics in secondary schools in Nigeria. The two intact classes were assigned to two groups using simple random sampling technique. Experimental group A comprised of 53 students who were exposed to guided inquiry instructional strategy, while those 67 students in experimental group B were taught using conventional method (Lecture Method). For the purpose of this study, an instrument titled Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT) and two (2) instructional packages was developed by the researcher. These instrument and packages serves as guide for the research.

The Mathematics Achievement Test (MAT) was developed by the researcher and it consists of 30 multiple choice items in Mathematics Achievement. The Mathematics Achievement Test consisted of two sections of A and B. Section A is for the demographic/background information while section B contained 30 objectives items with options A-D. The test items were based on the objectives outlined in the lesson plans prepared. The test items covered three topics namely: Angle of Elevation & Depression, Probability, Surds, Quadratic Equation, Indices & logarithms, Circle Theorem and Statistics. These topics are included in the SS2 syllabus. The Text Blue Print (Table of Specification) used for preparing the achievement test for SSII Mathematics is based on the selected topics in the scheme of work. The test items were constructed using Bloom's Taxonomy of educational objectives for the cognitive domain which are in six areas, namely; Knowledge, Comprehension Application, Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation.

The pilot test for the achievement test provided data for computing the coefficient of reliability and the Mathematics Achievement Test was subjected to Kuder-Richardson (KR-21) method of reliability to determine the internal consistency of the items. The reliability index of 0.78 was obtained for the Mathematics Achievement Test. Two research assistants, who are Mathematics teachers and the classroom teachers assisted in identifying students with dyscalculia in each school. The duration of the intervention lasted for five weeks. Descriptive statistics of Mean and Standard deviation of the scores obtained from the tests were used to answer the research questions, while Analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05



level of significance using version 25 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to analyse the data.

## Results

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant main effect of treatments (Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method) on dyscalculic students' achievement Mathematics in Abia state.

**Table 1: Gain in Mean Academic Achievement Scores of Students Taught Mathematics using Guided Inquiry Instructional Strategy and those taught using Lecture Method**

Methods		N	Pre-test Mean	Std.D	Post-test Mean	Std. D	Mean Gain
<b>Guided Strategy</b>	<b>Inquiry</b>	53	42.66	8.20	63.44	8.57	20.78
	<b>Lecture Method</b>	67	33.41	8.48	47.10	8.63	13.69

Table 1 revealed students' mean academic achievement and the pre-test mean score of 42.66 and post-test mean score of 63.44 of students taught Mathematics using guided inquiry instructional strategy. The comparison of the pre-test mean score and the post-test mean score revealed a mean gain of 20.78 after treatment. Tables also revealed pre-test academic achievement means score of 33.41 and post-test mean score of 47.10 of students taught Mathematics using guided inquiry instructional strategy using and those taught using lecture method. The comparison of the pre-test mean score and the post-test mean score revealed gain in mean of 13.69 after treatment. This indicated that lecture method has an effect on the performance of students taught Mathematics.

**Table 2: Gain in Mean Difference of Students taught Mathematics using Guided Inquiry Instructional Strategy and Lecture Method**

Methods		N	Gain in Mean	Difference in Gain in Mean
<b>Guided Strategy</b>	<b>Inquiry</b>	53	20.78 (63.44 – 42.66)	7.09 (20.78 – 13.69)
	<b>Lecture Method</b>	67	13.69 (47.10 – 33.41)	

Table 2 indicated that students taught Mathematics using guided inquiry instructional strategy had academic achievement gain in mean of 20.78 while the students taught with lecture method had academic achievement gain in mean of 13.69; the gain in mean difference therefore was 7.09. This revealed that students taught Mathematics using guided inquiry instructional strategy performed better than their counterparts taught using the lecture method.

This indicated that guided inquiry instructional strategy has higher positive effect on students' taught Mathematics compared to the lecture method.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant main effect of gender on dyscalculic students' achievement in Mathematics in Abia state.

**Table 3: Gain in Mean Academic Achievement Scores between Male and Female Students' taught Mathematics using Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method**

Treatment	Gender	N	Pre-test Mean	Std.D	Mean Gain	Post-test Mean	Std.D	Mean Gain
<b>Guided Inquiry</b>	Male	28	26.52	8.53		49.82	6.79	
	Female	25	24.43	8.42	2.09	45.53	6.59	4.29
<b>Lecture Method (Control)</b>	Male	37	24.86	7.99		42.67	5.80	
	Female	30	24.20	7.04	.66	45.77	5.34	3.10

Table 3 revealed academic achievements for the pre-test mean gain in Guided Inquiry is 2.09 and .66 for lecture method of Male and Female Students' taught Mathematics using Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method. The result indicated a post-test scores mean gain of 4.29 for Guided Inquiry and 3.10 for Lecture Method. The conclusion is that, there is difference in mean score as far as gender is concerned.

Table 3 showed the main effect of gender on Guided Inquiry Instructional Strategy and Lecture Method on dyscalculic students' achievement Mathematics in Abia state. The result revealed that after adjusting for pre-test scores as the covariate, there is no significant main effect of gender (male and female students) between students taught guided inquiry instructional strategy and lecture method. The result is given as gender:  $F(1, 118) = 30.138$ ,  $P = .264 (>.05)$ , Partial eta ( $\eta^2$ ) = .274 showed that there is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female students taught guided inquiry instructional strategy and lecture method. The null hypothesis on the mean posttest scores of gender was therefore accepted.

**Hypothesis Three:** There is no significant interaction effect of treatments (Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method) and gender on dyscalculic students' achievement in Mathematics in Abia state.

There is no significant main effect of treatment (Guided Inquiry instructional strategy and Lecture Method) on dyscalculic students' achievement Mathematics in Abia state.

**Table 4: ANCOVA on Tests of Between-Subjects Effects showing the Main Effect, Gender and Treatments on Achievement Scores of Students**

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects						
Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	1795.782 <sup>a</sup>	3	598.594	22.323	.000	.296
Intercept	82702.480	1	82702.480	3084.128	.000	.951
Pretest_Scores	.007	1	.007	12.365	.987	.000
Treatment	675.277	2	675.277	25.182	.000	.137
Gender	1612.636	1	1612.636	30.138	.000	.274
Treatment * Gender	185.278	1	183.862	28.201	.275	.965
Error	4263.666	116	26.816			
Total	1594330.000	120				
Corrected Total	6059.448	118				

a. R Squared = .296 (Adjusted R Squared = .283)

Table 4 revealed that after adjusting for pre-test scores as the covariate, there is a significant difference in the mean achievement score of students' taught using treatment (Guided Inquiry instructional strategy and Lecture Method) on dyscalculic students' achievement Mathematics in Abia state. The result which is given as  $F(2, 118) = 25.182, P = .000 (< .05)$ , Partial eta ( $\eta^2$ ) = .137 showed that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught using guided Inquiry and Lecture Method on dyscalculic students' achievement in Mathematics in Abia state. The null hypothesis on the mean effect of treatment was therefore rejected.

Table 4 showed the interaction effect of treatment (Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method) and gender on dyscalculic students' achievement in Mathematics. The result which is given as:  $F(1, 118) = 28.201, P = .275 (> .05)$ , Partial eta ( $\eta^2$ ) = .965 showed that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female students taught guided inquiry instructional strategy and lecture method. This revealed that there is no significant interaction effect of treatments and gender on the academic achievement of the dyscalculic students' taught using Guided Inquiry and Lecture Method. The null hypothesis was therefore accepted.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement score of students' taught using treatment (Guided Inquiry instructional strategy and Lecture Method) on dyscalculic students' achievement Mathematics in Abia state. This is supported by Ferguson, in Odupe and Opeisa (2019) who asserts that the inquiry-based teaching approach has a positive effect on the mathematics achievement of students. In inquiry-based learning, the teacher acts as the facilitator of the students learning rather than the supplier of information. These results aligned with that of Ugwuadu (2014) who observed that guided inquiry method of instruction proved more effective than lecture method in

enhancing students' academic achievement. The finding further showed that there is a significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female students taught guided inquiry instructional strategy and lecture method. This finding is supported by Mankumari and Ajay (2017) on gender differences in the academic performance of students showed that the female students outperformed their male counterparts. Moreover, the findings of Uwalake (2013) also revealed superiority in the academic achievement of females over males in chemistry. On the other hand, Oribhabor (2019) and Odupe and Opeisa (2019) studied the influence of gender on mathematics achievement of secondary school students and effect of gender on students' academic achievement in public secondary schools respectively. They reported separately that male students performed significantly better than their female counterpart on students' academic achievement in science subjects. On a contrary, Adebayo (2016) found that gender has no significant effect on students' achievement when taught using guided inquiry.

### Conclusions

Based on the findings of the result of the study, it was concluded that a significant difference existed in the effectiveness of guided inquiry in improving academic performance of secondary school students in Mathematics in Abia state, as those exposed to conventional teaching method. The conventional strategy use in teaching mathematics does not encourage creativity and critical thinking in mathematics class. In fact, it brings low conceptual understanding in geometry. The guided inquiry-based learning strategy is a compelling alternative to the more conventional classroom strategy utilized in the past. The learners must inquire directly to gain a deep comprehension of the features in order to grasp the concept.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings discussed above, the following recommendations have been made:

1. There is need for the provision of functional learning centres that could be provided in the curriculum for dyscalculic students and students faced with different learning disabilities. Through the use of guided inquiry method, this would enable students of high and low ability levels to gain confidence in their ability to reliably gather and interpret facts as they learn from their own inquiry.
2. Mathematics teachers should make use of innovative teaching strategy such as guided inquiry methods in order to help male and female dyscalculic students and students with other with varying learning disabilities.
3. It is also recommended that seminars and workshops should be organized for teachers on the application of guided inquiry method of teaching in aiding students with learning disabilities.

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## YOUTH RESTIVENESS AND NATIONAL SECURITY: COUNSELLING IMPLICATIONS

BY

**Mohammed M. & Ahmed A.**

Department of Educational Psychology, Niger State College of Education Minna

07066863571

musandaya@gmail.com

### Abstract

Youth restiveness in Nigeria has become alarming and now of serious concern. Almost all the communities in this country, most especially in the recent past, has witnessed one form of restiveness such as violent protest, Thuggery, cult clashes, riots, killings of the innocent people, which has also lead to the cost of lives and properties and slowing down developmental goals. The focus of this paper is to examine the concept of youth restiveness in Nigeria, National security, major causes of youth restiveness in Nigeria, the youth and National security, the government approach towards curbing youth restiveness in Nigeria, and the counseling implications. It is therefore recommended among others that government should provide functional and free education to its citizen in order to take the children out of street.

**Keywords:** Youth Restiveness, National Security, and Couselling Implications

### Introduction

Nigeria is commonly described as under developed, conflict ridden and fragile due to the ascendancy of restiveness and near conflict institutionalization. There is any region of the country that has not experienced full blown conflict in the recent times. In fact, in all regions of the country, it is either there is a violent conflict going on or one has just subsided or one is about to erupt. Consequences of conflict, destruction of lives and property have become so much of a common place that Nigerians are nearly no longer shocked when hundreds of human deaths are reported in the media. In this country today, one is only waiting for the next report of deaths and kidnapping in any part, from the Niger-Delta conflict to the Odua Congress in the West, Movement for the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) in the East, Banditry and Bokoharam in the North (Abolurin, 2017 & Amaraegbu, 2017).

Nigeria only enjoys relative peace and youth are central to the current high spate of restiveness and conflict in Nigeria (Akale & Oladosu, 2018). The youths form the basic and major armies perpetrating and driving conflict across the country (Abolurin 2011). The people perpetrating the conflicts are of age 18-35 (National Youth Policy, 2009). Youths are targeted on two fronts during conflict in Nigeria for recruitment and to be attacked. The youths in Nigeria today confront many challenges that are not their making (Akanle & Oladosu 2018). According to Chukuemeka and Agbara (2016) human society is nothing but a complex entity. Nigerian youth find themselves in a very complex nation and most times find it very difficult to navigate those

complicities and often become trapped in the complex systems. Nigeria is complex and layered relative to ethnicity, resource distribution, wealth flow, class dynamic and general socio-economic structure that predates the existence of the youths. The complex national structures are dangerous recipe for conflict and when they erupt like socio-cultural and political volcanoes manifested in conflicts, the youth are caught in the middle. They experience conflict, fight within conflict for survival and bear the consequences conflict. The youths are thus trapped in restiveness and conflicts that are motivated by issues that predate their existence. It is against this backdrop that this paper has discussed the youth restiveness and national security with counselling implications.

### **Concept of Youth Restiveness**

This is the extreme form of deviant behavior among youth which is socially unacceptable in any society. Youth restiveness involves the combination of actions behavior attitudes exhibited by youths which are socially unacceptable and unwholesome in the society (Igbo & Ikpa, 2013). Youth restiveness has been device through which youth use to obtain what they want from the relevant authority. Similarly, Elegbeleye (2005) viewed it from different angle as a “sustain protestation embarked upon to enforce desired outcome from a constituted authority organized body of youths”. It is accompanied by disruption of law, conflict and violence.

The common features of these organized bodies of youth are the resort to violence and one would agree that their activities posed great challenges to the security of the country. The violent nature of these youth activities has been responsible for the wanton destruction of valuable infrastructures, kidnapping and loss of lives. These acts had not only created dirty atmosphere but also endangered the security and affect the national development.

### **Concept of National Security**

Security means likelihood of survival. It means confidence in the maintenance of state boundaries and the reservation of its territorial ideological and cultural integrity. Asmau (2016) observed that there have been no generally and universally accepted conception of national security but is more of the military aspect; it should encompass all facet of national life in preservation of its values.

### **Causes of Youth Restiveness in Nigeria**

Asamu (2006) identified six factors that cause youth restiveness in Nigeria. They include bad governance, unemployment, poverty, inadequate educational opportunities and resources, lack of basic infrastructures and inadequate communication and information flow. Chukuezi (2009) posited that the causes are many, ranging from individual to societal factors and he mentioned such as marginalization, unemployment, exuberance and the role of politician in employing youth against their perceived enemies as the main causes of restiveness among youth in Nigeria. Similarly, Snappy and Hamittion (2011) in their studies of “Youth

restiveness and industrial disruption in the Niger Delta, identified factors such as economic, political socio-cultural as the causes of youth restiveness. Elegbele (2015) the jingoistic pursuit to patriotic ideas, the peer motivated excitement of being a student and the perceived victimization arising from economic exploitation are the causes of incessant youth restiveness, these imply that a plethora of closely related factors are responsible for youth restiveness in Nigeria, These include:

**Poverty:** Report from the World Bank (2015) indicated that Nigeria is third country of the world with poverty after China and India. This was evidence in the study undertaken by Zakari (2016), which shows that 70 percent of people in Nigeria are living below poverty line; in which one third survive on less than one US Dollara day. This figure includes the number of youth because they constituted about 40 percent of the Nigerian population. As Snappy and Hamilton (2011) observed more-over, the most severe region with poverty was north as the former Governor of central Bank of Nigeria Charles Chukuma Soludo reiterated on July, 2008; in fact to him poverty is a Northern phenomenon. In taking North-East as an example a large army of youth was unemployed and this according to Haruna and Jfumba (2011) have accounted for high level of poverty in the Zone there by precipitating the youth to join any group of militia thugs. In the last North Eastern Economic Summit held on 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> December, 2013 in Gombe State, the six state Governors of the region have unanimously agreed that poverty, unemployment and insecurity are the major problems bedeviling the security and the development of the region.

**Unemployment:** Unemployment has become one of the prevailing phenomena among the youth in almost all developing countries. In Nigeria about 70% of the population was believed to be unemployed. Surprising out of this unemployed percentage 809 are youth that fall within 17 – 45 years by conventional definition of the youth (NBSSC/10533:2013). NBS in collaboration with the Nigerian Federal Ministry of youth Development Stated that 54% of youth were unemployed in 2012, out this statistics females stood at 51.99 compared to their counterpart males while that of males stood at 48.19. Furthermore, the report disclosed that out of the 46,836 youths recorded against many types of crime, 42,071 which represent 75.5% were males and the remaining 24.5% were their counter parts females (National Baseline youth survey report 2012) this clearly indicates the level of unemployment among the youth and it link with many ones.

**Lack of access to education:** Another factor that is responsible for youth restiveness is lack of access to education and even those that were opportune to be admitted in various educational institutions there is a problem of lack of learning facilities. Education is one of the fundamental human rights and it is the key index of development since it improves productivity and health. Alubo (2012) strongly believed that quality of education has a direct bearing on national integration and progress. In Nigeria, most especially northern part has low literacy level. Nigeria universities are closed for more than 8 month in 2022 living the students to roaming

about the streets without knowing their fate worse still, the government interpreted it as politics, these may cause more social ills to the society in near future.

**Marginalization:** According to the Chukuezi (2019), youth resort to restiveness because of their perceived marginalization by the selfish elders in their communities. This means that the elders have occupied every position without empowering younger generation, this precipitate srestiveness among youths.

### **Cases of Youth Restiveness in Nigeria**

Nigeria in recent times has witnessed massive involvement of youth in various violence, the nature of these violence were political, religious rivalry and economic. The emergence of these conflicts and the involvement of youth in it have attracted a lot of attentions. These include end SARRS protest in all over Nigeria in 2019. Asamu (2016) documented the involvement of youth militant of Agyrasutown in the crisis erupted on 14, April, 2000 as a result of locating a local government headquarters against their wish. This has led to the killing of some many youths. Similarly, the study of politics and Thuggery in north region of Nigeria conducted by Haruna and Ayuba (2011) identified the emergence of different group of thugs since the inception of 1999-2023, the groups includes Ecomog in Borno and Yobe, Sara-suka in Bauchi, Yandaba in Minna, Yan-kalare in Gombe, Banu-Israila in Taraba, Yahoo Boys in Benin and Yan-shinko in Adamawa State. According to them, most of these groups that perpetrate election crises in those states are armies of unemployed youth and the most unfortunate was that they are employed, sponsored and dumped by desperate politician to protect their political interest.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013 there was a misunderstanding between Eggon youth and Army at road block where one of the youth refused to stop for check and this resulted the killing of three youth (VOA Hausa morning session)

### **The Youth and National Security in Nigeria**

If Nigeria will ever be secured, the place of the youth can never be trivialized against the background of their parameter and characteristics already demonstrated above. Moreover, the youth are the sustainable vanguard of the nation and leaders of tomorrow. They are thus the conscience of the nation and sight of the country. Any nation that underestimates the capacity of its youth in the quest for national security will soon become history. There is thus the need for sustainable understanding and appropriation of the youth's capacity if Nigeria is to ever be secured and develop. National security provides the enabling environment for development (Orji, 2011). For people and resources to be sustainably mobilized and deployed for National development there must be a strong sense of security within the nation (Orji, 2011). Local and external aggressions must be seen to have been checkmated.

No investor will invest in a nation seen to be insecure and constantly under threat, this is why nations, especially developed ones, spend huge amount of money to secures their nation boatels and deploy ideological apparatus especially the mediator

create both real, imagery and managed impressionist sense of security in their nations and any appearance of insecurity is dealt with decisively. National security achievement thus must be systematic and not unnecessarily violent as has been the case in Nigeria. To achieve national security also, preventive actions must be attended to rather than curative combative and reactive actions which most of the time are destructive and aggravate occurrences of conflicts and institutionalize them.

National security is thus very critical for development and all machineries must be put in place to guarantee it, for without it, development can never be achieved and the real sense worth of the nation with ultimately be traded. For the youths to function effectively for national security they must be of effectively empowered and re-orientated. Negative outcomes of involvement in conflict must be made known to them and the need to embrace peace and have positive view of life must be well inculcated into them. The education sector must be made more functional to enable a well well-trained youth that could compete internationally, since however, it is impossible to maintain that the education system in Nigeria is very functional (Ojua, 2012). Graduates from the Nigerian higher institution are constantly descended as either half-baked or outright unbaked. This is largely because the outputs from graduates of Nigerian higher institution have been poured to below their peers in other higher institutions. This is also why many youth engaged in cybercrimes popularly known as yahoo yahoo in the country regardless of the backlash on the nation even when they know the negative socioeconomic and diplomatic implication on the country.

### **Government Approach toward Curbing Youth Restiveness in Nigeria**

Youth that are considered as leaders of tomorrow are turned to be society destroyers, since they were mostly involved on all conflicts and violence that the country suffers. Obviously government has not been reluctant to the phenomena, but the strategy adopted in circuiting most of the restiveness in Nigeria was more of repressive and violence acts through the deployment of military and police to curb the menace, for instance in Niger Delta despite the amnesty continues to use reprisal means to suppress the restiveness in the area. Again, the Development Commissions, Boards and Ministries established by the government as the response to the demands of the people never made any meaningful achievement rather they serves as avenue for self-enrichment and corruption at the expense of the poverty stricken masses of the region (Chukuezi, 2019).

### **Counselling Implications**

Youth restiveness in Nigeria revolves around unemployment lack of access to education, poverty, marginalization and environmental degradation, thus, the need for counseling intervention. The goal of counseling process is to improve adjustment, higher functioning, self-direction, self-supporting and greater happiness. The focus is usually placed upon the process involved in the learning that occurs and the assistance that is given to the person who needs help (Oladele, 2000). This is a clear indication

of the importance of career guidance in our schools and specified on our educational system. In other word, education and work are interrelated, as such there are no two worlds, one for youths the other for adult but there is one world-life.

The development of career guidance programme from nursery to secondary school is based on the premise that, as all children mature; they pass the various developmental stages vital to their growth. The programme should focus on helping youths understand themselves in relation to the world around them on learning how to explore opportunities which are in consonance with their abilities, interests and values (Sambo, 2009). One of the seamier deficiencies of the existing career programmes in Nigeria is lack of vocational information which could facilitate vocational decision making. There is therefore a great need to develop vocational information. The need for career guidance has been intensified by certain limiting factors in the Nigeria society:

1. Most youth from low income families have relatively little prospect of maximizing their occupational goals that require graduation from a higher institution of learning.
2. Some parents have how education and certain values that cut their children off from certain occupations.
3. Occupational stereotyping by sex has brought un-healthy discriminating barriers in the world and against women (Sambo, 2009).

### **Conclusions**

Youth restiveness in Nigeria has pose a lot of challenges to the security architecture of the country and can endanger the peaceful co-existence on its people, in the same manner conflicts, terrorism, banditry and kidnapping has caused havoc in achieving a sustainable development goals. Poverty, unemployment, under employment, poor education system among other has driven the youths into restiveness in Nigeria, and has degenerated to the extent that everyone is affected. Moreover, the government of the day is not doing enough to stop these menaces. It is important that gov't should adopt a strategy of curbing the youth restiveness through some forms of empowerment in order to arrest the station until that is done, the security and other developmental stridence of the government cannot be achieved.

### **Suggestions**

1. Government should provide functional and free education to its citizen on order to take the children out of street.
2. Vocational and technical education should be properly funded in order for the youth to acquire skills that can create job for self-reliant.
3. Guidance and counseling activities should be seriously emphasized in our schools.



4. Multinational oil companies should re-channelled some of their profits to improve the lives of the communities and also creating job opportunities for the youth from the communities.
5. Youth should be empowered by ways of given scholarships and some incentives in order to support their dreams.
6. Sensitization programmes should be organized for the youth to enable them discovered their god given potentials and properly annexed them on ventures that can better lives.

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## INFLUENCE OF SELF-ESTEEM AND SOCIAL SUPPORT ON DRUG ABUSE AMONG STREET CHILDREN IN MAKURDI METROPOLIS

**Olah Patrick OCHICHE**

[Olapatrick2017@gmail.com](mailto:Olapatrick2017@gmail.com)

**08068268203**

**&**

**Aina Oluwarotimi OPEYEMI**

Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council

Lokoja Kaduna Road, Sheda, P.M.B 91, Abuja, Nigeria

[rotainal@gmail.com](mailto:rotainal@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

This study investigated assessment of psychoactive drug used and abused among street children in Makurdi metropolis in Benue State, Nigeria. The study employed ex-post facto research design. Two hundred (200) participants were randomly drawn from Makurdi metropolis in Benue State through stratified, convenience and simple random sampling methods. Self-esteem scale, social support scale and drug abuse screening scale were used for data collection. Three hypotheses were tested using multiple regression and simple linear regression analyses. The findings showed that self-esteem has no significant influence on psychoactive drug used among street children; however, the statistical values for each finding showed that social support has no significant influence on psychoactive drug used among street children. There was no significant joint influence of self-esteem and social support on substance abuse among street children. Based on these findings, it was concluded that self-esteem has no significant influence on psychoactive drug used among street children. Social support has no significant influence on psychoactive drug used among street children. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that parents and guardians should help children to identify and value themselves so as to boost their self-esteem. Parents, government, and NGOs should give support to children in order to encourage them by quitting drugs abuse. Children engaged in drug use are also encouraged to go for rehabilitation for proper treatment.

**Keywords:** Influence, Self-esteem, Social Support, Drug Abuse and Street Children

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### Introduction

Many youths today failed to discover their purpose as a person therefore found themselves in the street engage with so many activities. Some of these activities have changed their attitudes and personalities. Street can influence youths in so many ways as result of influence of peer-pressure. Many youths are not what they should be today because of the influence of peer-pressure in the street. So many things happen in the street and the chief of these are the uses and abuses of psychoactive drugs. The use and abuse of these drugs has both psychological and social influences.

The use of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and other psychoactive substances constitutes one of most important public health problems among youth worldwide (Oshodi et al., 2010). WHO (2023) in recent studies in African countries have shown that the phenomenon of drug use is also

common in this continent and is becoming one of the most disturbing health-related problems among street children (Igwe et al., 2009). Studies have shown that there is an increasing incidence in the use and a decreasing age of onset of these substances (Fatoye & Morakinyo, 2002). Most street boys begin their use of drugs with alcohol and cigarettes and later progress to more dangerous substances such as cannabis and codeine (Abiodun et al., 2010).

A psychoactive drug is a chemical substance that changes brain function and results in alterations in perception, mood, consciousness, cognition, or behavior (Lovett & Richard 2005). These substances may be used medically; recreationally; to purposefully improve performance or alter one's consciousness; as entheogens; for ritual, spiritual, or shamanic purposes; or for research (Ojo et al., 2009). Some categories of psychoactive drugs, which have therapeutic value, are prescribed by physicians and other healthcare practitioners. Examples include anesthetics, analgesics, anticonvulsant and antiparkinsonian drugs as well as medications used to treat neuropsychiatric disorders, such as antidepressants, anxiolytics, antipsychotics, and stimulant medications (Maurice et al., 2015). Some psychoactive substances may be used in the detoxification and rehabilitation programs for persons dependent on or addicted to other psychoactive drugs (Lovett & Richard 2005 & Jenna, 2023). Psychoactive drug use can be traced to prehistory. There is archaeological evidence of the use of psychoactive substances (mostly plants) dating back at least 10,000 years, and historical evidence of cultural use over the past 5,000 years (Merlin, 2003). The chewing of coca leaves, for example, dates back over 8,000 years ago in Peruvian society (National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 2012). The reason for their use and abuse may be because of how they perceive themselves or and lack of support from others.

Self-esteem reflects a person's overall subjective emotional evaluation of his or her own worth. It is a judgment of oneself as well as an attitude toward the self. Self-esteem encompasses beliefs about oneself as well as emotional states, such as triumph, despair, pride, and shame, (Hewitt & John, 2009). Smith and Mackie (2007), Orth, (2018) defined it by saying self-concept is what people think about the self; self-esteem is the positive or negative evaluations of the self, as in how we feel about it. Self-esteem is an individual's sense of his or her value or worth, or the extent to which a person values, approves of, appreciates, prizes, or likes himself or herself (Baumeister et al., 2005). It is generally considered to be the evaluative component of the self-concept, a broader representation of the self that includes cognitive and behavioral aspects as well as evaluative or affective ones.

Social support is the perception and actuality that one is cared for, has assistance available from other people, and that one is part of a supportive social network. These supportive resources can be emotional, tangible, informational or companionship and intangible (Bolger & Amarel, 2007). Social support can be measured as the perception that one has assistance available, the actual received assistance, or the degree to which a person is integrated in a social network. Support can come from many sources, such as family, friends, pets, neighbours, coworkers, organizations, etc. Government provided social support is often referred to as public aid (Taylor et al., 2004 & Kendra, 2023).

Social supports have different patterns of correlations with health, personality, and personal relationships (Gurung, 2006). For example, perceived support is consistently linked to better mental health whereas received support and social integration are not (Gurung, 2006). In fact, research indicates that perceived social support that is untapped can be more effective and beneficial than utilized social support (Taylor et al., 2004). Some have suggested that invisible support, a form of support where the person has support without his or her awareness, may be the most beneficial (Bolger & Amarel, 2007). Yet, there is no universally agreed upon definition of social support among researchers in the field, but these distinctions are all key in understanding what exactly researchers are examining in studies (Bolger & Amarel, 2007 & PHC, 2017).

### **Statement of the Problem**

A nation that fails to recognize the usefulness of her younger generation can be likened to a woman with everything yet begging to survive. Children are the future workforce of every nation, but when they are not in a normal state, their workforce nature becomes jeopardized. Psychoactive drugs problem is one of the issues Benue State Street children are facing. It has affected their daily functioning and their mental process. Most street children are what they are today because of the problem of psychoactive drugs. Many youths today have turned to criminality (Akpa et al., 2019).

Psychoactive substance use poses a threat to the health, social and economic fabric of families, communities, and nations. Adolescence is a time of experimentation and risk-taking, and the initiation of substance use often begins during this period. The consequences of drug use are often multifaceted. This habit not only affects health, education, and occupational career but also incurs a huge financial and social burden to society. According to the World Health Organization substance abuse is persistent or sporadic drug use inconsistent with or unrelated to acceptable medical practice. Today, there is no part of the world that is free from the curse of drug trafficking and drug addiction. All over the world, millions of people with drug addiction are leading miserable lives between life and death. Makurdi street children too are caught in this vicious circle of drug abuse, and the numbers of drug addicts among these children are increasing day by day.

Drug abuse has created a detrimental impact on society. It has led to an increase in the crime rate. Individuals with addiction resort to crime to pay for their drugs. Drugs remove inhibition and impair judgment egging one to commit offenses. The incidence of eve-teasing, group clashes, assault, and impulsive murders increases with drug abuse. A significantly higher proportion of substance users were associated with predisposing factors such as joint family, parental abuse status, working status, and illiteracy/school-drop out among Makurdi street children. Much research has been conducted on drug used and abuse but none have being conducted among street children in Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria, therefore making this research to fill a gap in literature and to add to knowledge.

## Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to:

- i. Assess the influence of self-esteem on psychoactive drug use among street children in Makurdi metropolis.
- ii. Examine the influence of social support on psychoactive drug use among street children in Makurdi metropolis.
- iii. Investigate the joint influence of self-esteem and social support on psychoactive drug use among street children in Makurdi metropolis.

## Hypotheses

- i. Self-esteem will significantly predict psychoactive drug use among street children in Makurdi metropolis.
- ii. Social support will significantly predict psychoactive drug use among street children in Makurdi metropolis.
- iii. Self-esteem and social support will significantly and jointly influence psychoactive drug use among street children in Makurdi metropolis.

## Methodology

Ex-post factor research design was employed in order to determine the influence of self-esteem and social support on drug abuse among street children. An ex-post factor research design was used because of its appropriateness when attempting to determine causes, effects between events that have already occurred; that the causes are studied after they presumably have exerted their effects or influence on another/other variables. Since the researcher intends to use the results of the study for counselling, placement and improvement of educational achievement, the researcher used ex-post factor research design. The area of this study is Markudi Metropolis of Benue State. Markudi has an area of about 34, 059 km<sup>2</sup> kilometre and a population of 300, 377 (National Population Census) (NPC, 2006). The River Benue is a major driver of economic, agricultural and environmental significance in the city as it supplies the bulk of water use by the people of Markudi and its environs for different activities depending on its points of contact.

The populations for this study were strictly street children in Makurdi Metropolis in Benue State. The study involved 200 street children, 142 male which is 71 % and female 57 which is 29 %. The participants were asked to fill in their biodata and to respond to the option that best fit them. The study used three sets of Instruments for data collections. The instruments are (1) Self-Esteem Scale, (2) Socio Support Scale and (3) Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Scale (ASSIST).

Self Esteem Scale by Rosenberg (1965) is a 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is believed to be multi-dimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Items 2, 5, 6, 8, 9 are reverse scored. Give “Strongly Disagree” 1 point, “Disagree” 2 points, “Agree” 3 points, and “Strongly Agree” 4 points. Sum scores for all ten items. Keep scores on a continuous scale. Higher scores indicate higher self-esteem.



The self-esteem scale is a standardized scale developed is a standardized scale of measurement. This scale has both direct and indirect scoring system and has the following: Disagree strongly= 1, Disagree= 2, Neither = 3, Agree = 4, Strongly Agree=5.

Socio Support Scale is a standardized scale of measuring tool developed by Zimet, Dahlem and Farley in 1988. The scale was used to assess perceived social support. The instrument is of 12-item with the 7-point Likert response scale. The questionnaire will be score in direct way and have the following score very strongly disagree =1, strongly disagree =2, disagree =3, neither =4, agree =5, strongly agree =6, very strongly disagree =7. The reliability coefficient of the instrument is .93 for friends, .92 for family, and .93 for others.

Alcohol, Smoking and Substance Involvement Scale (ASSIST) is a standardized scale the measure drug involvement and the rate of use. The validity of the revised ASSIST is 0.76 Cronbach alpha ASSIST is score ranging from Never =0 Once Twice =2, Monthly =3, Weekly =4, Daily =6 or Almost Daily =7.

The procedure for the study involved moving from street to street engaging the street children. The participants were asked to fill in the biodata and to respond to the option that best fit them. Out of 252 questionnaires were distributed, 200 questionnaires were returned filled completely. The statistical methods for this study were simple and multiple regressions. The simple regression tested the relationship between self-esteem and psychoactive drug used abuse as well as social support and psychoactive drug use and abuse. Multiple regression was used to determine a statically significance joint relationship between the means in psychoactive drug use and abuse and self-esteem as well as the means in psychoactive drug use and abuse and socio support.

## Results

**Table 1: Regression analysis showing the independent and joint influence of self-esteem and social support on substance abuse among street children**

Variables	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>F</i>	$\beta$	<i>T</i>	<i>sig</i>
Constant	.125	.016	1.544	A	12.878	.000
Self-esteem					.134	.895
Social Support					-1.756	.081

### Dependent Variable: Substance Abuse

The results presented in Table 1 showed that self-esteem has made no significant contribution to substance abuse ( $\beta = .009$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Similarly, there is no significant influence of social support on substance abuse. However, social support made strong contribution ( $-.125$ ,  $p > .05$ ) higher than self-esteem indicating that it made higher of unique contribution to substance abuse when self-esteem is controlled. Finally, the results presented in table 1 above revealed that there was no significant joint influence of self-esteem and social support on substance abuse among street children ( $R = .125$ ,  $R^2 = .016$  ( $F(2, 196) = 1.544$ ,  $p > .05$ ). This means that self-esteem and social support jointly contributed to 1.6% variation in substance abuse among street children. Therefore, hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 have been rejected.

## Discussion of Findings

The findings were discussed according to the tested hypotheses. Hypothesis one stated that self-esteem will predict psychoactive drug use and abuse among youth in Makurdi metropolis. Self-esteem has made no significant contribution to substance abuse in Makurdi Metropolis. The finding showed that street boys that have high self-esteem are not likely to abuse drugs even though they are in the street. But street boys with low self-esteem equally abuse drugs to boost self-esteem. This result could be attributed to lack of self-value and confidence. Some of the street boys that abused these drugs may try to gain the self-value they lack. Some of them may lay all their confidence on the drugs because they lack the self-value. Self-esteem is an important factor in humans' life but when it is not there, the individual can use drugs to boost it which is what the result of this study suggested.

This result is in line with The Mental Health and Counseling Center of the University of Texas (2014) report which showed that low self-esteem can lead to lack of development and/or tendency toward drugs or alcohol consumption. When a person has low self-esteem, they may be more influenced by the world around them and their resulting actions. A person with low self-esteem may have trouble overcoming negative thoughts or feelings and therefore turn to outside experiences or activities to change those negative thoughts into positive ones. Drugs can be one of the outside activities they turn to in a negative situation or state of mind.

This study is also agreed with Smart and Ogborne (1994) result that stated that youths under treatment for drug abuse had lower self-esteem than their counterpart. According to their report, youth with low self-esteem lack confidence in themselves therefore boast their confidence through the use of drugs. A person who has low self-esteem and has a drug or alcohol addiction or is at risk for developing an addiction normally has problems with relationships. Many of these people come from abusive or dysfunctional families.

The second hypothesis which stated that social support will predict psychoactive drug use and abuse is rejected based on the result. There is no significant influence of social support on substance abuse. However, social support made strong negative contribution indicating that it made higher of unique contribution to substance abuse when the other variable is controlled. This means that street boys that have support scored low on substance use and these without support tend to use drugs more. This could be because of coping with their situation that lack support. From the result, it showed that street boys that have social support have low tendency to abuse drugs compare to the children without social support.

This study is in line with the work of Antover and Tuliao (2011) research that compared the structural and functional social support of Filipino adults with substance use disorder. Results suggest that the lower social support had a significantly high influence on drug use. Their result also indicated that Heavy marijuana and tobacco users reported lower family and friend social support than light users, while heavy alcohol users reported higher friend social support than light users. Young adolescents reported using marijuana at an earlier age than young old adolescents.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings it was concluded that:

- i. Self-esteem has no contribution on psychoactive drugs use among street children in Makurdi Metropolis in Benue State.
- ii. Social support has negative influence on psychoactive drugs use and abuse among street children in Makurdi Metropolis.
- iii. There was no significant joint influence of self-esteem and social support on substance abuse among streets children

## Recommendations

This study calls attention for both Governmental and NGOs on the importance of self-esteem and social support on substance abuse among street children and how they can be help. This study has the following recommendation for psychological wellbeing since self-esteem and interpersonal communication are considered to improve it.

- i. Parents, government, and NGOs should support children to help them to stay away from drugs.
- ii. Therapist should help street boys with special techniques that will help eliminating low self-esteem from them. Techniques such as exercises, and sensate focus techniques are very effective in helping street boys work through their problems because in many cases of use of psychoactive drugs are due to low self-esteem.

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## **RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PARENTING STYLES, SOCIAL DEFECTS AND ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT OF ADOLESCENTS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN ABIA SOUTH SENATORIAL ZONE, NIGERIA**

**By**

**Chilee Charity ONWUKWE**

g-mail: [chilecarson@gmail.com](mailto:chilecarson@gmail.com); Phone Number: (+234) 0703 846 8465

**&**

**Aminu GARBA**

g-mail: [aminugarba@yahoo.com](mailto:aminugarba@yahoo.com); Phone Number: (+234) 0816 116 6641

Department of Educational Foundations, Nasarawa State University, Keffi

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated the relationship among parenting styles, social defects and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South Senatorial Zone of Abia State, Nigeria. Correlational research design was adopted. The population of the study comprised of 96,913 students and simple random sampling technique was used to select 375 students. The instruments used for data collection in this study are; Parenting Style Scale, Students Social Defects Questionnaire and Academic Achievement Proforma Sheet. The instruments were validated by experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach Alpha which yielded .74 and .68 for the PSS and SSDQ. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to test the hypotheses. The results of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between authoritarian, authoritative parenting style and students' academic achievement. The results further indicated that there was a significant negative relationship between delinquent, aggressive behaviour and students' academic achievement. The study concluded that there is an association between parenting style, social defects and students' achievement. It is recommended that parents should support their children through positive ways to help develop their academic and social life.

**Keywords:** Relationship, Parenting Style, Social Defects, and Academic Achievement, Adolescents

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### **Introduction**

The success or failure of a student is measured in terms of academic achievement. It means development of skills in school subjects. Academic Achievement is the criterion for selection, promotion or recognition in various walks of life. Poonam and Rohtash (2017) observed that "academic achievement as the extent to which a learner is profiting from instructions in a given area of learning i.e., achievement is reflected by the extent to which skill or knowledge has been imparted to him". Amatobi and Amatobi (2020) analyzed that a major problem facing Nigerian secondary education is the poor performance of students in core subjects, especially Mathematics and English Language. They noted that without a credit in Mathematics and English Language the student cannot pursue any course of study at institutions of higher level in Nigeria. Academic achievement is one of the most important goals of education. Academic achievement refers to what and how an individual has learnt quantitatively after a period of instruction given. The teaching and learning process that are going in every institution focus on

the academic achievement of the students. In a general sense, academic achievement is the current level of a student's learning. Academic achievement itself is the amount of knowledge derived from learning by the learner. Academic achievement is commonly measured with examinations that assess important procedural knowledge such as skills, and declarative knowledge such as facts which student have learnt (Kpolovie et al., 2014).

Parenting styles play a significant role in children and adolescent adjustment and have been related to different aspects of their psycho-social, emotional, cognitive and academic competences. Parsasirat et al. (2013) also emphasized that the kind of parenting style adopted by parents has monumental impact on children's attitude, academic achievement and career choice. Different parenting styles produce different characteristic traits of children including those demonstrated at school (Walker, 2015). Parents through their parenting styles have crucial effects on the academic achievement of their children at different levels of education. To be successful in their higher education and life, secondary school students and young adults need trusting, supporting, and caring relationships with their families, especially with their parents (Ahmadu et al., 2019). Hong et al. (2015) posited that parenting styles are important to adolescents' mental development. Parenting styles play an essential role on the better and effective academic achievement of students notwithstanding of the level of education of the students. Ahmadu, et al. (2019) maintained that the family (parents) has direct role in the social and academic life of students and young children. Parents through their parenting styles have crucial effects on the academic achievement of their children at different levels of education. Family support the child can obtain from their parents is an important protection throughout their lives, particularly during their transition to university.

Authoritative parents encourage their children to be independent while they keep controlling the actions of their children. Authoritative parenting style are demanding, responsive and are open to communication and actively participate in the child's life showing trust and acceptance, encouraging their children to be autonomous. Talil and Abrhiem (2014) observed that authoritative parents are high in demandingness and high in responsiveness, exhibiting more supportive than harsh behaviours. When children grow and develop, there is the possibility to be independent. Authoritative parenting is a more flexible style of parenting in which parents permit their children considerable freedom, but are careful to provide reasons for the restrictions they impose and will ensure that the children follow these laid down procedures. Authoritative parents are responsive to their children's needs and ideas and will often seek their children's views in family deliberations and decisions. According to Kosterelioglu (2018) authoritative parents are very much aware of the needs of their children and are equally sensibility to their immediate needs. Baumrind (1991) avers that, "unlike any other pattern, authoritative upbringing....consistently generated competence and deterred problem behavior". They are warmer, more accepting, and more helpful styles of parenting. Authoritative parenting has been found to be an essential factor in an adolescent's life in comparison with the other parenting styles. It has been seen as the most effective in enhancing personal and social responsibilities in adolescents, without constraining their newly formed autonomy and individuality.



The authoritarian parents shape, control, and evaluate the behaviour and attitudes of the child in accordance with a set standard of conduct, usually an absolute standard, theologically motivated and formulated by a higher authority. According to Baumrind (1991) a pattern of child rearing in which the parents are so much demanding and harsh is known to be authoritarian parenting. Authoritarian parents are very strict and they make their offspring to obey each and every demand placed on them without any relaxation, no matter what the circumstances are present. She believes in keeping the child in his place, in restricting his autonomy, and in assigning household responsibilities in order to inculcate respect for work. Parents regard the preservation of order and traditional structure as a highly valued end in itself. Parents do not encourage verbal give and take, believing that the child should accept her word for what is right. A lot of rigid demands are placed on the children by such harsh parents, strict rules are taught and compliance is claimed without any relaxation according to the children's feasibility. Very harsh policies are implemented on the children without any emotional involvement with them, thus compelling them to obey in each circumstance. Myers and Scott (2020) also noted the dominating nature of authoritarian parenting practices demands children to strictly follow rules and regulations as the basis of their decisions. In the study, authoritarian parenting contributed significantly to the students' academic performance (38%), but in a negative way.

Social defects are negative psychological variable that affects students' social life and achievement. Some of the dimensions of Social defects include delinquency, aggression and truancy, peer pressure, withdrawn behaviour, etc. The study investigated delinquent behaviour and aggression, which poses a real threat to the physical and social survival of an individual within certain social environments or collective settings. According to Goode (2016), delinquent behaviour has a destructive or self-destructive orientation characterized by persistence and repetition. Delinquent behaviour is also defined by unorthodox traits that do not conform to officially established generally accepted social norms. Delinquent behaviour causes negative evaluations for examples, crimes, to be committed by people. The causes of the delinquent behaviour in teenagers stem from lack of supervision, lack of attention from relatives, fear of punishment, dreaminess, the desire to eliminate the guardianship of caregivers or parents, ill-treatment by comrades, and in an unmotivated thrust to change the status quo.

Delinquent are marked by violation of social norms, moral norms, cultural values, the process of assimilation, and in the reproduction of values and norms. It may stem from a single action by an individual that does not meet set out social norms. Idris (2016) posited that delinquent behaviour is any behaviour exhibited by members of a group or society which is at variance with established rules of the group or society. Delinquent behaviour short chains the purpose of education by impacting negatively on teaching and learning in school (Nabiswa, Misigo, Makhanu, 2016). Delinquent behaviour can be regarded as a choice between socially acceptable and deviant ways of achieving set goals.

Aggression has gained an international credit due to its increasing importance (Abasiubong et al., 2011) and it is widely recognized in education field since the existing literature discusses its wide use during middle childhood and adolescence. Aggression has always been an important

issue of mankind. Aggression is defined as behaviour intended to cause harm or pain. Nowadays the aggressive behaviour has become an issue of vital importance and a major concern in most societies. The whole world seems to be under the pressure of aggressive acts of various forms. Violence can be seen in most parts of the world and it is undoubtedly disturbing the world's peace and harmony. Aggressive behaviour leads to disturbances in family relations and it causes difficulties in achieving the educational achievements.

Parenting style and psychological traits plays an important role in the educational attainment of adolescents. Moreover, parenting forms the basis of a family environment because without parental education, it was not possible for parents to fulfill their roles and duties in the family and the society. In Nigeria today, adolescents' exhibit behaviours that do not conform to the acceptable moral norms in our society. The researcher has observed the unpleasant behaviours that emanated from students in Abia state which causes burden to parents, school administrators/teachers and the society. Poor academic performance of students has attracted attention of educationists, researchers, curriculum planners, educational policymakers and government at all levels. Most of the problems leading to students' poor academic performance in school emanate from social defects and parenting style. Research has shown that parenting style and social defects is among the factors that affects adolescent's individual life and academic achievement. In essence, those studies that have been conducted are not comprehensive enough to illuminate strong factors affecting students' academic achievement as they focused on few factors. This research is therefore aimed at investigating the relationship between parenting styles, social defects and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South Senatorial Zone of Abia State, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between parenting styles and social defects on academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. The study sought to:

1. Determine the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.
2. Investigate the relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.
3. Find out the relationship between delinquent behaviour and academic achievement of the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.
4. Determine the relationship between aggressive behaviour and academic achievement of the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.

### **Hypotheses**

To facilitate the investigation, the following hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 levels of significance:

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.

**HO<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between delinquent behaviour and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.

**HO<sub>4</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between aggressive behaviour and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.

### **Methodology**

A correlational research design was adopted in this study. A correlational research is concerned about the relationship or association between two or more variables. The main emphasis in a correlational study is to discover or establish the existence of a relationship or association between two or more aspects of a situation (Kothari, 2004; Ranjit, 2011; & Anikweze, 2013). The population of the study comprised of 96,913 adolescent students in public secondary schools in Abia South Senatorial zone of Abia state. The sample size is 375 students selected using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table of specification for determining sample size from a given population. The sample of the study was drawn from SS 2 students in the Senior Secondary Schools in Abia State. A multi-stage sampling procedure was employed. The first stage was the use of cluster sampling procedure to select the schools from the already existing senatorial zones in Abia state (Abia North, Abia South and Abia West) as illustrated in Table 1.

The second stage was the use of proportionate sampling procedure to select the Local Government Areas from the senatorial zones. The study further employed the use of simple random sampling to select participants from SS2 adolescents class using the hat and draw method of selection. Simple random sampling procedure was further used to select 20 students from each of the sampled schools. The use of balloting was made possible as respondents were asked to pick from the ballot box. Yes and No option was written out and dropped in the box for participants to pick and all those who picked YES were used for the study. The essence was to give the participants equal chance of participation.

**Table 1: Sampling Frame of Senior Secondary Schools in Abia South Senatorial Zone, Nigeria**

<b>Abia South LGA</b>	<b>Number of Schools</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Sampled Schools</b>	<b>Sampled Students</b>
Aba North	7	17,080	3	45
Aba South	7	18,660	3	45
Obingwa	14	12,920	7	105
Osisioma	12	11,835	6	90
Ugwunagbo	5	11,803	2	30
Ukwa East	7	10,925	3	45
Ukwa West	3	13,690	1	15
		<b>96,913</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>375</b>

**Source: Field Survey, 2023**

Three instruments used to obtain information from the respondents were Parenting Style Scale (PSS), Students Social Defects Questionnaire (SSDQ) and Academic Achievement Proforma Sheet. The Parenting Style Scale (PSS) was constructed to measure students understanding and level of parenting style. The indices of parenting style used in this study are Authoritarian, Authoritative and Permissive parenting style. The instrument consists of 16 items bothering on influences of parenting style on Students' academic achievement and is structured into a four-point Likert scale and scoring as Strongly Agreed (SA) = 4, Agreed (A) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1. Students Social Defects Questionnaire (SSDQ) was constructed to measure students' Delinquent Behaviour and Aggressive Behaviour. The instrument consists of 14 items. The response set for the instrument is structured on a modified 4-point Likert scale type as Never = 1, Sometimes = 2, Often = 3, and Almost Always = 4. The Academic Achievement Proforma Sheet was developed by the researcher and was used to obtain Mathematics and English Language scores of students from each of the school. The researcher with the help of the subject teachers served as research assistance in the administration of the Proforma sheet. The Mathematics and English Language teachers were instructed on how to record the scores of the students using the 2<sup>nd</sup> term achievement of SS 2 students across the Senior Secondary Schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria.

The instruments were validated by two experts in the Department of Educational Foundations and Psychology. The experts in their respective views rated the instruments to determine their logical validity index using construct and face validity measures. Their result gave an index of 0.75 for Students Social Defects Questionnaire (SSDQ), 0.76 for the Parenting Style Scale (PSS) and 0.82 for the Academic Achievement Proforma Sheet. In order to determine the reliability of the instruments, a pilot test was carried out on 50 respondents in Government Senior Secondary School within Abia North which is part of the study but not part of the sample frame. Cronbach's Alpha method was used to determine the reliability coefficient and internal consistency, yielded an index of 0.68 for Students Social Defects Questionnaire (SSDQ) and 0.74 was obtained for the Parenting Style Scale. The instrument was administered to the respondents with the help of the classroom and subject teachers. Data collected was

analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics (Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, mean, standard deviation) to answer the research questions, while the formulated hypotheses was tested with the use of Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMCC) to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. The hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance, using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for data analysis.

## Results

**Hypothesis 1 (HO<sub>1</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone.

**Table 2: Correlation Coefficient between Authoritarian Parenting Style and Academic Achievement of Adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Abia South senatorial zone**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.D	df	r	P-Value
Authoritarian PS	375	32.63	4.55	37	.704	.036
Academic Achievement	375	51.06	6.52	3		

**Level of significance Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) < 0.05 shows significant relationship**

Table 2 revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. The result which is given as: N = 375, r = .704, (p-value = .036). The formulated hypothesis was therefore rejected as p-value (.036) is less than .05 levels of significance.

**Hypothesis 2 (HO<sub>2</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria.

**Table 3: Correlation Coefficient between Authoritative Parenting Style and Academic Achievement of Adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Abia South senatorial zone**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Std.D	df	R	P-Value
Authoritative PS*	375	30.8	4.5	373	.754	.034
Academic Achievement	375	4	2			
		51.0	6.5			
		6	2			

**Level of significance Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) < 0.05 shows significant relationship**

Table 3 revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. The result shows a positive relationship with N = 375, r = .754,

(p-value = .034). The formulated hypothesis was therefore rejected as p-value (.034) is less than .05 levels of significance.

**Hypothesis 3 (HO<sub>3</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between delinquent behaviour and academic achievement of the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.

**Table 4: Correlation Coefficient between Delinquent Behaviour and Academic Achievement of Adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Abia South senatorial zone**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Std	df	r	P-Value
Delinquent Behaviour*	375	38.42	4.27	373	-.054	.428
Academic Achievement	375	51.06	6.52			

**Level of significance Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) < 0.05 shows significant relationship**

Table 4 revealed that there is no significant relationship between delinquent behaviour and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. The result which shows a negative relationship with  $N = 375$ ,  $r = -.054$ , (p-value = .428). The formulated hypothesis was therefore accepted as p-value (.428) is greater than .05 levels of significance.

**Hypothesis 4 (HO<sub>4</sub>):** There is no significant relationship between aggressive behaviour and academic achievement of the adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South.

**Table 5: Correlation Coefficient between Aggressive Behaviour and Academic Achievement of Adolescents in Senior Secondary Schools in Abia South senatorial zone**

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Std	df	r	P-Value
Aggressive Behaviour*	375	32.26	4.57	373	-.065	.285
Academic Achievement	375	51.06	6.52			

**Level of significance Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) < 0.05 shows significant relationship**

Table 5 revealed that there is no significant relationship between aggressive behaviour and academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. The result shows a negative significant relationship with  $N = 375$ ,  $r = -.065$ , (p-value = .285). The formulated hypothesis was therefore accepted as p-value (.285) is greater than .05 levels of significance.

### Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that there is a significant positive influence of authoritarian parenting style on academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial



zone, Nigeria. This is in line with Ishola and Taiwo (2015) whose study revealed that there was a significant influence between authoritative parenting style and academic performance of male students in social studies, while there was no significant relationship between authoritative parenting style and academic performance of female students in social studies. This is also supported by Obi and Okeke (2014); and Odongo, Aloka & Raburu (2016) who found out that authoritarian and authoritative parenting style made significant contribution to students' academic achievement.

Findings from the study further revealed that there is a significant positive influence of authoritative parenting style on academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. This finding of the study is supported by Baidoo-Anu, Abiauw and Kaedebi-Donkor (2019) revealed that parenting styles correlate high with academic achievement and as such parenting styles have relationship with the academic achievement of students. Asrat (2015) research results revealed that out of the four specific parenting styles, the authoritative style has the medium significant correlation with academic achievement. The authoritarian style also has a negative significant relationship with achievement. However, there is no significant relationship between the neglectful parenting styles and achievement. More so, study by Kosterelioglu (2018) further shows that democratic and overprotective parenting styles were found to have the strongest and the most significant impact on learning approach orientation whereas overprotective and permissive parenting styles had the most significant impact on learning avoidance orientation.

Result of the study on hypothesis three revealed that there is a significant negative relationship between delinquent behaviour and academic achievement of secondary school students in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. This is corroborated by Ayinde and Olasehinde-Williams (2020) findings of the study were that: the most prevalent deviant behaviour among deviant pupils was coming late to school. Study by Shireen and Sufiana (2015) further revealed that boys use abusive and foul language and involve in destructive activities as compare to girls who were rarely observed in abusive language or physical fight.

Findings from the study on hypothesis four indicated that there is a significant negative influence of aggressive behaviour on the academic achievement of secondary school students in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria. This is supported by Preeti and Saket (2014) whose study revealed that there is negative correlation between academic achievement and aggression of school students. Academic achievement of boys and girls was found to have negative correlation with aggression. Orhan (2013) results revealed that aggression had significant negative effects on students' current academic achievement (GPA) and cumulative academic achievement score (CGPA).

## Conclusions

The findings of this study justify the importance of parenting styles, social defects and academic achievement of senior secondary school students. The study concludes that there is a significant positive relationship between parenting styles (authoritative and authoritarian)

and social defects (delinquent behaviour and aggressive behaviour) on academic achievement of adolescents in senior secondary schools in Abia South senatorial zone, Nigeria.

### Recommendations

The study recommends that authoritarian and authoritative parents should endeavour to continually support their children in their education and other aspect of life. Parents should also seek for positive ways to help develop their children's academic and social life. Parents, guidance, teachers, and other care givers should pay more attention to the social defects of well being of adolescents/students, and also ensure that they display good behaviour in the society.

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## LEARNERS' INVOLVEMENT AS A CORRELATE OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN BASIC LITERACY EDUCATION CENTRES IN ONDO STATE, NIGERIA

**Olawale SESAN O. (PhD)**

&

**Prof M. O. OYITSO**

Department of Adult and Non-Formal Education, Faculty of Education  
University of Benin, Benin City  
sesan.olawale@uniben.edu

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### Abstract

The study investigated learners' involvement as correlate of their academic achievement in Basic Literacy Education Centres in Ondo State. The study was guided by two research questions and one hypothesis which was tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The correlation survey research design was adopted in line with the stated purpose of the study. The population of the study comprised of 1,346 adult learners and 90 literacy facilitators in the 90 government-owned Basic Literacy Education Centres in Ondo State, Nigeria. The multi-stage sampling procedure involving the stratified, simple random and cluster sampling techniques were used to select a total of 708 adult learners from 45 government-owned Basic Literacy Education Centres in Ondo State as a sample of the study. The research instruments used were the Adult Learners Involvement Questionnaire (ALIQ) and the Adult Learners Achievement Test (ALAT). Face validity of the instruments was assured by the supervisors and other experts in the areas of Literacy Education, Educational Management and Educational Evaluation. The ALAT was tested for reliability using the Split half reliability technique; a coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. The ALIQ was tested for reliability using the Cronbach Alpha reliability technique and a coefficient of 0.83 was obtained. The data collected for the study were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The research questions were answered using frequency count, percentages and mean statistics while the hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression. The major finding of the study revealed that Learners' involvement correlates their academic achievement. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that learners' involvement is a correlate to adult learners' achievement in Basic Literacy Education in Ondo State. It was, therefore, recommended that Centre Based Management Committee should ensure that the facilitators use the appropriate methodologies that will boost the involvement of learners in the teaching and learning process.

**Keywords:** Learners' involvement, Academic Achievement, Basic Literacy Centres

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### Introduction

Over the years, adult learning as an integral part of the education system has been recognized as a tool for societal development. As a specialized education programme, it is targeted at the individual adult, who seeks knowledge either as a medium of furthering academic endeavour or starting afresh. However, the significance of citizens' ability to read and write has made literacy one of the necessities of contemporary civilization and a major component of the entire adult education programme in Nigeria. Though basic literacy alone cannot be said to be a sufficient guarantee for development, nevertheless, it is a major component required for the

development of any nation. Literacy is an integral aspect of the right to education in Nigeria, and it is a necessity for achieving personal, social, economic, and political empowerment. It is a critical means of enhancing people's abilities to deal with the ever-changing challenges and complexities of life, culture, economy, and society.

The recognition of the relevance of literacy to development over the years has led to the acknowledgment of basic literacy as the focus of adult education in Nigeria and many other less-developed countries. The high rate of illiteracy which is detrimental to societal development has been an issue of concern to the Nigerian government as well as international bodies. This has spurred the enunciation of numerous efforts by different government administrations aimed at reducing the scourge of illiteracy and its associated problems in a nation. Basic literacy was described by NMEC (2017: 10) in its policy guidelines for Mass literacy, Adult and Non-Formal Education ‘‘as a learning process designed to provide reading, writing and numeracy for youth and adults hindered or not opportune for formal school’’. The policy further revealed that Basic Literacy is equivalent to primary 1-3 of the formal education system and usually runs for 6-15 months.

In Ondo State which is the area under study, the state government through the Agency for Adult and Non-Formal Education established basic literacy centres, spreading across the local government areas of the state in a bid to promote access to education for all. Preliminary investigation revealed that there are ninety (90) government-owned basic literacy centres in Ondo State, with five in each Local Government Area. Admittance to literacy was provided through the established basic literacy centres where illiterate adults and youths are encouraged to enlist within their respective local government areas and communities. Aside from the establishment of the centres, adult education officers in different categories are recruited and deployed to mobilize illiterate adults for registration for basic literacy programmes and organize the entire learning system.

The Federal Ministry of Education (2018) cited in Olawale (2023) asserted that while the quest for literacy is being stressed by different states government administrations, the functionalities and sustainability of established basic literacy centres are in doubt and are evident in the high drop-out rates in literacy education programmes and high regression rates into illiteracy which has become a recurrent decimal. In a survey by the National Commission for Mass Literacy, Adult and Non-formal Education (NMEC) (2019), it was found that 35 per cent of the nation’s adult population was illiterate. Considering the huge sum of money the nation has put into basic literacy education centres and various mass literacy programmes, it is reprehensible that Nigeria as a nation still has such a high number of illiterates in this 21st century. For instance, the 2021 budget appropriation for NMEC stood at two billion, one hundred and fifty-five million, two hundred and forty-two thousand, nine hundred and ninety-three naira (N2,155,242,993); which is considered huge in relation to the present economic realities of the nation.

In Ondo State, the National Bureau of Statistics (2021) revealed that the level of literacy rate stands at 75.6% which is still far from the internationally recommended benchmark of 99.9%



literacy rate despite the existence of basic literacy education programmes in almost all communities in the State. The academic achievement of the adult client enrolled in the programme has not been satisfactory as many either relapse to illiteracy or do not complete the programme, and many failed to acquire the skills of literacy which they have come for in the programme.

The fundamental aim of teaching and learning process in basic literacy education centres is to acquire the desirable ability of reading and writing, communicate effectively and perform other simple tasks aided by the skills acquired. Basic literacy centres instituted by government and private bodies are aimed at reducing the level of illiteracy in the society through the provision of needed learning content. To this end, the extent to which this goal is achieved is a measure of the adult learners' academic achievement.

Aibuinuomo (2018) described academic achievement, which is often used interchangeably with learning performance is described as the extent to which the adult learners in basic literacy education programme has acquired the skills of reading, writing and numeracy. It can also be described as the outcome of the educational process which indicates the degree to which the adult learners, the facilitator, the curricular, and indeed the basic literacy programmes entirely have achieved the predetermined goals. Alkahli (2016) and Olawale et al. (2022) posited in their studies on predictors of learning performance of adult learners in basic literacy programmes in Sokoto State and Edo State revealed that learning performance of adult learners in an achievement test conducted in their studies were average and high respectively with several factors contributing to this outcome, one of which the involvement or participation of learners in the learning process is considered probable among these several factors.

The involvement of learners in the teaching and learning processes in basic literacy classes is also crucial to their academic achievement. No matter the effort of the facilitator, without the conscious involvement of adult learners in the teaching and learning process, academic achievement could be jeopardized. In this context, learner involvement is defined as an individual's ability to take care of his or her learning, which entails being responsible for various parts of learning; such as asking questions, completing a task, interacting with classmates and facilitators, goal-setting, self-monitoring, and taking actions to participate in the entire learning process. Phillips (2018) cited in Olawale (2023) defined it simply as the act of consciously participating in all teaching activities

Learners who are involved in all parts of teaching and learning learn more. Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) stated that adult learners are self-directed individuals and, thus ever willing to participate in the learning process in order to achieve the purpose for which they enrolled in the programme. Consequently, Ndiewo, Aloka, and Raburu (2016) revealed that a strong relationship exist between learner participation and achievement. Adelman (2006); Iam-On & Boongoen, (2015), further revealed that while this assertion above is valid, the ability of learners' involvement to predict outcomes depends on the individual adult learners and group. Involved learners usually devote their energy to studying, engage in learning activities, and

interact well with other members of the learning centre. Astin (2009) supported the notion that learners who participated actively in classroom discussion were more satisfied with the learning process. High academic achievement should occur on the part of the adult learners when both the facilitator and learner interact and actively participate in the learning activities. Learner's involvement should enhance learners' retention in the learning process and should have a positive impact on persistence and healthy competition (Azurdee, 2010). To investigate empirically the nexus among the variables as explained, this study seeks to examine adult learners' involvement as a correlate of their academic achievement in basic literacy centres in Ondo State, Nigeria.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study aims to examine the learners' involvement as a correlate of their achievements in basic literacy education centres in Ondo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the objectives are:

1. To ascertain the level of involvement of learners in the learning process in basic literacy education centres in Ondo State.
2. To determine the level of adult learners' achievement in Basic Literacy Education Centres in Ondo State.
3. To determine if Learners' involvement does correlate with their academic achievement in basic literacy education centres in Ondo State.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the level of learners' involvement in Basic Literacy Education Centres in Ondo State?
2. What is the level of adult learners' achievement in Basic Literacy Education Centres in Ondo State?

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis was tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

HO<sub>1</sub> Learners' involvement does not significantly correlate with their academic achievement in basic literacy education centres in Ondo State.

### **Methodology**

The study employed the Correlation Survey Research Design in view of the nature of the variables under investigation and the objectives intended. The design shows the statistical association, prediction as well as the relationship among the variables; The population of this study comprised of one thousand three hundred and forty six (1346) adult learners in all the ninety (90) government-owned Basic Literacy Centres in Ondo State (Source: Ondo State ANFE, 2021). The sample size for this study consisted of a total of seven hundred and eight (708) adult learners selected from the forty-five (45) basic literacy centres across nine (9) selected local governments' areas in Ondo State. The multi-stage sampling procedure was used in selecting the sample as explained below.

**Stage 1:** The Stratified Sampling Technique was adopted to divide the population into Senatorial District of Ondo-North, Ondo South and Ondo Central.

**Stage2:** From each of the three strata (three (03) Senatorial Districts of the State) the simple random sampling technique using the balloting method was used to select three (03) local government areas totalling nine (09) local governments areas sampled for the study.

**Stage 3:** From the selected nine (09) local government areas, all the five (5) Government-owned Basic Literacy Centre in each Local Government Area totalling forty-five (45) Centres were adopted for the study. This means that fifty percent (50%) of the available basic literacy education centres in the state was used for the study. This was done using the cluster sampling technique.

**Stage 4:** Finally, from the forty-five (45) literacy centres in the sampled nine local government areas, seven hundred and eight (708) adult learners in the Basic Literacy Education Centres in the 2021/22 academic year were selected for the study through the cluster sampling technique.

Two research instruments, namely Adult Learners' Involvement Questionnaire (ALIQ and Adult Learner Achievement Test (ALAT)) were used to collect relevant data for the study. The Adult Learners' Involvement Questionnaire (ALIQ) was designed by the researcher. It was a close-ended questionnaire designed on a five-point Likert type scale (Very High, High, Moderate, Low and Very Low) which measured the extent to which learners participate in the learning activities of the basic literacy centre. The questionnaire was divided into two sections A and B. The section A sought for the demographic data of the corresponding adult learners while section B items were meant to determine the level of learners' involvement in classroom teaching and learning process. The ALAT was also adapted from the standardized basic Literacy and Numeracy Achievement (LaNA) Test designed by National Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA, Ondo It was a multiple-choice test covering questions to test the basic reading, writing and numeracy abilities of the adult learners. Section A of the Instrument dealt with the respondents' demographic information while section B consisted of 20 items covering the basic reading, writing and numeracy ability of the adult learners. The items selected from the adapted instrument were done in line with the contents of Learning Reading, Writing and Mathematics: English Primer developed NMEC for Basic Literacy education programme. The instruments were face validated using experts' judgment approach. Experts in the area of Adult Education, Educational Management, and Measurement and Evaluation helped in vetting all the instruments to ensure validity. Suggestions made by the three experts were adhered to in producing the final draft for use in the study.

The Cronbach Alpha Reliability Technique was used to conduct the reliability test for ALIQ was conducted using Cronbach Alpha statistics procedure which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.83. The split half reliability technique was used to conduct the reliability test for ALAT and a coefficient of 0.86 was obtained as the reliability index. The instruments were administered by the researcher in conjunction with research assistants. All instruments upon

completion were retrieved for data processing. Out of the 708 prepared ALAT and ALIQ, 685 were completed.

The data collected were analysed using mean statistics, simple percentages, frequency, simple linear and multiple linear regression statistics using the SPSS Version 23. Research questions 1 was answered using mean statistics. To determine the mean decision point for these research questions, the range was calculated as five (highest rating point of instrument) minus 1 (lowest rating point of instrument) divided by five (highest rating point). This was numerically expressed as  $5-1 = 4/5 = 0.80$ . The least value of the scale which was one (1) was then added in order to identify the maximum of the lowest mean decision point. Hence, the mean decision points for these research questions were 1.00 – 1.80 (Very Low); 1.81 – 2.60 (Low); 2.61 – 3.40 (Moderate); 3.41 – 4.20 (High); and 4.21 to 5.00 (Very High).

For Research question 2, the administered test scores were translated to the five regular grading points of A, B, C, D, and E which were allotted 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 points respectively. Similar to research questions 1 and 2, the mean statistics was used for analysis and decision making for the research question. The mean decision points were 1.00 – 1.80 (Very Low); 1.81 – 2.60 (Low); 2.61 – 3.40 (Moderate); 3.41 – 4.20 (High); and 4.21 to 5.00 (Very High)

## Results

**Research Question One:** What is the level of learners' involvement in basic literacy education centres in Ondo State?

The data obtained were analysed and the result is presented in the Table 1:

**Table 1: Mean distribution of Learners' Involvement**

SN	Items	N	Weighted Mean	Mean	Decision
1	Adult learners ask questions during class lessons	685	2532	3.70	High
2	Adult learners contribute to class discussion	685	2522	3.68	High
3	Adult learners are involved class presentation when required	685	2538	3.69	High
4	Adult learners complete their given task	685	2568	3.75	High
5	Adult learners work with one another on task during class lessons	685	2580	3.77	High
6	Adult learners work with one another outside of class to prepare for class activities	685	2598	3.79	High

7	They talk about lessons difficulties with facilitators	685	2532	3.70	High
8	They discuss lessons and other tasks with co-learners	685	2552	3.73	High
9	Adult learners tutor one another on class topics	685	2552	3.73	High
10	Adult learners give attention to learning activities	685	2631	3.84	High
11	Adult learners raise circular issues for discussion in class	685	2642	3.86	High
<b>Grand Mean</b>				<b>3.75</b>	<b>High</b>

**Mean Benchmark:** 1.00 – 1.80 Very Low; 1.81 – 2.60 Low; 2.61 – 3.40 Moderate; 3.41-4.20 High, 4.21–5.00 Very High

The data in Table 1 above showed that all the items raised in respect of this research question on the level of learners' involvement in Basic Literacy Centres have a mean score between 3.60 and 3.86 indicating that respondents were rated high in their learning involvement in the learning centre. This means that adult learners contribute highly to class activities, raise issues for discussion in class, discuss lesson with facilitators and co-leaners, gives maximum attention during lesson. They also, performed highly in completion of task given, working with one another outside class situation and get involved in presentation during class lessons. With a grand mean of 3.75 therefore, it was concluded that the level of learners' involvement in learning process in basic literacy centres is high in line with the set decision rule.

**Research Question Two:** What is the level of adult learners' achievement in basic literacy education centres in Ondo State?

The data obtained were analysed and the result is presented in Table 2:

**Table 2: Distribution of Adult Learners Achievement in Basic Literacy Centres**

Grades	Frequency	%	Mean	Decision
Poor (E)	09	1.3	3.65	High
Fair (D)	47	6.9		
Good (C)	229	33.4		
Very Good (B)	288	42.2		
Excellent (A)	112	16.2		
<b>Total (N)</b>	<b>685</b>	<b>100</b>		

**Mean Benchmark:** 1.00 – 1.80 Very Low; 1.81 – 2.60 Low; 2.61 – 3.40 Moderate; 3.41-4.20 High, 4.21–5.00 Very High

The data on Table 2 showed that 1.3% of sampled respondents' achievement test scores were graded as Poor, 6.9% as Fair, 33.4% scores were graded as Good, 42.2% as Very Good while

16.2% of adult learners' achievement scores were Excellent. With a mean point of 3.64, it was concluded that the level of adult learner achievement is high

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** Learners' involvement does not significantly correlate with their academic achievement in Basic Literacy Education Centres in Ondo State.

**Table 3: Simple Linear Regression analysis of Learners' involvement and academic achievement**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	207.939	1	207.939	444.696	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	319.369	683	.468		
	Total	527.308	684			

R=0.628<sup>a</sup>; R<sup>2</sup>=0.394

a. Dependent Variable: Learners' Achievement

b. Predictor: (Constant), Learners' Involvement

Table 3 showed the simple linear regression statistics on learners' involvement as a correlate of adult learners' achievement in basic literacy centres in Ondo State. The data summarized in the Table showed that  $F=444.696$  and  $p\text{-value}=.000^b$ . Testing at an alpha level of 0.05, the  $p\text{-value}$  (.000) is less than the alpha level (0.05). Consequently, the null hypothesis which states that learners' involvement does not significantly correlate learners' achievement'' was rejected. Hence, Learners' involvement did correlate learners' achievement relatively in basic literacy education centres. Also, the R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.394 means that 39.4% of the total variance in adult learners' achievement can be relatively accounted for by learners' involvement in the learning process. It was thus concluded that learners' involvement relatively correlate their academic achievement in basic literacy education centres in the area under investigation.

## Discussion of Findings

This study examined learners' involvement as correlate of their academic achievement in Basic Literacy Centres in Ondo State. The findings from research question one of the study revealed that the level of learners' involvement in basic literacy education centre under investigation was high. All issues raised in connection with this research question were classified as high. The finding is buttressed by the assertions of Gibbs and Poskitt (2010) who noted that adult learners are self-directed individuals who enroll on a programme out of their own volition and, thus always willing to participate in the learning process in order to achieve the purpose for which they enrolled in the programme. This finding and the corroborating assertions are real facts because the adult learners, unlike children, are mature individuals who are self-directed and motivated toward achieving their set goals. Also, the adult learners enroll in a literacy programmes out of their own freewill either for self fulfilment and need to compete for a particular task; hence the need to participate actively in the process while utilizing the experiences they have acquired outside the learning environment.



The result from the research question two on the level of adult learners' achievement in basic literacy education centres in Ondo State revealed that a majority of the learners scored above average in the adult learners' achievement test administered, indicating that their learning performance is high. This result negates the finding of Alkahli (2016) in his study on facilitators' professional qualities and learning outcomes of adult learners in basic literacy programmes in Sokoto State; the study revealed that learning outcomes of adult learners were average as against high academic achievement obtained in this present study in Ondo State. The justification for this difference could be attributed to the differences in the level of facilitators, the environment in terms of learning culture. In southern part of the country where this present study was conducted, education delivery in general is high when compared with the Northern part of the country where Alkahli conducted his study in 2016. Furthermore, the years' difference in the conduct of the researches may also be attributed to the difference in the findings. Nevertheless, this finding justifies the earlier assertions of this study that adults are people who enter into a programme voluntarily hence, they tend to put their mind in it and achieve the success they desire. The desire to acquire literacy skills on the part of the adult learners, coupled with other external factors and facilitators influence could be adduced as the reason for the direction of this finding.

The finding from the study in the tested hypothesis showed that learner's involvement significantly correlates their academic achievement in basic literacy education centres in the area under investigation. This finding is in line with the assertions of Adelman (2006); Iam-On and Boongoen, (2015) who noted that the link between learner participation and achievement has been established in studies by academics; however, the ability of learners' involvement to predict outcomes varies by individual client and group. Ndiewo, Aloba, and Raburu (2016) in a similar study revealed that a statistical relationship exists between learner involvement and their academic performance. Azurdee (2010) also asserted that when learners get involved in the learning process, they feel better and are more likely to complete it. The author went on to say that learners' involvement in their learning has a favourable impact on their persistence and learning outcomes or achievements.

Lastly, Astin (2009) supported the notion that learners who participated actively in classroom discussion were more satisfied with the learning process. Therefore, it is safe to adduce that learners' active engagement in classroom discussions is crucial for effective learning; it has a significant influence on the future success of education and the personal development of learners. The concurrency of this finding and the corroborating views presented could be attributed to the natural belief that self-involvement in any activity plays a significant role in goal attainment. Irrespective of the location or setting, when an individual is committed to a course of action particularly a learning oriented action and gets involved, goal attainment becomes guaranteed. Nevertheless, the view of Iam-On & Boongoen, (2015) that ability of learners' involvement to predict academic achievement may differ by individual client and group remain valid. This is because every learner is a person with his own qualities and individual differences thus impacting learning as well.

## Conclusions

The findings illuminate a compelling relationship between the two variables. The study revealed that the level of learners' involvement in the learning process was notably high, paralleled by a commendable level of academic achievement among adult learners in the investigated centers. The observed correlation between learners' involvement and academic achievement serves as a crucial insight into the dynamics of adult education in Basic Literacy Education Centres. The significance of this correlation emphasizes the pivotal role that active participation and engagement play in the learning journeys of adult learners. As evidenced by the positive correlation, it becomes evident that when adult learners are actively involved in their learning process, their academic achievements are notably enhanced.

These findings bear valuable implications for educational practitioners, policymakers, and instructors involved in adult literacy education. Recognizing and fostering an environment that encourages and supports learners' active engagement can potentially lead to enhanced educational outcomes. Moreover, the outcomes of this research underscore the need for continued efforts in tailoring instructional strategies to align with the unique characteristics and needs of adult learners. By acknowledging the correlation between learners' involvement and academic achievement, educators can design and implement interventions that foster a learner-centric approach, ultimately contributing to the overall success and empowerment of adult learners in Basic Literacy Education Centres.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of this study:

1. Learners' involvement should be emphasized by Centre based management committee to Facilitators in the course of carrying out their responsibilities.
2. Centre based management committee should ensure facilitators use the right methodology that will generate the involvement of learners in the teaching and learning process

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## INTERNAL SUPERVISION: A TOOL FOR TEACHERS' EFFECTIVENESS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS, NIGERIA

By

**Saka Abdullateef MANJO, Yusuf SULEIMAN & Olowo Sherifat SALIHU**

Department of Educational Management and Counselling, Faculty of Education,

Al-Hikmah University, Kwara State, Nigeria.

Corresponding Author: [lateefmanjo@gmail.com](mailto:lateefmanjo@gmail.com)

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### Abstract

It is an undisputable fact that Nigerian educational system in general and secondary schools in particular are faced with problem of supervisions and this has direct effect on its products. The study examines the concept and purpose of internal supervision, techniques of internal supervision, and makes of distinctions between supervision and inspection. Furthermore, concept of teachers' effectiveness and challenges of international supervision were critically examined. The challenges include employment of unqualified and untrained persons for quality control, resulting in low-quality output and insufficiency of the resources and minimal amounts required for inspection among others. The study concludes that internal supervision enhances teachers' classroom instruction, their level of subject-matter expertise, and their professional growth as teachers. Therefore, it is suggested that the principal as internal supervisor should pay regular visit to the teachers when the teaching is ongoing and offer professional support and suggestions on how they can improve in their carrier.

**Keywords:** Internal Supervision, Teachers' Effectiveness, Senior Secondary Schools

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### Introduction

Any organization, be it social, economic, political or educational is set up to achieve some set of predetermined goals which can only be achieved through effective supervision by the head of such organization. Therefore, supervision as an integral part of educational system is an inevitable aspect of school administration and thus, it is regarded as life wire and nervous system of the school organization without which educational institution cannot operate successfully. Alabi (2023) asserted that the success or failure of educational system especially at the secondary school level to a larger extent depends on the efficacy of the school administrators specifically the principals who prudently plan, coordinate and utilize other resources towards enhancing academic excellence in the school. Principals as school administrators remain the source of school leadership in the management of teaching and non-teaching staff, students, facilities and relevant educational stakeholders to ensure the effectiveness of the school system.

Supervision is a vital tool of school administration, which is democratic in nature with emphasis on improving classroom instructions for the betterment of students. Supervision is the development of an authentic and mutual relationship between teachers and supervisors with soul aim of assisting the teachers in professional improvement. The emphasis is on helping the teacher to do a better job of teaching the children to learn more (Uzodinma et al., 2022). Supervision as a result of its significance in the educational system, has become essential and unavoidable in recent times with the purpose of making teaching and learning better for the

learners and teachers, meanwhile, internal supervision deal with set of activities which are carried out by the supervisors with the basic aim of sensitizing, mobilizing and motivating staff in the school towards performing their duties optimally in terms of achievement of the stated goals of educational system.

The goal of supervision is to provide teachers and students with professional help and guidance that is actually focused on accomplishing effective teaching and learning in the classroom (Osuji & Uriri, 2022). The portion of school administration known as supervision is responsible for ensuring that the educational system's goals are met. Jacob and Solomon (2021) opined that supervision is a specialized technical service that is largely focused on analyzing and enhancing student growth and learning. Additionally, the group of activities created to enhance the teaching-learning process can be referred to as supervision. In Nigeria, there has been debate on the proper form of supervision. Jacob and Solomon (2021) believed that in-school supervision is an internal process (micro-inspection). The process of supervision involves establishing plans in advance to alter behavior in order to enhance learning. According to him, behavior can include that of administrators, counsellors, supervisors, and pupils (Okekeuche & Nwafor, 2020).

There are two major types of supervision: internal supervision and external supervision. Thus, this paper focuses mainly on the significant of the internal supervision on the teachers' effectiveness in public senior secondary schools in kwara state. According to Ogunode (2020), internal supervision refers to oversight provided by institutional heads within the various institutions, whilst external oversight is handled by local, district, regional, or national offices. When it comes to the day-to-day management and supervision of the school, the school head or principle, as it is known in the modern public school system, is in charge. On the other hand, Jacob and Solomon (2021) pointed out that internal supervision covers all of the tasks completed by teachers and school administrators to improve teaching and learning. Internal supervision is any sort of supervision that occurs within the walls of the institution. This kind of supervision is carried out by principals, teachers, and students.

Additionally, one of the most crucial tasks a teacher performs in the classroom is instructing students (Ojo, 2019). Academically, the success of teaching depends on instructors' careful planning in terms of adequate preparation, supply, and availability of tools and instructional materials. In accordance with this, teaching is an art, and the effectiveness of instruction is directly related to the teacher's passion for and devotion to the material being taught. It is the art of influencing knowledge with the intention of educating the audience to improve the lives of individuals in society (Ajadi & Kayode, 2022). The teacher is the key player in the educational process who organizes, designs, directs, inspires, and motivates students through efficient teaching methods (Okolie et al., 2023).

Effective teaching cannot be fully accomplished without the use of instructional supervisors because they encourage more direct and efficient communication between the instructor and the students. According to Oyekan (2018), the following items are frequently used by teachers as instructional tools in their lessons. They are cardboard pieces that show various teaching and learning activities in the context of a classroom, others are text books, black/white board,

projector and screen. The following were emphasized as reasons for the value of employing instructional resources in the classroom, including how it lessens teacher anxiety and worry of potential learning obstacles for students. The ability of the students to respond to the questions is also helpful to the teacher in receiving good feedback from them during assessments (Ajadi & Kayode, 2022).

### **Concept of Supervision**

According to current educational theory, supervision refers to all activities that are essential to the smooth running of a school system as a whole which includes all tasks and functions. While also serving as a support structure, supervision places a strong emphasis on the growth of both teachers and students throughout the teaching and learning process. The word "supervision" is somewhat vague. According to their fields of study, scholars, managers, administrators, and various organizations have given it various definitions. Adam (2023) said that the word "supervision" is derived from the verb "super vide," which means to watch over. Supervision is the study and cooperative improvement of all aspects that influence a child's growth and development. It is every effort made by appointed school officials to guide teachers and other educational staff in enhancing instruction. It is also the process of enhancing the entire educational setting in order to improve student learning. Bearing in mind that the ultimate purpose of supervision in school is the improvement of pupil learning, but its immediate focus is on the teachers and educational industry as a whole.

In the world of business, supervision refers to a specialized service that is based on generally acknowledged principles and a planned strategy for an institution's development (Adene, 2019). Supervision is the technique of fostering growth and raising teachers' administrative and academic performance. It is intended to be a task of enhancing instruction through routine observation and teacher in-service training. In other words, it is giving instructors professional support so they can become more knowledgeable and proficient in their own fields of expertise (Edo & David, 2019). The goal of supervision is to inspire people to work more effectively or productively. Supervision is a set of actions taken to improve teaching and learning for students, whereas personnel supervision is a set of actions taken by the supervisor with the primary goal of sensitizing, mobilizing, and inspiring staff members to carry out their responsibilities in the school in the best possible way in order to achieve the stated goals of the educational system.

### **Concept of Internal Supervision**

According to Edo and David (2019), the technique of fostering growth and raising teachers' administrative and academic performance is known as internal supervision. It is intended to be a task of enhancing activities through routine observation and teacher in-service training. In other words, it is giving instructors professional support so they can become more knowledgeable and proficient in their own fields of expertise. On this point, principals are responsible for supervising, directing, and coordinating teachers' educational activities in accordance with their code of conduct. Yeng et al. (2022) asserted that internal supervision has evolved into a genuine tool for evaluating teachers' work performance in response to criticism of the quality of education and as a gauge of progress on the apparent downward trend in educational accomplishment. Ateb (2021) asserted that supervision in school is thus a



combination or integration of many processes, procedures and conditions that are deliberately designed with the sole aim of advancing the work effectiveness of teachers and other personnel involved in the schooling process.

As a supervisor, the principal offers teachers specialized advice to help them become more proficient in their specialized fields. This support is particularly evident in the areas of lesson planning or taking notes before to delivery, making effective use of instructional resources, maintaining school records, enforcing rules, cultivating positive interpersonal relationships, and managing classrooms. If all of these factors are correctly managed and coordinated through ongoing feedback, they frequently give the academic accomplishment a clear emphasis and direction (Osuji & Uriri, 2022). When teachers are not present in the classroom, prefects and class leaders occasionally make sure that the duties given to the students are completed. Since students interact with their teachers more frequently than any other supervisors on every day, teacher supervision of students' work is crucial for improving student accomplishment (Jacob & Solomon, 2021).

Effective teachers are those who achieved the aims and objective of education at large. Increasing teachers' capacity to perform their obligations as educators is the aim of supervision. A teacher's teaching methodology is made up of a system of interconnected components called objectives, materials, strategies, models, methods, tools, and evaluations (Yahaya & Bolaji, 2023). The goal of supervision is to enhance the effectiveness of teachers' instruction and produce the best learning outcomes. These angles can be used to evaluate the effectiveness of a teacher's instructional strategy. The teaching goals should be clearly stated, supported by solid content, and come with the proper materials and instruments. The educational process should employ efficient models and methodologies as well as appropriate assessments (Yahaya & Bolaji, 2023).

Additionally, Ivagher (2021) noted that internal supervision holds a special place in the entire educational system, so it is imperative that we give it the spotlight. Internal supervision is understood in modern Nigeria as a process that improves curriculum, teaching methods, and teacher professional development through democratic interactions between the teacher and the supervisor. Yeng et al. (2022) opined that internal supervision in the modern era is focused on enhancing the teaching-learning environment to the benefit of both teachers and students, assists in identifying teachers' areas of strength and weakness, and encourages follow-up activities aimed at addressing those weaknesses. It also recognizes teachers and fosters a friendly working environment based on positive human interactions.

### **Qualities of a Good Internal Supervisor**

A supervisor could also be the principal of a school, or a senior member of staff of a school (Guchi, 2019). However, supervision in a school system implies the process of ensuring that policies, principles, rules, regulations and methods prescribed for purposes of implementing and achieving the objectives for education are effectively carried out. Edo and David (2019) stated that a supervisor is a person in a position of power or leadership who has the knowledge and skills to exert control and steer others toward desirable goals while balancing the use of curriculum approaches and other educational issues. A supervisor is a person formally assigned

to the school to engage with teachers in order to enhance the standard of student teaching and learning. According to Adeoye (2022), good instructors and counsellors have many traits with good internal supervisors it seems they are sincere, open, flexible, and sensitive.

They regard their supervisees as individuals and as budding professionals, and they are considerate of the supervisees' individual distinctions (such as gender, race, and ethnicity). They frequently and clearly indicate that they are supervising the counsellor's performance because they are at ease with the authority and evaluative responsibilities that come with the supervisory job. Even yet, effective supervisors show their dedication to the supervision enterprise by preparing for and participating in supervision sessions. They also are committed to assisting the counsellor in growing (Adeoye, 2022). These supervisors demonstrate good intellectual functioning, a clear understanding of their own supervisory abilities and limitations, and the ability to recognize how one's personality and interpersonal style may influence how supervision is carried out.

### **Purpose of Internal Supervision**

In the study of Edo and David (2019) internal supervision tries to foster growth, interaction, error-free problem solving, and commitment. The goal of internal supervision is formative, nonetheless, as it relates to ongoing development and diverse strategies that let teachers gain knowledge by examining and illuminating classroom practices. Al-Kiyumi and Hammad (2019) affirmed that most teachers are capable and intelligent enough to develop the right teaching performance when there are effective mentorship processes, which is consistent with the need for supervision. Ngole and Mkulu (2021) claimed that the internal supervision of schools entails all actions taken by school administrators to guide teachers and other educational professionals in enhancing instruction. Ateb et al. (2021) opined that stimulation of professional growth and development of teachers, selection and revision of educational objectives, materials of instruction, methods of teaching; and the evaluation of instruction are the concern of competent and professional supervisor. Supervision of instruction is an important aspect of school administration that pays attention on the achievement of appropriate instructional expectations of the educational system.

Nwankwo et al. (2019) maintains that supervision is the process of supporting, assisting, directing, stimulating and motivating teachers for effective teaching and learning process in educational institutions. Internal supervision is an act of monitoring the performances of school staff, with keen interest of observing both advantages and disadvantages and using befitting and amicable techniques to ameliorate the errors while still improving on the advantages, thereby improving the standard of schools and achieving educational objectives. The main goal of internal supervision is to enhance classroom instruction and student development. The notion that a teacher's instructional behavior influences students' learning is a fundamental tenet of internal supervision. Teaching and learning can be improved by looking at instructional behaviors. Furthermore, other specific purposes of internal supervision according to Ngole and Mkulu (2021) may include the following:

1. to recognize that educators are unique people with unique needs and interests,

2. to take into account that, when combined, a desire to learn and reflective practice serve as models and the foundation for personal perception and understanding,
3. to promote personal development through professional dialogue and reflective practice,
4. to allow time and encouragement for development and transformation,
5. to promote professional development that is started on one's own,
6. to create a learning environment that values teamwork, communication, and collaboration in order to produce a welcoming setting that promotes professional development, and
7. to state that it is everyone's duty as a Faculty member to advance professionally.

### **Techniques of Supervision**

Peretomode (2020) stated that a skilled supervisor can use a variety of tactics to influence teachers' behavior in a way that will lead to good teaching. The following are some of these techniques:

1. Classroom Observation: this simply involves live observation of teachers while caring out teaching in the classroom by the supervisor.
2. Teacher Visitation: this is a situation where a teacher pays visit another teacher in class when caring out teaching with the main purpose of gaining ideas and experiences. This is particularly good for newly recruited teachers with little or no teaching experience.
3. Demonstration: this involves the presentation of a pre-arranged series of teaching events to a group for their viewing.
4. Workshops: this is a process by which a small group of people (teachers) are organized to discuss some specific topic(s) or work on a common problem with mind of finding solutions to such problem.
5. Micro-teaching: this is a teaching process that scaled down in term of time, class size and complexity so as to make tutors focuses on a particular teaching techniques.
6. Listening to recording, watching videos, YouTube on how to teach well so as to enhance better performances
7. Research: this involves a process of finding solutions to some identified problems in teaching through collection and analysis of data and make recommendations.

### **Distinction between Supervision and Inspection**

Considering the functional similarities, Lawal (2021) asserted that supervision and inspection are administrative tasks aimed at effectively achieving organizational objectives. Both serve as instruments for coordinating instructional activities, with their main goal being to increase productivity. Although the phrases "supervision" and "inspection" are frequently used interchangeably, they actually refer to two different notions in terms of the nature and extent of the jobs they do. While inspection is carried out specifically to make sure that minimum standards are upheld in the fundamental activities of teaching and learning, supervision is carried out to achieve improvements in instruction, the resolution of school constraints, the maintenance of super-ordinate subordinate cooperation, professionalism and staff autonomy, and the achievement of intrinsic motivation. Regarding the provision of resources, the upkeep of discipline, and the management of required records and accounting are pertinent.

As stated by Lawal (2021), internal supervision offers opportunity to learn about the difficulties the school faces and the degree of success attained in achieving educational objectives. When the educational system is too large and stakeholders are free to act do whatever they choose, education quality suffers. The laissez faire supervisory approach does not improve the standard of instruction in secondary schools since most people will not act appropriately at the appropriate time in the absence of an authority that specifies what must be done and effectively oversees them on the job. The objectives of secondary education are considerably more easily attained when secondary schools' monitoring is improved. As the cry of degeneracy in the educational sector is currently heard throughout the federation, this becomes more urgent and important.

### **Challenges of Internal Supervision**

The UNESCO has succinctly characterized the challenges and issues facing supervision as teachers and education supervisors fall under this group.

- a) Use of officers/personnel in multiple disciplines or duties outside their ability
- b) Employment of unqualified and untrained persons for quality control, resulting in low-quality output;
- c) A lack of tools, supplies, equipment, literature, transportation for inspectors and supervisors, and stationery for institutions;
- d) A lack of fundamental training or orientation and a lack of contact with or connection to an experienced officer;
- d) Lack or insufficiency of the resources and minimal amounts required for inspection;
- e) Gross over-enrollment in schools and classes, creating over-sized institutions that make it impossible for effective management, sound teaching and learning, among other things.
- f) Lack of implementation of reports and recommendations, derogating from their critical importance for quality, and a decline in the quality of such reports.

### **Theoretical Framework: Human Relation Theory**

The study is anchored on neo-classical or human relations theory which emphasis o the incorporation of human aspect in the organization to enhance productivity and achieve the set goal.. According to this idea, the importance of the human element is given top priority, and the organization is viewed as a task best performed by a group effort (Adamu, 2018). The theoretical model supports the social and psychological aspects of individuals' behaviors in the organizational structure rather than the mechanistic view of the organization (school).

Human relations theory promotes the idea that management is a network of social connections that ushered in the human aspect of organization by incorporating their needs, welfare and philosophy towards achieving the set goal. The theory was developed by Elton Mayo and subsequently worked upon by Chester Bernard and Henry Fayol. The application of human relation theory to educational industry was firstly used by Marry Parker Folletas against the position of the traditional method of organizational analysis. This method's theoretical beliefs emphasize the formal structure of the organization and downplay the importance of the function of the human elements in the organization. According to proponents of this philosophy,

management should be centered around human relations. According to Adamu (2018) social psychology has a solution to the management dilemma. The theory is credited to the Australia-born psychologist and philosopher, Elton Mayo, who was interested in what played out between workers' behaviours and the production capacity, with consideration of "physiological, physical, economic, social and psychological aspects. Mayo describes this as a "clinical method (Adamu, 2018).

The following neo-classical or human relations theory beliefs are regarded as the conclusions or recommendations drawn from the Hawthorne:

- i. Employee morale and productivity are influenced by social and psychological elements at work, not by the physical environment.
- ii. Organization is a social system.
- iii. Non-monetary incentives and penalties have a big impact on how the workers act, feel, and produce.
- iv. Workers are social animals, not inert beings or distant, unrelated persons.
- v. A division of labor based solely on specialization may not be the most effective strategy.
- vi. Workers frequently form informal organizations (small social groupings). These groups establish the manufacturing standards and behavioral tendencies.
- vii. Rather than responding as individuals to management, employees respond as members of their informal work groups.

The relevance of this theory is predicated on the idea that if the government and principals of the schools take into consideration all the factors that can motivate teachers, especially the non-economic (the human relation factors), they will be able to achieve their desired goals (students' outstanding academic performance through teachers' effectiveness). Through the government-designed policies, this might become a reality. This action will promote teachers' efficacy. The same goes for teachers, who must utilize all means at their disposal to pique and maintain students' interest in learning in order to improve their academic performance through efficient internal monitoring (Adamu, 2018).

### **Concept of Teachers' Effectiveness**

In the academic setting, particularly in senior secondary schools, teachers' effectiveness is an important criterion to take into account when evaluating students' academic performance. The managers of secondary schools must ensure that teachers are effective if they want the planned outcomes of the schools to come to pass. According to Chetty et al. (2019), teachers' teaching methods significantly affect how well their students learn. It is impossible to overstate the importance of teachers' performance in the educational system of schools. Therefore, it is possible to think of a teacher's effectiveness as the successful culmination of all of the strategies they have used to foster positive learning in their pupils, all of which have resulted in the students' consistently remarkable academic achievement over time. Teachers' compliance with a system that is in line with the school's curriculum is one approach to assess their success. The exceptional performance of kids is likely to be improved by teachers who follow this observation. The technique may not produce a positive result if the opposite is true.

Chetty et al. (2019) believed that the performances of teachers reveal how effective they are. Because of this, how well the school is run and how well its teachers perform in their roles is directly related to both. The productivity of teachers is a physical representation of their effectiveness since the more effective they are, the more productive they will be. The overall quality of how well teachers complete their given tasks demonstrates their effectiveness. This significantly affects how well pupils do. Teacher productivity is attained through dedication along with other factors like subject matter expertise, punctuality, preparation of effective lesson plans, methodology, a positive personality, effective classroom management, time management, effective teaching techniques, effective utilization of instructional materials, reinforcement, and others. When instructors are effective, they provide an environment where children can prosper and the school can be proud of itself.

Abioye and Akintayo (2017) agreed with the Federal Republic through the National Policy on Education which states that "no education can rise above the level of her teachers," thus, recognizing the importance of teachers in the effort to maintain a high standard of education. The aforementioned impacts of teachers' job performance on students and society (Ajetunmobi et al., 2020). By inference, if the teachers are effective, children can accomplish well academically. Therefore, it can be concluded that if pupils do not perform well academically, the breakdown of the educational system has been caused by teachers' inability to meet expectations. In the teaching field, innovation is constantly needed. Of all occupations, teaching is undoubtedly the most honorable. In addition to their six hours of instruction time, teachers typically set aside two hours each day for tasks connected to teaching, such as creating lesson plans, work schedules, instructional materials, assessment tools, and other tasks.

Hasbay and Altidang (2018) conceptualized effectiveness in terms of work quality, arguing that it is a reflection of having the necessary credentials in the sector, and that effectiveness is inextricably linked to having the qualities of modern living. It is further suggested that a worker (in this case, a teacher) who lacks these requirements will likely be ineffective and inefficient. Using this conceptualization model, it is evident that ineffectiveness is a sign of teacher unsuitability because it is a significant productivity-influencing factor.

### **Internal Supervision as Tool for Teachers' Effectiveness in Nigerian Secondary Schools**

Internal supervision exists nearly everywhere. Its roots can be seen in the early days of public education, when developing nations employed education to create a unified language and culture. A vital instrument for ensuring that all education personnel adhered to the same policies and procedures and followed a common curriculum was supervision (Sari, 2019). When a teacher perceives themselves as developing in nature rather than just imparting knowledge in a parrot fashion, they are fulfilling their duty (Ngole & Mkulu, 2021). One of the jobs a teacher must complete is providing direct support to specific students by assisting them in understanding the lessons. The instructor must help the students grow through group projects and conversations. An improvement in the academic performance of the kids is the result of all of these efforts (Ngole et al., 2021).



In order to prepare students for maturity and society membership, educational institutions' main goal is to teach and train students in the necessary skills, values, and societal norms. Teachers' effectiveness and efficiency are necessary for the achievement of these goals. Frequently, teachers make or break a school. The pupils' performance and learning results will be impacted if the teachers are mostly ineffective or incompetent. The effectiveness of a teacher in their job depends on a number of variables, from the availability of acceptable facilities, compensation, appropriate qualifications, and the existence of fundamental skills to the standard of instructional supervision provided by the principal. There is therefore a need for internal supervision in order to improve educational quality and classroom performance as well as lessen the challenges teachers experience in their careers. Internal supervision, which aims to create a secure and private setting for staff to reflect on and discuss their work and their personal and professional responses to it, is thought to increase teachers' professional performance. The emphasis is on assisting staff in growing personally and professionally and in reflecting on their work in order to improve effectiveness.

There are a few reasons why internal supervision is effective in improving teachers' effectiveness. The reasons are:

1. It provides teachers with feedback on their teaching practices. This feedback can help teachers identify areas where they can improve, and make changes to their teaching to improve student learning.
2. Internal supervision helps teachers to develop new teaching skills and knowledge. Supervisors can provide teachers with resources, such as professional development inform of workshops, seminars, conferences and symposiums among others to help them learn new teaching methods and strategies.
3. Internal supervision helps to create a supportive and collaborative environment for teachers. When teachers feel supported and valued by their supervisors, they are more likely to be motivated to improve their teaching. Zepeda (2019) sees internal supervision as the link to increase job satisfaction, better staff retention, less turnover, and increased staff productivity.
4. The sense of school management support among teachers is to improve with effective internal monitoring, as well as their dedication to the school's mission and objectives. Internal supervision models are tools for enhancing teaching methods and are regarded as a component of instructional supervision.

However, it is important to note that not all forms of internal supervision are effective.

For example, supervision that is punitive or overly critical is not likely to be effective in improving teachers' effectiveness. Instead, internal supervision should be constructive and supportive, and it should focus on helping teachers improve their teaching. Here are some tips for effective internal supervision:

- i. Be constructive and supportive. The goal of supervision should be to help teachers improve their teaching, not to criticize them.

- ii. Focus on specific areas for improvement. Don't just give teachers general feedback. Instead, focus on specific areas where they can improve, such as their classroom management skills or their use of technology.
- iii. Provide teachers with resources and support. Help teachers find resources, such as professional development workshops, that can help them improve their teaching.
- iv. Create a supportive and collaborative environment. Teachers should feel supported and valued by their supervisors i.e principal, vice principal, e.t.c

By following these tips, you can help ensure that internal supervision is effective in improving teachers' effectiveness in secondary schools.

### **Conclusions**

Internal supervision in education focuses on those activities related to teaching and learning and is the process by which the teacher and supervisor are engaged in a close helping relationship. Essentially, internal supervision in education involves a teacher receiving information from a colleague or a superior who has observed the teacher's performance and who serves as both a mirror and a sounding board to enable the teacher to critically examine and potentially alter his or her own practice. When it is used properly, it can enhance teachers' classroom instruction, their level of subject-matter expertise, and their professional growth as teachers. In the context of such supervision, suggestions are exchanged and assistance is provided to help the teacher become more competent through the analysis of factual information gathered during the observation and thereby lead to achievement of institutional objectives.

### **Suggestions**

Based on the study, the following suggestions were made:

1. Regular attendance of conference should be given priority by teachers to enhance their' efficacy in the teaching-learning process.
2. Teachers should be given sufficient information about contemporary teaching approaches during the pre-observation conference to promote effective teaching and learning delivery
3. Principals should frequently visit classrooms to observe the instructors' chosen methods of instruction or teaching.
4. Principals of schools should adopt a positive outlook toward post-observation conferences since they give teachers the chance to receive feedback and enhance their lesson plans.
5. The school principal should foster a culture where teachers are encouraged to engage in analysis and strategy to assess their performance and improve their ability to give instruction,
6. The government should make sure that principals receive pre-professional or pre-practice training through internal supervision workshops and seminars geared at the acquisition of relevant skills for carrying out their supervisory tasks to improve quality instruction.

7. The principals' supervision should be an ongoing activity, and the interaction between supervisors and instructors should be one in which both parties learn from one another and the teaching-learning process as a whole.

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## **PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL PERSONNEL ON CLASSROOM CHALLENGES AMONG STUDENTS OF GIFTED SCHOOLS IN GWAGWALADA AREA COUNCIL, FCT, ABUJA, NIGERIA**

**BY**

**Busari Adeleke AKINDELE**

08060268108

**&**

**Mohammed Ibrahim BAJI (PhD)**

08071873350, 08036519746

imohammedbaji@yahoo.com

Department of Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education and Arts

Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, P.M.B. 11, Lapai

Niger State, Nigeria

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### **Abstract**

This study investigated the perception of school personnel on the classroom challenges among students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. Two objectives guided the study and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance. A descriptive survey design was used. The population of the study was 309 school personnel and a sample size of 169 was selected through simple random and stratified proportionate sampling techniques. A questionnaire titled Questionnaire on Perception of School Personnel on the Classroom Challenges among Gifted Students (QSPCCGS) was used for data collection which consisted of 25 items structured on a four-point modified Likert scale; ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The validity of the instrument was ascertained through content and face validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined through a test re-test method and the coefficient index obtained was 0.79. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used for data analysis. The finding of hypothesis one revealed that there was no significant difference in the perception of school personnel on the challenges facing the gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council. The finding of hypothesis two showed that there was no significant difference in the perception of school personnel on causes of classroom challenges among the gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja, Nigeria. Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that principals should collaborate with stakeholders in education such as Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) to address the challenges facing gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT Abuja.

**Key Words:** Perception, School Personal, Classroom Challenges and Gifted Students

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### **Introduction**

Giftedness is a state of being excellent and exceptional in performance. Barnet (2019) described giftedness as those identified by professionally qualified experts, who by virtue of their outstanding abilities, are capable of high performance and require specialised educational programmes and services beyond regular school programmes in order to realize and maximise their potentials for development of the self and the society. Over the years,



education of exceptional persons has suffered a lot of neglect as a result of lack of awareness by the public on the capacity of gifted students to withstand the rigour of formal education. According to Barnett (2019), gifted students demonstrate achievements or potential abilities in areas such as:

1. General intellectual ability: they tend to perform or *show* the potential to perform in several fields of study.
2. Specific ability: a gifted child is naturally endowed with a high degree of general mental ability or extraordinary ability *in a* specific sphere of activity or knowledge,
3. Creative or productive thinking: gifted students reflect in individuals who tend to be or have the potential to become producers (rather than consumers) of original knowledge, materials, or products and who employ thought processes that tend to be inductive, integrated, and problem oriented,
4. Leadership ability: leadership appears to be a blend of characteristics within which above-average intelligence as they normally show potential in leadership responsibilities through their creative ability and skills,
5. Visual and performing arts: gifted children show potential performance *at* exhibition or superior ability in a visual *and* performing arts area, and
6. Psychomotor ability is also exhibited among the gifted students.

Contextually, school personnel refer to persons working in a school setting (Meador, 2021). The process of operating a school and educating the students has been viewed as a top-down approach with a clear power differential (Borman & Dowling, 2008 in Ansley, Houchins & Varjas, 2019). According to Ansley et al. (2019), teachers and other staff members are responsible for students' learning and development. Simon and Johnson (2015) suggested administrative support as a strong predictor of positive working conditions and higher job satisfaction in the school setting. Ansley et al. (2019) detailed how school personnel and administrators collaboratively create ideal working contexts that foster enabling learning environment which promote students' growth and development.

Perception, on the other hand, refers to a set of senses involving the ability to detect changes in body positions and movements. It involves the cognitive processes required to process information, such as recognizing the face of a friend or detecting a familiar scent (Cherry, 2020). In the view of Williams and Levitas (2021), perception is the process where sensory information is processed from our environment which is used in order to interact within our environment. The main types of perception include vision, touch, sound, taste and smell (Michele, 2021).

Classroom challenges are those factors that obstruct quality teaching and learning process in the classroom. The features of classroom challenges may include psychological or emotional, physiological, and physical environment. Reis-Jorge et al. (2021) posited that seating

arrangement, time constraints, high noise levels, personality clashes, different levels, class size and monolingual classes are factors that contribute to classroom challenges. Rhiana et al. (2021) maintained that classroom challenges are those problems faced by teachers which may include lack of teamwork, minimal personal time, working towards long term goals, arguments and students excuses.

Bainbridge (2020) analysed the following classroom challenges among the gifted students: academic problems, social problems (covering social related issues such as boredom, bullying, delinquency, isolation, depression, peer relations), and emotional problems due to poor and uncondusive academic setting. According to Kentucky Department of Education (2020: 27-28), gifted students may experience special challenges in the school as a result of the following: educational mismatch between the student and the rest of the class, lack of accommodating high creativity, energy, intensity and aspirations of gifted students, few, if any, adaptations for asynchronous development, inadequate support to deal with social pressures to conform to popular ideas, beliefs and norms, few accommodations to address unchallenging or repetitive curricula, student's heightened sensitivities to differences, resulting in the student trying to hide his or her talents or simplify his or her achievements, frustration in finding supportive environments, and producing feelings of isolation, and age-appropriate and social maturity that does not align with the student's advanced development in talent areas.

Davidson Academy (2021) further analyzed some of the most common problem areas for the gifted students as follows: heightened sensitivities and advanced emotional processing, poor social skills (inherently awkward and at times poor at socialization), perfectionism (displaying a range of challenging behaviours, such as competitiveness with others, achievement at the expense of socializing, or avoidance of activities for fear of failure), and self-concept (struggling to develop a healthy self-concept during crucial identity formation periods).

The problems associated with giftedness are mostly external in nature and are caused by the lack of acceptance and understanding of giftedness in the society (Salaudeen, 2010 in Karen, 2018). The general intellectual abilities, specific academic aptitude, creative and productive thinking, leadership ability, visual and performing arts, and psychomotor skills of the gifted students are highly undermined by various communities and school settings which required research to address it (Barnet, 2019). Bettini at al. (2016) stressed that with administrative support, school staff are more empowered to perform their jobs effectively to support the gifted students. Thus, school personnel are the available human resources in the school that utilize the material resources for the realization of the goals of a school. This may include the school heads, teaching and supportive staff in the school. Meador (2021) viewed school personnel as the most recognizable employees who work within the school district or setting to support students' learning and administrative system.

Manely (2018) maintained that some common challenges that can hinder effective teaching and learning process among gifted students are large class sizes, mixed-age and mixed-ability classes, undiagnosed students learning disabilities, insufficient funding for classroom supplies and equipment and lack of administrative support. Dussault (2018) asserted that teachers in gifted schools are faced with similar challenges arising from many directions; with students,

parents, administrators, or as a result of the many roles and responsibilities they undertake. School Governance (2018) stated that classroom challenges are constraints that affect effective teaching and learning process among gifted students in the classroom.

However, there are several causes of classroom challenges among gifted students in gifted schools. Like other students, gifted students experienced challenges in the classroom situation and generally in life. In support of the above statement, Barnet (2019) posited the following causes of classroom challenges among gifted students: inadequate existing gifted programmes, challenges of enrichment programmes in the classroom due to mixed abilities of students, and poor strategies for teaching the gifted students in the general classroom. Similarly, The Tenney School (2017) has discussed the following causes of classroom challenges among gifted students: many gifted students try to reach impossible goals or perfection which can lead to psychosomatic problems and even eating disorders in hopes to maintain full control of one's life goal, pressures of rigorous school work or extracurricular activities, social maturity (gifted students are often very socially mature for their age, but this can cause them to have problems interacting with their peers), trouble of focusing on school work unless it becomes necessary, organization of skills as a result of abstract thinking. Oak Crest Academy (2016) asserted that among challenges faced by gifted students in the classroom are low self-esteem, perfectionism, asynchronous development and boredom and burnout. More so, the consequences of placing a gifted student in an average classroom with little support posed a risk that may lead to bullying, depression and social isolation which eventually affect their academic performance (Oak Crest Academy, 2016: 5). According to Dada and Ani (2019), gifted and talented students sit in classrooms bored and frustrated, they are left out and are not really benefiting from equal educational opportunities as their peers, and their full potentials not considered.

In Gwagwalada Area Council of Federal Capital Territory, there are two schools for the gifted. These include the School for the Gifted Gwagwalada which was established in 1993 but commenced its operation in 1994 and Gwagwalada Gifted Secondary School which was established in 2010. The schools were established to cater for the educational needs of the exceptionally gifted and intelligent students in the Federal Capital Territory. In many gifted learning environment, students are encouraged to learn about subjects that interest them most. Looking at the nature of gifted students, there are certain challenges obstructing their abilities especially in the classroom situation. These challenges may include poor means of instructional delivery, poor selection and utilization of instructional materials, poor time management, lack of classroom control and management, inadequate infrastructural facilities and poor mastery of subject contents. It is on the basis of this, this study is necessitated to investigate how the school personnel perceive the classroom challenges surrounding gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja with the view to providing them with the opportunity to achieve the desirable learning outcomes.

Practically, the findings of this study will serve as a reference material for those who wish to conduct a research on gifted students in gifted schools. The findings will also guide the school counsellors and school psychologists to recognise their responsibilities to ensure adequate

provision and utilisation of facilities as well as counselling services in gifted schools aimed at minimizing classroom challenges faced by the gifted students. The findings will further create awareness and positive perception of parents and the public to support gifted schools.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Gifted and talented students required specialized and unique education that is different from other students in specific areas. Lack of adequate knowledge and skills by some school administrator and teachers to teach the gifted students using the appropriate methods and instructional materials could serve as a challenge to their learning outcome and academic achievement. Poor learning facilities have also hindered effective and quality teaching and learning among the gifted students in the gifted schools. Also, poor time management by some teachers to effectively utilize the time assigned to them for lesson delivery in the gifted schools have resulted to waste of time, energy and resources which greatly contribute to classroom challenges among gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja which necessitate this research output to ameliorate the ugly condition. .

### **Objectives of the Study**

The following are objectives of the study:

1. To determine the perception of school personnel on the classroom challenges facing the gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT, Abuja.
2. To examine the perception of school personnel on the causes of classroom challenges among gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT, Abuja.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in perception of school personnel on the classroom challenges facing the gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT, Abuja.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in perception of school personnel on the causes of classroom challenges among gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT, Abuja.

### **Research Methodology**

Descriptive survey research design was used in this study. This design was considered relevant because it permits the researcher to study the perception of small sample of school personnel in order to generalise the findings on the whole population.

The population of this study was three hundred and nine (309) school personnel which comprised of Principals, Teachers and School Counsellors from Gifted Schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja (Federal Capital Territory Secondary Education Board, FCTSEB, 2022). The sample size for this study was 169. This consisted of 2 principals, 162 teachers and 5 school counsellors. The sample size was determined using the Research

Advisor (2006) sampling table for determining a sample from a given population. Stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used for selection of the research respondents. In this case, the respondents were grouped into strata (i.e, principals, teachers and school counsellors), and a simple random sampling technique was used through hat and draw method to select each respondents from the sampled schools.

### **Research Instrument**

The instrument for collection of data in this study was a structured questionnaire titled “Questionnaire on Perception of School Personnel on the Classroom Challenges among Gifted Students (QPSPCCGS)”. The instrument has two sections: section “A” which contained the demographic data of the respondents covering status and gender. Sections “B” centered on items that measure perceptions of school personnel on classroom challenges among gifted students. It has 25 items which measured classroom challenges and causes of the classroom challenges among gifted students. The items were structured on a four-point modified Likert scale namely; Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) which were scored as 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively.

### **Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

The QPSPCCGS instrument was validated by specialists in Counselling and Educational Psychology of the Department of Coyunselling Psychology, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai. The validation was done through content and face validity. Based on the experts’ advice, some questions were modified, some dropped while some were added in order to make the instrument valid. For example, under classroom challenges facing gifted students, item 4 was moved to causes of classroom challenges among gifted students. Also, under causes of classroom challenges, “method” in item 1 was changed to “methods”, “inadequate..” in item 4 was changed to “unqualified”. It was also advised that item 6 (there is mismatch between gifted students and the rest of other students in classroom setting) should be deleted. In all cases, the observations and recommendations of the validators were corrected and harmonized.

The reliability of the research instrument was ascertained using the test re-test method. The instrument was administered to 30 students in Suleja Academy, Niger State which is outside the scope of school of gifted students in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. The two scores obtained were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC) to determine to internal consistency of the items. The coefficient index obtained was 0.79; signifying a high reliability which was considered appropriate for use in the study.

### **Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis**

The researchers personally administered the instrument to the respondents individually. Each of the respondents was given a copy of the instrument and the instrument was retrieved from them on the spot. The data collection took three (3) days duration. The challenges encountered include lack of will to participate by the school personnel and financial constraints due to cost of materials as a result of inflation. The data collected in this study were analyzed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test the null hypotheses which measured differences in

perception of school personnel on classroom challenges among students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja.

## Results

**Table 1: One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on Perception of School Personnel On the Classroom Challenges among Gifted Students of Gifted Schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT, Abuja**

Background	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.489	2	.245	1.220	.298
Within Groups	33.269	166	.200		
Total	33.758	168			

Table 1 is a one-way analysis of variance that tested the null hypothesis. Since the P-value is greater than 0.05 ( $p = 0.298 > 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis which stated that there is no statistical significant difference in the perception of school personnel on the classroom challenges facing the gifted students in gifted schools of Gwagwalada Area Council FCT Abuja was retained.

**Table 2: One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the Perception of School Personnel On Causes of Classroom Challenges among Gifted Students of Gifted Schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT Abuja**

Background	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.555	2	.278	.805	.449
Within Groups	57.262	166	.345		
Total	57.817	168			

Table 2 is a one-way analysis of variance used to test the null hypothesis. Since the p-value is greater than 0.05 ( $p = 0.449 > 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the perception of school personnel in causes of classroom challenges among gifted students in gifted schools of Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja was retained.

## Discussion of Findings

The finding of this study revealed that there is no significant difference in the perception of school personnel on the challenges facing the gifted students of Gifted Schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT Abuja. Similar to this finding was a study by Majzoob and Alnoor (2017) carried out in Addamer City-Sudan at the basic school level. The study revealed that there are no significant statistical differences at (0.05) level in the problems facing the gifted and talented students, their parents and teachers. Also, the study finding of Hudson (2019) in Northeast Florida with 234 population found that there was no statistically significant difference on the classroom challenges faced between gifted students and non-gifted students. The study finding of Ayasreh and El-Omari (2016) conducted in Jordan with 470 population was also in agreement that there is no significant difference in the classroom challenges among the gifted students at the basic and secondary. However, Shareefa at al. (2019) correlated teachers' perceptions on differentiated instruction among the gifted students



in Maldives and revealed a significance relationship was found. Graefe (2017) discovered that there was significant impact of climate and encouragement in the classrooms of gifted students. A study by Moreschi (2022) in Kentucky of United States with 882 population revealed that there was no significant difference on teachers' ability to tolerate gifted students which often lead students remaining unidentified and receiving services for conditions detached from giftedness. Uzunboyulu et al. (2022) carried out a study in Sakarya of Turkey and the finding showed that there was a significant difference on the classroom challenges facing the gifted students such as technological disruptions, motivation problems, timing problems and communication problems.

The finding of hypothesis two indicated that there was no significant difference in the perception of school personnel on causes of classroom challenges among gifted students of Gifted Schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. This finding is in line with the study of Majzoob and Alnoor (2017) who reported that there no significant statistical difference at estimating problems' degree that face gifted and talented students from the point of view of teachers. The study of Hamizah et al. (2021) also found that there was no significance difference among gifted and talented students on the burdened with social and emotional issues that affect psychological well-being and emotional stability. According to a report by Abu-Yazid and Noriah (2016) from Malaysia with 846 population, the finding indicated that gifted and talented student have problems related to career direction due to multi-potentials, lack of information, lack of guidance and other supporting factors. Similarly, Amnah et al. (2017) carried a study in Malaysia and the finding indicated that there was no significance difference among gifted and talented students in experiencing internal pressures and conflicts that limit their social and emotional development.

## Conclusions

From the findings of this study, it was found that there was no significant difference in the perception of school personnel on the challenges facing gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja. It is therefore concluded that gifted students in gifted schools of Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja are faced with classroom challenges which require the attention of stakeholder in education for possible remedies.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made:

1. Principals should collaborate with School-Based Management Committee (SBMC) to provide learning facilities so as to minimize the challenges facing gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council FCT Abuja.
2. Government, parents and other stakeholders in education should collaborate to provide infrastructure and security to address causes of classroom challenges among gifted students of gifted schools in Gwagwalada Area Council, FCT, Abuja.

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## IN-LAWS PRESSURES ON MARRIAGE AS PERCEIVED BY MARRIED COUPLES IN KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

By

**Dr. Isiaka Ibrahim JAWONDO**

jawondoi@gmail.com / jawondoi85@gmail.com 08060809796 / 08075335959 /  
08184422594

Department of Educational Psychology and Counselling, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria;  
&

**Hikmot Oluwatoyin SUNMONU**

Guidance and Counselling Unit. Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin.

*\*Corresponding author email address: jawondoi@gmail.com*

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### Abstract

This study was carried out to examine in-laws pressures on marriage as perceived by married couples in Kwara state. The purpose is to find solutions to the problems of in-laws pressures on marriage as perceived by married couples in Kwara state. The variables considered in the research include Religion and Gender, while the samples for the study consisted of 300 married couples, spread across Kwara state. Two research questions were formulated with research hypotheses which were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance using t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The data collected were analyzed with the use of frequency counts, simple percentages and rank ordered. The In-Laws Pressure on Marriage Questionnaire (ILPMQ) was adopted for this study to gather the data. Experts in the field of Guidance and Counselling validated the instruments for both pre-test and post-test. A test retest was employed at interval of two weeks to test for the reliability co-efficient of the instrument. Cronbach's alpha statistic method was used to test the result. A coefficient value of 0.80 was obtained. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that gender and religion difference had no significant in perception of in-laws influence on marriage and married couples should endeavour to improve on their in-laws relationship and communication styles, so that their in-laws pressure and marital adjustment will be mitigated. It was recommended that counsellors should dispense inter-personal relationship counselling among couple.

**Keywords:** In-laws, Pressure, Married couples

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### Introduction

Marriage is meant to be a life-time relationship, terminable only by death. "Till death do us part" is a very familiar marriage vow which should be true of every marriage. When two opposite sex adults decide to marry, each makes a pledge that the other will be the most important person in their life. "You're the one" and "You come first" are common phrases that seal this promise. It is thus expected that partner will be on each other's side when the going gets rough. Couples may fight between themselves, over big things and small, but expect a partner to stick up when someone else threatens, criticizes, and makes one feel bad. The last thing expected, as complain about the events of the day, is to have a spouse side with the colleague, friend, they are complaining about, and say, "The guy was right." If that happens regularly, they would give up talking about their day-to-day problems and conclude there was

something rotten in the state of their marriage. But this, couples have found, precisely what happens, over and over again, when conflict arises between them and the in-laws.

The word marriage means a lot to various people. Marriage, also called matrimony or wedlock, is a socially or ritually recognized union between spouses that established rights and obligations between those spouses, as well as between them and any resulting biological or adopted children and affinity (in-laws and other family through marriage). The definition of marriage varies around the world not only between cultures and between religions, but also throughout the history of any given culture and religion, evolving to both expand and constrict in who and what is encompassed, but typically it is principally an institution in which interpersonal relationships, usually sexual, are acknowledged or sanctioned. In some cultures, marriage is recommended or considered to be compulsory before pursuing any sexual activity. When defined broadly, marriage is considered as a culture universally. A marriage ceremony is known as a wedding. Individuals may marry for several reasons, including legal, social, libidinal, emotional, financial, spiritual, and religious purposes. Whom they marry may be influenced socially by determining rules of incest, prescriptive marriage rules, parental choice and individual desires.

In some areas of the world, arranged marriage, child marriage, polygamy, and sometimes forced marriage, may be practiced as a culture and tradition. Conversely, such practices may be outlawed and penalized in parts of the world out of concerns of the infringement of women's rights, or the infringement of children's rights (both female and male children), and because of international law. In the African context, (with particular reference to the Nigeria), in-laws are the relations of each of the spouses brought into closer contact with the other spouses as a result of the marriage. Such relations include the immediate and extended families of each of them. For example, the immediate relations of the husband, such as father, mother and other siblings now become the father-in-law, mother-in-law, brothers or sisters-in-law of the wife. While members of the extended family like aunts, uncles, close or distant cousins all become in-laws to the wife.

### **The Roles of Parents-in-law in Marriages**

The role of in-laws in marriage according to Abati (1990) in Ibrahim (2011) described the in-laws as a factor that is an inevitable one in marriage since a husband and wife do not drop from the sky like snowflakes, but are, by natural biological fact, children of other individuals and families. He further opined that marriage is a contract or union between two individuals and two families, but often, the couple encounters a lot of problems from the latter, particularly from the female in-laws who, by their own instructions, tend to turn a marriage into a competition of vanities. The in-laws influence in marriage according to Okuku (1990) in Ibrahim, (2011) described in-laws as very influential and powerful in the home. He sees in-laws as not only capable of intervening in times of misunderstanding in the home, but also in the case of the death of the husband is capable of inheriting the properties of their deceased son (his wives and children inclusive). With all these in mind, perhaps it would not be too farfetched to say that culture of the society has opened up the opportunity for in-laws to play a decisive role in the marriage of their relations. Daodu (1990) opine that because culture does



not give a marked distinction between the immediate and extended families of the individual and the degree of involvement of these in the individual's life, it has caused a lot of complications in the family network relations in the society.

The African child has many fathers and mothers, therefore the individual in the extended household and family system feels it is a right that they have a say in the decisions concerning children they regard as their own, even when they are old enough to make such decisions themselves. Commenting on the types of decisions influenced by family members, Ibrahim (2011) opined that the decision of who to marry in the past, was not a personal one, neither was it the sole responsibility of the immediate families, rather, it was the interest of the extended families and the society at large that the relatives of both parties saw that the choices made were socially approved.

In the Nigerian culture, parental role is clearly defined. Mothers combine child care with economic responsibilities. Fathers have mainly economic and disciplinary responsibilities. Such definitions of parental roles might be expected to affect the warmth of the relationships between fathers and their children, and between mothers and their children, on the other hand (Ibrahim, 2011). Indeed, many Nigerian adages imply that children are generally closer to their mothers than to their fathers. Suffice to say that this mother-child bond which has been established from childhood extends till adulthood, even after the child is married. Perhaps, this is why most parental issues raised in marriages are usually related to mothers-in-law. There is a local parlance that says, "Blood is thicker than water". In this part of the world, we have what could be called close family ties in the family set-up. Ibrahim (2011) opined that the problem of mothers-in-law in marriages is universal, but it takes a peculiar twist in Nigeria in view of the persistence of the extended family nature. He further stated that this parents-child bond could be used to an advantage. If the wife (daughter-in-law) understands and tries to establish a good relationship with her parent-in-laws, the latter could then take the wife's side whenever there is conflict between the wife and husband. However, some parents, in most cases mothers-in-law take advantage of the parent-child bond to cause trouble for the couple, especially if they do not like their daughter or son-in-laws.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Marriage entails obligations of support and nurturance that must be fulfilled – whether or not one wishes to fulfill them. It is no longer an option; the changed relationship demands turning the activities in marriage from options into responsibilities. It is those who refuse to follow such expectations that usually marry, but for a short time (Oniye, 2000). Relating to one another in a marital relationship is inevitable because man is gregarious in nature. Two people may be living together under the same roof and may refuse to communicate with each other. This is supported by Cohn (2010) who asserted that unless two people who are living together turned to each other's wavelength, they might be (psychologically) miles apart. In many marriages, quite many husbands and wives seem to live like strangers or co-tenants with one another.

The rate at which couples seek divorce in recent times has been alarming, currently in the society, this is not so, because only few marriages live that long. Marital mortality is now

growing rapidly as the society witnesses the increasing deaths of young marriages. The society is filled with wreckages of many ill-fated marriages. Many homes are suffering from marital problems and most marital relationships are not working as they should (Ibrahim, 2011). The stories from the mass media confirm the incidence of marital crises and divorce, which is of high increase in the society. It is difficult to provide accurate statistics on the actual rate of divorce in Nigeria due to the fact that not all cases of divorce are reported and recorded but literature and media reports indicates a high rate of divorce. Yahaya, (2008) stated that divorce rates have increased markedly in United States, Britain, South Korea, Canada, Brazil, Nigeria and South Africa to mention but few countries. In Nigeria, more than ten percent of the marriages conducted every year, ended up in divorce (Ibrahim, 2011). It is this increasing rate of divorce cases reported all over the country that made Filani (1984) in Ibrahim (2011) described marriages in Nigeria as being terminated in an unprecedented manner. On investigation, most of the causes leading to these divorce cases have perceived pressures from in-laws as a root cause.

The issue of in-laws pressure in marital set-up is very important. Hence, a look into it will help to promote marital adjustment. Studies by Ibrahim (2011) revealed that the marital communication of the couple does have a greater influence on the marital adjustment. Therefore, the need for conducting a research to find out the in-laws pressures on marriage as perceived by selected married couples in Kwara state.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance:

1. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of respondents on in-laws Pressures on Marriage on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the perceptions of respondents on in-laws Pressures on Marriage on the basis of religion.

### **Methodology**

The research design adopted for this study was descriptive survey method. Abdullah (1995) in Sunmonu (2011) posited that descriptive survey research requires systematic collection of data or information from population or sample of population through the use of personal interview and, or scale of opinion questionnaire. A sample of 300 married couples were selected from the three (3) senatorial districts of Kwara state namely, kwara central Central, Kwara North and Kwara South respectively using the stratified random sampling technique according to the desired characteristics of gender and religion family type was adopted for the study. From each of the stratified selected senatorial district, respondents were randomly drawn from public organizations such as schools, secretariats, churches, mosques, N.Y.S.C Secretariat, hospitals, and local government headquarters. A hundred (100) of newly married adults were selected from each of the senatorial districts, and eventually, three hundred (300) respondents were drawn from the three senatorial districts in Kwara State as sample for the study.

### Instrumentation

The instrument used in collecting data for this study was a researcher-constructed questionnaire tagged “The In-Law Pressure on Marriage Questionnaire (ILPMQ). The questionnaire is a 20-items instrument, subdivided into two major sections A and B. Section A requires the respondents to give background information such as gender and religion. Section B focused on items eliciting respondents’ view on pressures of in-laws on marriage. The respondents were expected to respond to the 20 items on in-laws pressure on marriage using the four-point rating scale of SA-Strongly Agree, A - Agree, D - Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree. The data obtained were subjected to statistical analysis. The statistical methods employed in this research study are both descriptive and inferential. Descriptive analysis was used to explain the data in the demographic section (Section A), that is frequency count and simple percentage. The data collected was subjected to mean, standard deviation, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), to compare the mean score of the variables and determine if there would be any significant differences between the variables at 0.05 alpha levels.

### Results

#### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the perceptions of respondents on in-laws Pressures on Marriage on the basis of gender.

**Table 1: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of respondents’ expression on In-laws Pressures on Marriage on the Basis of Gender**

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Male	150	58.1200	5.658	298	-.97	1.960
Female	150	58.7933	6.290			

\*significant,  $p > 0.05$

The result of the t-test in Table 1 indicated that the calculated t-value is -.97 which is less than critical t-value of 1.960. This hypothesis is therefore accepted. Therefore, there is no significant difference in the perceptions of married couples on the in-laws pressures on marriage on the basis of gender.

#### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference in the perceptions of respondents on in-laws Pressures on Marriage on the basis of religion.

**Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation and t-value of respondents’ expression on In-laws Pressures on Marriage on the Basis of Religion**

Religion	N	Mean	SD	df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Within groups	150	98.73	1.662	298	0.15	1.96
Between groups	150	92.41	1.683			

\*significant,  $p > 0.05$

The result of the t-test in table 2 indicated that the mean scores of respondents who share the same religious belief with their spouse were 98.73, while that of respondents with different religious beliefs with their spouse was 92.41. The table also indicates that the calculated t-value was 0.15 which is less than the critical t-value of 1.96, it then there is no significant difference in in-laws pressure as perceived by married couples who share the same religion and those who do not. The hypothesis is therefore accepted.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The finding of hypothesis one stated that there was no significant difference in the expression of male and female respondents on the in-laws pressures on marriage as perceived by married couples based on gender. This hypothesis was accepted in its null form. As indicated in table 2 that the calculated t-value is -.97 which is less than critical t-value of 1.960 level of significance; this means that there was no significant difference in the perception of in-laws pressure as viewed by subjects of gender. One would have expected a difference in the perceptions of female respondents since they are more involved in the relationship with parents-in-law, and they feel the pinch more, this finding has also proved otherwise. Therefore, the assertions of Elman, Press and Rosenkrantz (1970) in Ibrahim (2011) which stated that the perceptions of male and female respondents differ are contradicted. This finding also contradicted the statement in the Oniye, (2008) who found that sex and age are important variables identified to be responsible for differences in perceptual functioning.

The finding of hypothesis two indicated that there is no significant difference in in-laws pressure as perceived by married couples who share the same religion and those who do not. This hypothesis was accepted in its null form. As indicated in table 3, the t-value calculated was less than the critical value at 1.96 levels of significance; this means that there was no significant difference in the perception of in-laws pressure as viewed by subjects who share the same religious beliefs and those who do not. This finding contradicts that of Oniye (2008) whose findings revealed that uniformity of religion between husband and wife tends to foster marriage stability. He further explains that a family that prays together tends to stick together. Ogundeji, (2010) also tends that in extreme difficulties, a couple may offer joint prayers to solve their problems.

### **Counselling Implications**

The implication of this study is that counselling is an important aspect of human life without which the society will be in a confused state. Counselling enables people (especially couples) live a well-adjusted and happy life. The findings of this study will no doubt be of great advantage to counsellors in carrying out their work more effectively. Newly married couples will be properly guided on how to manage other social problems and discourage broken homes and as such raising a prosperous family. More so, couples between the ages of 20 years to 35 years should be enlightened more on the need and importance of good communication and relations with in-laws in marriage through programmes like workshop, seminar, and symposiums. This study will be of help in reducing divorce rates in our societies and also correct the notion that marriage today is an institution of woe and grief.

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that as far that married couples were no significant differences in the perceptions of in-laws pressures on marriage on the basis of gender. To this end, in the study that there was no significant difference in the perception of in-laws pressure as viewed by couples who share the same religious beliefs and those who do not. But the assertion that uniformity of religion between husband and wife tends to foster marriage stability and the family that prays together tends to stick together and When ever extreme difficulties, a couple may offer joint prayers to solve their problems. But when it is a strong love, patience, endurance and high sense of understanding existed between married couples in order to enable them handle any arising situation that seems unpleasant.

## Recommendations

In-laws have a vast role to play in the success of marriage because of the close relationship their influence has on a couple. This has made it possible because of the cultural or societal expectations placed on them which make them to have a say in the family of their relations. Therefore, considering the above, the study wishes to suggest the following recommendations to help reduce in-laws pressures in marriages:

1. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that married couples should always seek for marital counseling toward establishing and maintaining a healthy marital life. Since gender cannot be ruled out of marital life. There is a need to lay more emphases on marital communication and its effect on marital life. Various techniques that can promote effect communication between married couples should also be inculcated in the males and female children since they are going out to establish their new life.
2. And also it was recommended that married couples' religion and communication should be placed in its rightful position in marriage for it would enhance marital satisfaction, problem free marriage, peaceful home and society since the family is the foundation of the human society. This study will be of help in reducing divorce rates in our societies and also correct the notion that marriage today is an institution of woe and grief.

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## ASSESSMENT OF SCHOOL-RELATED FACTORS IN SECONDARY SCHOOL LEARNERS' MENTAL HEALTH AND SUICIDE RISK IN NIGERIA

By

**Agnes Ijeoma ONONAIWU (PhD)**

Department of Counselling Psychology, Faculty of Education and Arts

Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria

[agnesononaiwu72@gmail.com](mailto:agnesononaiwu72@gmail.com) 08165650903

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### Abstract

This paper addresses the escalating mental health crisis among secondary school learners in Nigeria, emphasizing the impact of school-related factors on their well-being and suicide risk. Amid global concerns regarding adolescents' mental health, Nigeria grapples with unique challenges arising from socio-economic, cultural, and educational factors influencing its youth's psychological health. The study aims to explore and understand the intricacies of these challenges within the Nigerian context. It goes further to examine risks and influencers of mental health crisis among secondary school students in Nigeria. It concludes that prioritizing mental health education, early intervention, and the creation of supportive school environments can influence mental health stability of secondary school students in Nigeria. Among its recommendations is conducting more extensive and comprehensive researches for deeper discoveries into the specific school-related factors affecting secondary school learners' mental health and suicide risk in Nigeria. Also, enhancing teacher training programmes to equip educators with the skills and knowledge necessary to recognize signs of mental distress in students and provide appropriate support.

**Keywords:** Assessment, School-Related Factors, Mental Health, Suicide Risk, and Secondary School Learners

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### Introduction

In recent years, concerns surrounding mental well-being of adolescents have gained significant attention worldwide, with a growing recognition of the challenges they face in an ever-evolving and demanding environment. Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, is no exception to this global phenomenon. The mental health of secondary school learners in Nigeria has become an issue of paramount importance, as the nation grapples with the complex interplay of socio-economic, cultural, and educational factors affecting the psychological well-being of its youth. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), mental health disorders among adolescents are on the rise globally, with an estimated 10-20% of adolescents experiencing mental health issues (WHO, 2020). In Nigeria, this issue is compounded by various factors, including the stressors associated with the educational system, socio-economic disparities, and the rapidly changing social landscape. As adolescents navigate the critical phase of their lives marked by academic pressures, peer relationships, and identity formation, it becomes imperative to understand the unique challenges they face in the Nigerian context and develop strategies to address their mental health needs.

Nigerian secondary school learners, typically aged between 16 and 19, face a multitude of challenges that can have profound impacts on their mental health. These challenges include, but are not limited to, academic pressures, family expectations, societal norms, and the rapidly changing digital age with its influence on social interactions. The traditional emphasis on academic achievement, often measured by standardized examinations, can place an immense burden on students. The fear of failure in these examinations, such as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), National Examinations Council's Senior School Certificate Examination (NECO) can result in high levels of stress and anxiety (Adelugba, Adebayo, & Adelugba, 2021). Peer pressure, societal expectations, and cultural norms can lead to issues related to self-esteem and body image, which are known risk factors for mental health challenges (Ogunnaike et al., 2019). Additionally, the pervasive influence of technology and social media has introduced new challenges related to cyber-bullying, addiction, and the distortion of reality, which can further exacerbate mental health issues (Olusanya et al., 2020). The repercussions of the mental health crisis among Nigerian secondary school learners are far-reaching. Untreated mental health issues can impair cognitive development, hinder academic performance, and lead to school dropout rates (Atilola, 2015). Moreover, untreated mental health challenges during adolescence can persist into adulthood, affecting an individual's overall well-being, employability, and social functioning (Gureje, Lasebikan, Ephraim-Oluwanuga, Olley, & Kola, 2005). The implications are not limited to the individuals themselves but extend to families, communities, and the nation at large. A lack of adequate mental health support can contribute to increased healthcare costs, decreased productivity, and potentially higher rates of crime and substance abuse (Oshodi et al., 2016).

### **Impact of School -related Factors on Mental Health**

Thus, addressing the mental health crisis among Nigerian secondary school students is not just a matter of individual well-being but a crucial societal concern. Addressing school-related factors is of paramount significance when it comes to mental health crisis and suicide risk among Nigerian secondary school students has significant impact in the following ways:

**(i) Impact on Academic Performance:** School-related stressors can significantly affect students' academic performance. When students experience high levels of stress due to factors like excessive workload or competitive environments, their ability to concentrate and learn effectively is compromised ((Adelugba et al., 2021)). This, in turn, can lead to lower academic achievement and decreased motivation to excel in their studies. According to Adelugba, Adebayo, and Adelugba (2021) academic stress is a prevalent issue among Nigerian secondary school students, adversely affecting their academic performance.

**(ii) Emotional Well-being and Self-esteem:** School-related factors can influence students' emotional well-being and self-esteem. For instance, bullying or negative peer interactions can erode a student's self-esteem and contribute to feelings of isolation and depression (Olusanya et al., 2020). Addressing such factors is crucial for maintaining students' mental health, Olusanya et al. (2020) highlighted the detrimental effects of cyber-bullying on the emotional well-being of adolescents in Nigeria.

**(iii) Attendance and Dropout Rates:** A school environment that does not address mental health concerns can lead to increased absenteeism and dropout rates. Students struggling with mental health issues may be more likely to skip school or eventually drop out to escape the stress and pressures they face (Atilola, 2015). Atilola (2015) emphasized the relationship between mental health issues and school dropout rates in Nigeria.

**(iv) Long-term Impact:** Untreated mental health challenges during secondary school can have long-lasting consequences. These challenges can persist into adulthood, affecting individuals' overall well-being, employability, and social functioning ((Gureje et al., 2005)). Consequently, addressing school-related factors is critical for preventing the long-term implications of untreated mental health issues. In their study, Gureje et al. (2005) conducted a community study in Nigeria, finding out the long-term impact of untreated mental health issues.

**(v) Economic and Societal Implications:** Failing to address school-related factors that contribute to the mental health crisis among secondary school learners can have broader economic and societal implications. Increased healthcare costs, decreased productivity, and potentially higher rates of crime and substance abuse are some of the societal consequences ((Oshodi et al., 2016). In a study conducted, Oshodi et al. (2016) investigated substance use among secondary school students in Nigeria and established its implications on the society.

### **Impact of Mental Health on Nigerian Secondary School Students**

The following are the impact of mental health on secondary school students:

**(i) Academic Pressure:** Nigerian students face intense academic pressure due to a competitive education system. The need to excel in examinations, especially, the Senior School Certificate Examinations, can lead to stress, anxiety, and depression among students (Olarewaju & Ojo, 2017).

**(ii) Socio-economic Factors:** Many students come from low-income families, and financial constraints can exacerbate stress and mental health issues. Lack of access to educational resources and a stable home environment can negatively impact students' well-being (Onukwugha & Onukwugha, 2019).

**(iii) Cultural Expectations:** Nigerian culture places a strong emphasis on academic achievement and obedience to authority figures. This can create a sense of pressure and fear of failure among students, contributing to mental health problems (Adeyemo, Ogunwobi, & Sotunde, 2020). Societal norms and expectations regarding gender roles can also contribute to mental health issues, as adolescents may struggle with conforming to these expectations (Good et al., 2012).

**(iv) Bullying and Peer Pressure:** Bullying and peer pressure are prevalent in Nigerian secondary schools. These issues can lead to feelings of isolation and depression among students (Adelabu, 2019). Adolescence is a time when peer relationships become central, and peer

pressure can have a profound impact on mental health. Students may feel pressured to conform to social norms and engage in risky behaviors (Brechtwald & Prinstein, 2011).

**(v) Lack of Mental Health Services:** Nigeria has a shortage of mental health professionals, and mental health services are often inaccessible or stigmatized. This lack of support makes it challenging for students to seek help for their mental health issues (Gureje et al., 2020). The shortage of school counselors and mental health professionals in educational institutions can also hinder early intervention and support (Schulte-Körne et al., 2016)).

**(vi) Family Environment:** The family environment plays a crucial role in the mental health of secondary school learners. Family conflicts, parental expectations, and unstable family dynamics can contribute to stress and anxiety (Barker et al., 2018). Adolescents from dysfunctional or abusive families may be at a higher risk of developing mental health issues (Barker et al., 2018).

**(vii) Technology and Social Media:** Excessive use of technology and social media platforms can have adverse effects on mental health. Cyberbullying, social comparison, and the pressure to maintain an idealized online image can contribute to anxiety and depression (Twenge & Campbell, 2018). The constant exposure to unrealistic beauty standards and curated lifestyles on social media can negatively impact adolescents' self-esteem (Perloff, 2014).

### **Suicide Risk among Secondary School Students**

Suicide risk among secondary school learners is a complex and concerning issue that has garnered attention from researchers, educators, and mental health professionals. Suicide among learners, particularly adolescents in secondary school settings, is a critical concern with multifaceted factors influencing its occurrence. It is of no doubt a global issue. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), suicide is the second leading cause of death among individuals aged 15 to 29 years worldwide (WHO, 2019). This age group includes many secondary school learners therefore becoming a critical concern with multifaceted factors influencing its occurrence.

Several factors contribute to the heightened risk of suicide among secondary school Students such as:

- (i) Mental Health Issues:** Adolescents may grapple with mental health challenges such as depression, anxiety, or mood disorders, which can significantly increase the risk of suicidal ideation and attempts.
- (ii) Bullying:** Experiences of bullying, whether in person or online, can lead to feelings of isolation and hopelessness, contributing to suicide risk.
- (iii) Academic Pressure:** Intense academic pressure, including high expectations from parents and educators, can create overwhelming stress for students, potentially leading to feelings of inadequacy and despair.
- (iv) Peer Relationships:** Peer relationships play a crucial role during adolescence. Struggles with social isolation, rejection, or conflicts with peers can contribute to suicidal thoughts.

- (v) **Family Dynamics:** Family conflicts, dysfunction, or inadequate support systems can exacerbate an adolescent's vulnerability to suicide.
- (vi) **Substance Abuse:** Substance abuse issues, such as drug or alcohol misuse, are often intertwined with mental health challenges and can increase the risk of self-harm.
- (vii) **Access to Means:** Easy access to lethal means, such as firearms or medications, can escalate the risk of successful suicide attempts.
- (viii) **Lack of Awareness and Support:** Stigmatization of mental health issues and a lack of awareness about available support resources can prevent learners from seeking help when needed.

### **Strategies for Preventing Mental Health and Suicide Risks among Secondary School Students**

Preventing mental health issues and suicide risks among secondary school students require a multifaceted approach that involves various stakeholders, including educators, parents, mental health professionals, and policymakers. Here are some evidence-based strategies:

- (i) **Mental Health Education and Awareness Programmes** Implement comprehensive mental health education programmes within secondary schools. If awareness programmes are organized, learners stand the chance to benefit and come to the knowledge of managing their mental issues.
- (ii) **Early Detection and Screening:** When regular conduct of mental health screenings are done, it enables identification of learners at risk of mental health issues. When mental issues are discovered early, solution would be sort to combat further development.
- (iii) **Accessible Counseling Services:** Schools should have reliable and functional counseling services which should also be accessible to learners to discuss their issues with the Counselors.
- (iv) **Anti-Bullying Programmes:** Schools should provide a framework for and implement anti-bullying programmes that create a safe and inclusive school environment.
- (v) **Peer Support and Mentoring:** Schools should establish peer support programmes and mentoring initiatives that connect students with trusted peers or adults.
- (vi) **Parent and Community Involvement:** Parents should be engaged in the quest to solve mental health issues as it affects their wards. The community should also be enlisted in activities tailored towards improving mental health of learners.
- (vii) **Training for Educators:** There should be training for educators on recognizing signs of mental health issues, suicide risk, and how to respond effectively.
- (viii) **Reducing Academic Pressure:** Academic pressure of learners should be reduced. The whole academic process should be reviewed such that the pressured areas should be re-worked to lessen academic burden on the part of the learners.

- (ix) **Encouraging Physical Activity and Healthy Lifestyles:** Promote physical activity and healthy lifestyle among learners. Regular exercise would promote mental health and keep them fit.

Incorporating these strategies into the educational system can help create a supportive and nurturing environment that reduces the risk of mental health issues and suicide among secondary school learners. However, if the above are not properly and adequately managed, the following can constitute hindrances to solutions to solving learners' mental challenges:

(i) **Under-reporting of Mental Health Issues:** Under-reporting and stigmatization of mental health issues among secondary school learners is a significant concern that has been documented in numerous studies. This phenomenon can have detrimental effects on the well-being of students and hinder their access to appropriate support and treatment. Secondary school students often under-report their mental health problems due to various factors, including fear of stigma and discrimination (Eisenberg et al., 2007). According to a study by Gulliver et al. (2010), approximately 70% of adolescents with mental health issues do not seek help or report their problems to anyone. This under-reporting can be attributed to a lack of awareness about mental health issues and available resources (Gulliver et al., 2010).

(ii) **Stigmatization of Mental Health Issues:** Stigmatization of mental health issues is prevalent among secondary school students, and it often leads to social exclusion and discrimination (Corrigan et al., 2010). Studies have shown that stigma related to mental health can prevent students from seeking help or disclosing their struggles (Corrigan et al., 2010). Negative stereotypes about mental illness persist in schools, which contribute to the stigmatization of affected students (Pescosolido et al., 2010).

(iii) **Barriers to Seeking Help:** The fear of being labeled as "mentally ill" can deter students from seeking help for their mental health issues (Eisenberg et al., 2007). Stigma also affects how teachers and peers perceive students with mental health problems, making it difficult for affected individuals to discuss their issues openly (Pescosolido et al., 2010).

## Conclusions

In examining school-related factors in secondary school learners' mental health and suicide risks in Nigeria, this paper underscores the critical importance of addressing the multifaceted challenges faced by students within the educational system. Our analysis has demonstrated that schools can serve as both a source of stress and a potential solution. By implementing evidence-based strategies, such as mental health education, accessible counselling services, and anti-bullying programs, schools can create an environment that fosters well-being and resilience. Also, the collaboration of various stakeholders, including educators, parents, mental health professionals, and policymakers, is essential for effective prevention and support initiatives. In conclusion, calls for a holistic approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of school-related factors and their impact on students' well-being.



## Recommendations

The following recommendations have been offered:

1. **Conduct Further Research:** Conduct more extensive and comprehensive research to delve deeper into the specific school-related factors affecting secondary school learners' mental health and suicide risk in Nigeria. This may include longitudinal studies to track the long-term effects of these factors.
2. **Evaluate Existing Mental Health Programmes:** Evaluate the effectiveness of existing mental health programmes and initiatives in Nigerian secondary schools. Assess their impact on students' mental well-being and identify areas for improvement.
3. **Develop Culturally Tailored Interventions:** Create culturally sensitive mental health interventions that consider the unique socio cultural context of Nigeria. These programmes should be designed to resonate with local beliefs, practices, and values.
4. **Strengthen Teacher Training:** Enhance teacher training programmes to equip educators with the skills and knowledge necessary to recognize signs of mental distress in students and provide appropriate support. This includes training on effective communication and referral to mental health professionals.
5. **Enhance Accessibility of Counseling Services:** Improve the accessibility of school-based counselling services by increasing the number of trained counsellors and ensuring students are aware of and comfortable using these services.
6. **Raise Awareness and Reduce Stigma:** Education authorities should launch nationwide awareness campaigns to reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and suicide. These campaigns should target students, parents, teachers, and the wider community.
7. **Encourage Parental Involvement:** Promote parental involvement in their children's education and mental well-being. Organize workshops and seminars for parents to learn about identifying and addressing mental health concerns in their children.
8. **Policy Advocacy:** Government advocate for policy changes at the national and state levels to allocate resources and funding for mental health services in schools. Policies should prioritize mental health education and support.
9. **Establish Supportive School Environments:** Encourage schools to create supportive and inclusive environments where students feel safe and valued. This includes implementing anti-bullying policies and programs.
10. **Collaborative Efforts:** Government should Foster collaboration among schools, mental health professionals, local communities, and government agencies to address mental health and suicide risks comprehensively. Building partnerships can lead to more effective interventions.

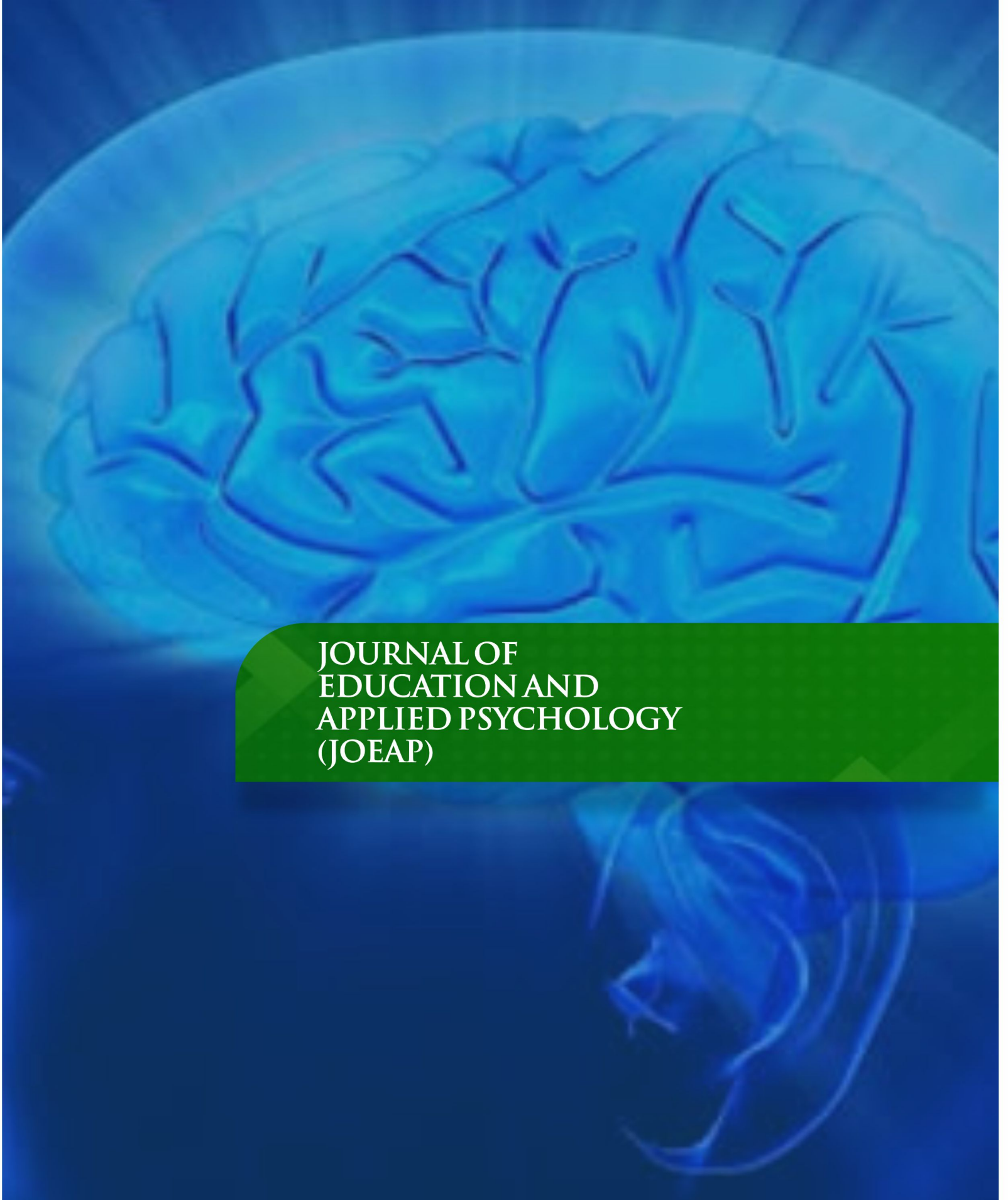
11. Long-Term Monitoring and Evaluation: Implement a system for long-term monitoring and evaluation of mental health initiatives to assess their impact over time and make necessary adjustments.

12. Research Disparities: - Investigate any disparities in mental health and suicide risk among different demographic groups within Nigerian secondary schools, such as gender, socioeconomic status, and urban/rural locations.

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Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, P. M. B. 11, Lapai, Niger State, Nigeria.

**E-mail:** [ibbuljoeap@gmail.com](mailto:ibbuljoeap@gmail.com) **Website:** <https://ojs.ibbu-journals.com.ng/JOEAP>