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**International Journal of  
Specialized and Professional  
Education (IJOSPED)**

Vol. 1 No 1

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## **Foreword**

This is the first issue of the International Journal of Specialized and Professional Education (IJOSPED), and it is my pleasure to introduce the maiden edition of the journal to the academic world. This is a journal with a difference. The Journal is an intellectual property of Lagos State University of Education.

Over the past few decades, researchers have produced a body of literature that examines the educational importance of space, finding that how learning spaces are laid out, furnished, and equipped makes a difference in the teaching and learning process. In pursuit of manuscripts of the highest quality, multiple opportunities for mentoring, and greater reach and citation of IJOSPED publications, IJOSPED encourages authors to share their drafts to seek feedback from relevant communities unless the manuscript is already under review or in the publication queue after being accepted.

In other words, to be eligible for publication in IJOSPED, manuscripts should not be shared publicly (e.g., online), while under review (after being initially submitted or after being revised and resubmitted for reconsideration), or upon notice of acceptance and before publication. Once published, authors are strongly encouraged to share the published version widely, with an acknowledgement of its initial publication in IJOSPED.

In this maiden edition, 10 peer-reviewed articles are published. They cut across the specialized and professional education spectrums. These include the influence of social media usage on the teaching effectiveness of university lecturers in Oyo State; Academic goal-setting practices of university students in Lagos State, Nigeria; implications for counselling; career decision-making and school business succession plans among children of private school owners in Osun State, South-West Nigeria; Treating adolescents and adult drug

addicts with the Narcotic Anonymous (NA) counselling package and Impact of Information Technology on Family Dynamics: Implications for Counseling.

Others are Self-concept and value as predictors of pupils' academic performance in social studies (a case study of a selected public primary school in Lagos State); Inclusion of adults with special needs in adult literacy centres; Availability and deployment of employability skills among students in the sociology of education; The use of culturally relevant mathematics activities in Nigerian early childhood and primary classrooms and Texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' writing skills: a study of Nigerian higher institution students' essays.

I strongly recommend this high-quality journal to scholars and students for patronage.

**Adebayo Oluwole, PhD**

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# General Introduction

## General Introduction

**The International Journal of Specialized and Professional Education (IJOSPED)** invites researchers, scholars, and practitioners to contribute to our upcoming issue focusing on the evolving landscape of specialized and professional education and other related issues.

## Scope and Topics of Interest

**IJOSPED** publishes original research articles reporting on research that fulfils the criteria of a generally accepted research paradigm which critically evaluates the research done in a specific field in education. Thus, we welcome original research, theoretical papers and case studies that explore innovative approaches, challenges, and best practices in this field.

## Topics of Interest

We encourage submissions on a wide range of topics related to specialized and professional education, including but not limited to:

- Pedagogical innovations in professional training.
- Technology-enhanced learning in specialized education.
- Assessment and accreditation in professional programs.
- Lifelong learning and up-skilling in specialized fields.
- Inclusivity and diversity in specialized education.
- Challenges and opportunities in online professional education.
- Industry-academic partnerships and their impact on specialized education.

- Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood and Primary Education
- Special Needs Education
- Topical Issues in Adult Education
- Educational Psychology, -Guidance and Counselling Education-Measurement and Evaluation
- Counselling Psychology and other related matters
- And any other issue related to Specialized and Professional Education.

### **Editorial Policy**

Please note that the manuscript can only be accepted the:

- i. make significant contributions to the field and extend the borders of educational debate.
- ii. arouse readers' interest and stimulate debate.
- iii. reflect sound scholarship and research design with appropriate, correctly interpreted references to other authors and works.
- iv. have contents that are accessible to the broad readership of the education community and are not just addressed to specialists in a particular subject area.

When articles are first received, they are scanned for plagiarism compliance. The result will be communicated to the authors and if it meets our 18% maximum policy, it will be accepted and if not, it will be returned for a rework

If the article complies with the Journal's policy and scope, it will then move on to external double-blind peer review. The author(s) must ensure that the language in the manuscript is suitably edited and the name and address of the language editor must be supplied.

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## **Submission Guidelines**

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Manuscript files can be in the following formats: DOC or DOCX. Microsoft Word documents should not be locked or protected.

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Manuscripts should not exceed (7000) words excluding references and appendices. We encourage you to present and discuss your findings concisely.

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Highlight the research objectives, methodology, main findings, and implications.

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**Organize your manuscript into sections:** Introduction, Literature Review, Methodology, Results, Discussion, Conclusion, and References.

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Manuscripts may be submitted electronically by email or via the submission portal at [ijosped.lasued.edu.ng](http://ijosped.lasued.edu.ng). The Editorial Committee then decides whether or not to accept the manuscript for review.

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We look forward to receiving your contributions and sharing valuable insights to advance specialized and professional education.

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# **1** Influence of Social Media Usage on Teaching Effectiveness of University Lecturers in Oyo State

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**MELEKEOWEI Premobowei Dele and  
OJUOLAPE Bode**

## **Abstract**

*Technological incompetence and limited access to social media platforms were observed to impede classroom instruction and delivery during the COVID-19 pandemic period among teaching staffers of universities in Ibadan, Oyo state. This study therefore investigated the influence of social media platforms on the teaching effectiveness of university lecturers. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The sample size consisted of three hundred and fifty (350) lecturers randomly selected from the University of Ibadan. The social media awareness and accessibility scale (0.69) was used to generate data. Four research questions were raised and answered using Frequency distribution, T-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the study showed that the level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state is high ( $= 4.26 > 3.00$ ), and there was a significant difference in teaching effectiveness based on gender (male and female) among university lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state ( $T(348) = .352, p < .05$ ). Lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms ( $r(348) = .424, p < 0.05$ ) and lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms ( $r(348) = .415, p < 0.05$ ) had relationship to teaching*

*effectiveness among university lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. It was recommended that Lecturers should be taught different social media techniques as this will help in increasing teaching effectiveness and that lecturers should adopt different social media platforms into the teaching and learning process in tertiary institutions.*

**Key Words:** Lecturers, Social Media Platforms, Teaching Effectiveness

### **Introduction**

One bright spot in the pandemic cloud was the use of social media tools for teaching and learning, which enhanced the capacity to learn, share, access, create, and obtain useful information in a variety of academic subjects while also allowing instructors and students to engage in a stimulating learning environment (Dutta, 2020). Digital learning experiences enhanced pedagogy and alleviated the boredom of classroom confinement by providing instructors and students with access to a wider range of online experts and resources as well as materials such as presentations, videos, and lecture notes. While there were certain difficulties with online learning, including inadequate network access and other technical issues, social media use as a substitute for traditional classroom instruction was widespread. (Akinnubi, Sule, & Yisa, 2012).

On the other hand, a university's ability to fulfil its mission is greatly influenced by the efficiency of its teaching. One of the main pillars of a successful university system is efficient teaching in academia. When lecturers carry out their duties as expected, their university can fulfil its mission; nevertheless, when lecturers fail to do their jobs effectively, the opposite happens (Alabdulkareem, 2015). According to Akinnubi, Sule, and Yisa (2012), an educational institution can only accomplish its goals by enlisting the help of qualified instructors who possess the necessary skills to provide high-quality instruction through contact with students in a teaching-learning environment. No matter how impressive an institution and its curriculum are. Awotua-Efebo (2014), opined that the

implementation of its programs will be ineffective unless skilled and effective teachers handle them. This means teaching and learning depend on teachers. This explains why an effective teacher has been conceptualized as one who produces desired results in the course of his duty as a teacher (**Devlin and Samarawickrema, 2010**). Considering the foregoing, the teaching effectiveness of a lecturer is of utmost importance.

In higher education institutions, lecturers have three primary responsibilities: teaching, research, and community service. They are known as the "three canons of academics" according to Nadeau (2020). Additionally, Vogel, Rose, Okdie, Eckles, Katheryn, and Brittany (2015) assert that the goals of higher education, particularly universities, are knowledge creation, dissemination through research, and community service. According to Klassen and Tze (2014), academic staff members' research output is now crucial to their chances of advancement within the university. A highly successful lecturer can also be a researcher, a knowledge producer, a distributor, and a receiver (Modebelu&Kalu-Uche, 2013). It is required of lecturers to participate in activities designed to help them acquire new knowledge and abilities needed to do their jobs well. Within the university system, retraining programs, mentorship, seminars, research publications, conferences, symposiums, inaugural lectures, technology and communication, gadget use, and other events all support the professional growth of lecturers (Udoh-Uwah and Etim, 2018).

However, prior studies have revealed that because internet connection is so convenient on school grounds, the majority of instructors at public universities in Nigeria are not doing their duties as they should. In a perfect world, professors and all other staff members would take pleasure in their work every day and look forward to returning to their homes and offices the following day. This is because these employees give their all. After all, they have no reservations about their work (Shaomei, Reynolds, Li, and Guzmán, 2019). Nonetheless, it has been noted that most lecturers in Nigeria, and most developing nations, are ineffective educators. Even though

a large number of lecturers work as teachers, they don't put all of their energy into their work, and students don't receive the finest instruction. Due to a lack of other options, the majority of people who continue in education manage private enterprises, which undoubtedly takes up teaching time (Shaomei, Reynolds, Li, and Guzmán, 2019).

Social media's accessibility, affordability for each user, ease of use, and network effects makes it a useful teaching tool in higher education (Choi, & Kang, 2014). According to Kietzmann, Hermkens, and Kristopher (2011), social media platforms serve as a means of connecting people and giving them access to content creation and sharing capabilities. Common examples of social media apps include Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Wikis, Twitter, Blogs, Pinterest, Tumblr, YouTube, Instagram, and Flickr. These technological advancements are drawing in college and university students as well as instructors, who are interested in learning how to share and communicate with one another for educational purposes and stay inspired to work hard (Hughes, 2009). Over time, it has become clear that a large number of lecturers were interested in using social media tools, including wikis, Twitter, blogs, microblogs, video-sharing websites, and social networking sites, to enhance their classes. This was particularly the case during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In higher education, social media use is growing in popularity. Every facet of the academy has been profoundly impacted, including professional development, publishing, research, teaching, communication, and student life. Numerous universities and colleges across the globe are observing the trend. Online social media can be used in a variety of ways to support learning and teaching. Numerous recent studies indicate that the widespread acceptance and use of social media apps in conjunction with formal learning environments presents new chances for educational institutions to innovate and modernize while also better preparing students for the twenty-first century (Choi, & Kang, 2014).



Although social media started because of personal use, it has however become useful in virtually all domains. From a preliminary check, it appears that almost every polytechnic and university in the world has adopted some form of social media, using it for general outreach, to attract potential students, maintain alumni relations, and increase institutional reputation and pride. The primary reason for adopting social media in the classroom is because it is familiar to almost everybody and also because it is less expensive and requires minimal training. One of the largest surveys of social media in higher education to date shows that universities can leverage social media into the classroom and ensure it is more useful than it is now (Purnama, 2018).

Lecturers use social media online to motivate and create excitement for learning among their students using, for example, VDO on YouTube.com by showing certain interesting VDOs or even requiring their students to submit assignments via the YouTube channel (Salem, Zumrah, Noor, Othman and Rahman, 2017). In addition, by using social media, lecturers can communicate with students immediately and in real-time when students are online and asking questions. Social media also provides an opportunity for both parties to build relationships and establish trust, as well as reduce stress. Furthermore, lecturers can reach out to students who neglect to submit their work as they will be able to communicate with them immediately as well as answer any questions that students may have. Also, lecturers can create teaching materials by using VDO clips and posting them online or on social networks, as well as creating Word files or PDFs that can be posted on social media platforms (Kenna, & Hensley, 2019).

Social media, in the context of this study, is measured in terms of awareness, accessibility and usage. Awareness is a state of consciousness and purpose. **Al-Fawareh, (2016)** viewed awareness as the condition of being aware and able to understand what is happening around one. Awareness is also a state or ability to perceive, feel or be conscious of events, objects or sensory patterns. Awareness means having an idea of the existence of something. The potential of

social media platforms for information dissemination can only be of benefit to lecturers if they are aware of their existence. The extent of awareness of social media platforms among lecturers will determine the extent they are most likely to utilize them for information dissemination and lectures

In addition, accessibility of social media platforms means the degree to which social media platforms are easily accessible by lecturers to teach students. The university system, according to **Atolagbe, &Oyeniran, (2015)**, has embraced the use of various ICT platforms in the form of the Internet and other electronic materials in the delivery of lectures to the students. The reason is to provide adequate and uninterrupted access to ICT facilities. As Julian and Tabrizi. (2017) noted, that the ICT facility (Internet) is very crucial in that it provides access to a vast amount of information, which students need to achieve their academic goals.

In addition, students and teachers/lecturers are sometimes not up to date in terms of using social media for teaching and learning and are not familiar with integrating and taking advantage of social media application (APP) software in their teaching and learning (**Mayangsari, &Aprianti, 2017**). This will negatively affect their ability to take full advantage of using and accessing social media for academic purposes. There are also financial implications such as the cost of data and the cost of buying social media-enabled phones (smartphones), tablets and laptops. If not resolved, all these problems are capable of contributing to poor academic performance among the students and reducing their success rate. This is the gap this study seeks to address. Thus, the need to enhance the effective delivery of teaching is the reason why this study focused on the influence of social media usage on teaching effectiveness among university lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were answered in the study;

1. What is the level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state?

2. Is there a difference in teaching effectiveness based on gender among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state?
3. What is the significant relationship between lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state?
4. What is the significant relationship between lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state?

### **Methodology**

A descriptive survey design was adopted for this survey to assess social media usage and teaching effectiveness among University Lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo State to explain and describe the subject of interest among lecturers.

### **Population of the Study**

The target population comprised Lecturers from three selected Universities namely; the University of Ibadan, Lead City University and Technical University.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

A simple random sampling technique was used in selecting the participants of this study. Randomly, a total of 350 Lecturers in the three selected Universities in Ibadan were considered.

### **Research Instrument**

Social media awareness and accessibility scales (SOMAAS) were developed and used to gather information from the respondents of the study. Content and face validity were established and strengthened by two experts in test and measurement. The reliability coefficient of the instrument is 0.69. This was considered stable enough to be used for data collection.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Following data cleaning, the data were coded and put into a computer program called the Statistical Package for Social Sciences for

Analysis (SPSS). To identify the significant link at the 0.05 level of significance, the data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean, tables, and percentages), the T-test, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC).

**Results**

**Research Question 1:**What is the level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state?

**Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Teaching Effectiveness and Social Media Usage**

Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean $\bar{x}$	SD
1. I learn more when I regulate my own learning experience and seek information on things that I want to learn about	222 63.4%	86 24.6%	42 12.0%	-	-	4.51	.701
2. I use Internet technology to explore topics of interest for students.	211 60.3%	98 28.0%	41 11.7%	-	-	4.49	.697
3. Using social media makes teaching easier and more convenient for me	177 50.6%	94 26.9%	62 17.7%	12 3.4%	5 1.4%	4.22	.951
4. Social media usage helps me be successful in my teaching.	180 51.4%	115 32.9%	47 13.4%	6 1.7%	enrolled	4.33	.814
5. I enrolled more in online classes to improve my teaching.	205 58.6%	119 34.0%	26 7.4%	-	-	4.51	.632
6. I use Internet communications technology tools when I want to teach my students.	113 32.3%	173 49.4%	37 10.6%	20 5.7%	7 2.0%	4.04	.915
7. I share interests and reflections online based on my teaching	156 44.6%	139 39.7%	30 8.6%	17 4.9%	8 2.3%	4.19	.947
8. I learn many things by interacting with other Internet users.	118 33.7%	138 39.4%	38 10.9%	36 10.3%	20 5.7%	3.85	1.163
<b>Weighted mean = 4.26</b>							

Table 1 above shows the frequency distribution of the level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. I learn more when I regulate my own learning experience and seek information on things that I want to learn about ( $\bar{x} = 4.51$ ) was ranked highest by the mean score rating and was followed in succession by enrolling more in online classes to improve my teaching. ( $\bar{x} = 4.51$ ); I use Internet technology to explore topics of interest for students. ( $\bar{x} = 4.49$ ), Social media usage helps me to be successful in my teaching. ( $\bar{x} = 4.33$ ), Using social media makes teaching easier and more convenient for me ( $\bar{x} = 4.22$ ); I share interests and reflections online based on my teaching. ( $\bar{x} = 4.19$ ); I use Internet communications technology tools when I want to teach my students. ( $\bar{x} = 4.04$ ) and I learn many things by interacting with other Internet users. ( $\bar{x} = 3.85$ ) respectively. The table also shows the weighted mean of 4.26 which is greater than the standard mean of 3.00. This implies that the level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state is high.

**Research Question 2:** Is there a difference in teaching effectiveness based on gender among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state?

**Table 2: Summary Table of T-test for independent measures showing comparison of Teaching effectiveness based on gender**

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	Sig
Teaching effectiveness	Male	136	100.79	10.95			
	Female	214	99.92	11.19			
					348	.352	.549

From Table 2, the result showed that there was a significant difference in Teaching effectiveness based on gender (male and female) among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state ( $T_{(348)} = .352$ ,  $p < .05$ ). From the table above, male participants had a mean score of 100.9 while female participants had a mean score of 99.92 with a mean difference of 0.87 and statistically significant.

**Research Question 3:** What is the significant relationship between lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state

**Table 3 PPMC summary on the relationship between lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms and teaching effectiveness**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	R	Sig	P
Lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms	350	97.89	13.35	348	.424	.000	<0.05
Teaching effectiveness		100.26	11.09				

Table 3 shows a significant relationship between lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state;  $r_{(348)} = .424$   $p < 0.05$ . This implies that lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms had a moderate influence on teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state.

**Research Question 4:** What is the significant relationship between lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state?

**Table 3 PPMC summary on the relationship between lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms and teaching effectiveness**

Variable	N	Mean	SD	DF	R	Sig	P
Lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms	350	38.02	5.67	348	.415	.000	<0.05
Teaching effectiveness		100.26	11.09				

Table 3 shows a significant relationship between lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. The result revealed that there is a significant relationship between lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state;  $r_{(348)} = .415$   $p < 0.05$ . This implies that lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms had a moderate influence on teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state.

**Discussion of Findings**

On the level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media among university lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state, the weighted mean is greater than the standard mean. This implies that the level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media among university lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state is high. This research finding indicates that University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state have a high level of teaching effectiveness with the usage of social media. Also, considering the difference in teaching effectiveness based on gender among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state, the result shows that there is a significant difference in Teaching effectiveness based on gender (male and female) among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state, result. This implies that there are gender differences based on teaching effectiveness. Further result shows there is a significant relationship between lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. This implies that lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms had a moderate influence on

teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. The result further revealed that lecturers' awareness of teaching with social media platforms is a determinant of teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state.

Lastly, there is a significant relationship between lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms and teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. This implies that lecturers' accessibility to social media platforms had a moderate influence on teaching effectiveness among University lecturers in Ibadan, Oyo state. This is supported by the study of Ahmad, & Ahmad, (2018) stated that the level of awareness of librarians of social media tools has increased rapidly. *Zagorski, (2017)* also attested that tertiary institution librarians are to some degree aware of social media that can be used to provide library services. This is interesting because the level of awareness is a determinant of usage. Recently, there has been an increase towards the use of social media among librarians, and that is why they are using them to a high extent in performing their library functions. Bouhnik, Deshen, & Gan, (2014) reported that awareness and knowledge among library staff on social media applications is very poor. In a similar vein, Chen, Hwang, & Wang, (2012) reported that the rate of use of social media platforms by academic library personnel in Nigeria is very low as a result of a lack of awareness and training on the various kinds of social media and their applications to library services. Oyedele, & Oladeji, (2015) in their study revealed that the level of awareness of librarians of social media tools is increasing at a high rate. In a similar study, Cetinkaya (2017) revealed that there was a high level of awareness of the existence of Web 2.0 technologies among librarians. Ifeanyi-Obi, Olatunji, & Akpala, (2014) revealed in their study that, awareness and knowledge among library staff on social media applications are very poor, according to the authors, the majority of library staff are not using social media applications in their libraries. Based on the many conclusions drawn from this study, it is critical to acknowledge the impact of social media use as a useful tool for facilitating classroom engagement and raising the standard of teachers' efficacious instruction.



## **Conclusion**

Based on the study's findings, it was concluded that the productivity and efficacy of an academic staff as well as the calibre of its graduates significantly influences how effective postsecondary institutions are around the world. As a result, the primary factors influencing teaching procedures in postsecondary institutions, including colleges of education, are lecturers and human resources. This ensures that students receive a high-quality education. Research has demonstrated that lecturers are the institutional workforce that converts every country's educational curriculum into real-world learning experiences through teaching and learning. Social media is being used by libraries of all kinds more and more to interact with their patrons and provide accessibility to their programs and services. A normal library in the twenty-first century would need social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, Instagram, blogs, and others to disseminate information.

## **Recommendations**

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

1. Lecturers should be taught different social media techniques as this will help in increasing teaching effectiveness.
2. Lecturers should adopt different social media platforms into the teaching and learning process in tertiary institutions.
3. Policymakers should introduce courses and also make it clear for lecturers to be certified in the use of Information and communication technology (ICT) and other aspects of social media.
4. Lecturers should pay attention to the most used social media platforms that are suitable for students' academic activities.
5. The tertiary institution should design training/seminar on social media usage for lecturers.

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## Academic Goal Setting Practices of University 2 Students in Lagos State, Nigeria: Implications for Counselling

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### Abstract

*Students' inability to set data-based (specific, measurable, attainable, reliable and time-bound) personal improvement goals threatens their academic success. Hence, the study aimed to investigate year-one students' academic goal-setting practices at Lagos State University of Education, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research was used in carrying out this study. The study population consisted of 3,101 year-one students of the University. A sample size of five hundred and one (501) participants was selected through a proportional and simple random sampling technique. The Formative Goal Setting Questionnaire (FGSQ) developed by Research Collaboration (2015) was adapted and used as an instrument for the study. Two main research questions were answered while two null hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study. The study revealed higher data-based goals for all students than personal improvement goals. Nevertheless, data-based and personal improvement goal-setting for female students was higher than for male students. One sample test statistic and Anova used to analyse data for the two hypotheses also revealed that the mean difference between male and female year one students' data-based and personal improvement goal-setting formation was statistically significant ( $p <$*

*0.05). This means year one students' data-based and personal improvement goals showed significant gender differences. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended, among others, that therapeutic techniques that can help to change students' faulty thinking and challenge their lack of desire for personal improvement should be sought to treat students who have problems with setting high personal improvement goals. Counsellors also need to advocate continued research into how to increase the goal-setting ability of male students and should focus more on counselling male students' goal-setting ability.*

**Keywords:** Academic goal setting, Counselling, Practice, University, Year one Students.

### **Introduction**

The issue of academic goal setting among university students in Nigeria has become needful, especially in today's technological advancement and the influx of social media all over the globe. This assertion is corroborated by the studies of Li and Fan (2022), who found that social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are controlling youths these days and has led to media multitasking (using social media while trying to do an academic or professional activity) which according to them leads to reduction in paying adequate attention to their studies. Also, according to a study conducted by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in 2013, about 97% of undergraduate and graduate students use digital devices during class for non-academic purposes. The study also found that students who use digital devices now get distracted by social media, text messages and Email notifications during class time. No wonder McCoy (2013) submitted that a student's behaviour within a classroom is related to their work ethic outside class. The pertinent question that comes to one's mind is if students are not concentrating in class when a lecturer is teaching them, what will they be doing when they are alone?

Meanwhile, according to the studies of Van Rooij (2017) and Wilcoxon and Marrett (2011), the first year of studying is crucial for degree completion as students often drop out by the end of the first year of their degree program. For instance, the Australian Government (2020), Federal Ministry of Education and Research (2020) and National Center for Education Statistics (2020) reported that in the United States of America, 24% of first-year students drop out, while these rates have been estimated at 27% in Germany and 18% in Australia. The Dutch Inspectorate of Education (2021) and Van den Broek (2019) also reported that in Dutch universities, 26% of students drop out in the first year, of which 19% switch to another program and 7% leave higher education altogether. The story is not different in Nigeria as 2021 Vanguard News 2021 reported an 18% dropout rate of year one University students in Nigeria.

Muhammed, Olayiwola-Adedjoja and **Iretor-Oscar** (2021) define a goal as a dream with a definite plan and a behaviour or outcome that a person is consciously trying to perform or obtain. This means goals are individually determined and provide the framework for action and direction. Adara (2011) also opined that goals are personally important, within the reach of the individual to achieve and clearly defined with a specific plan setting and achieving goals. In addition, Locke and Latham (1990) asserted that goals motivate individuals to exert extra effort, persist and focus attention on relevant task features. According to Abe, Ilogu and Madueke (2014), goal-setting is necessary to identify what one should be doing, how he should be doing it, how long it should take and the things required for its accomplishment.

Gender differences in goal setting as the second variable of this study is necessary as it is one of the personal factors that have been related to differences found in academic goal setting. For example, Meece and Holt (1993); and Nolen (1988); have found that females have a greater need for setting academic goals; Rusillo and Arias (2004); Anderman and Anderman (1999); Midgley and Urda (1996) found that males show higher need for academic goal setting. Thus, findings regarding gender differences in achievement goal orientations have



been somewhat inconsistent. Apart from this, the knowledge of significant gender differences in students' academic goal-setting will dictate the particular gender that counsellors, lecturers and other stakeholders need to focus on for increased academic goal-setting.

The major concern of this study, therefore, stems from the fact that the myriad consequences of students' inability to set meaningful and personal improvement goals are a threat to the attainment of their motivation for learning and academic success and, as such, must be removed from the root otherwise, its attendant causes and implications may pose a greater challenge to the future education, well-being and overall development of learners and the nation at large. Therefore, the question that readily comes to one's mind is how the nation can change the path of undergraduates, especially those just coming into the system who are mostly internet addicted, lazy and careless about their educational pursuits.

Although different researchers have carried out studies on the impact of goal setting on students' motivation and academic performance, none has particularly worked on year one academic goal-setting practices at Lagos State University of Education. For instance, Adegboyega (2018) conducted research on the influence of achievement motivation on Nigerian undergraduates' attitudes towards examination. Abe, Ilogu and Madueke (2014) investigated the effect of goal-setting skills on students' academic performance in the English language in Enugu, Nigeria and found that performance in the English language was enhanced among participants exposed to goal-setting intervention compared to those in the control group.

Therefore, it becomes pertinent to find out practices of meaningful and personal improvement goals set by year one students of Lagos State University of Education using gender as a second variable. It is against this background that the researchers investigated the academic goal-setting practices among year-one students of Lagos State University of Education involving two Colleges of Education (Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education and Michael Otedola College of Primary Education) that have just been transmuted into a University of Education in February 2022. Hence, there is a need to

quickly carry out a study so that it could be a basis for making further policies that would help the pioneer students and also help other institutions in Nigeria and other nations.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The inability of some students to set realistic, measurable, meaningful and attainable academic goals that would motivate and regulate their behaviour to strive for academic success has been a major occurrence in tertiary institutions. This negative attitude has led to the ugly practice of the syndrome of sorting (financial gratification) and sex for marks among Nigerian undergraduates. Moreso, experience has revealed that many students show little or no interest in education as some prefer to engage in internet fraud (popularly called Yahoo business) than pay attention to their schooling and academic responsibilities. Internet addiction and its accompanying multifaceted negative influences on today's youths' academic, career, emotional, social and economic development cannot be overemphasized. Also, despite the importance of counselling in schools in modifying students' maladaptive behaviour, the human and material resources needed to make counselling more effective in helping students set realistic, measurable and meaningful goals are yet to be adequately provided. This makes the focus of this study fundamental.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The focus of this study is to investigate the practice of goal setting among year one students of Lagos State University of Education and to specifically:

1. Determine the difference in degree of data-based goals set by year one male and female students of Lagos State University of Education
2. Find out the difference in the degree of personal improvement goals set by year-one male and female students of Lagos State University of Education

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:

1. What difference exists in the degree of data-based goals set by male and female year one Lagos State University of Education students?
2. What is the difference in the degree of personal improvement goals set by year one male and female Lagos State University of Education students?

### **Research hypotheses**

The following research hypotheses were formulated for the study:

1. There is no significant gender difference in the data-based goals set by male and female year one students of Lagos State University of Education
2. There is no significant gender difference in the personal improvement goals set by male and female year one students of Lagos State University of Education.

### **Literature Review**

#### **Conceptual Review**

#### **Definition and Meaning of Academic Goal Setting**

Rowe, Mazzotti, Ingram, and Lee (2017) described goal setting as the identification of a specific accomplishment to be made in a specific area with measurable outcomes, such as actions and timelines for achievement. This definition makes goal setting personal, specific and measurable. Dotson (2016), however, submitted that goal setting focuses students on desired academic outcomes and direction in achieving success. This means setting goals. Goal setting is beneficial to individual learners as it propels them to pay more attention and put in more effort to achieve success. It also implies that goals direct behaviour and provide guidelines for how much effort individuals must put into their actions to have expected results. Gaumer, Erickson and Noonan (2018) defined academic goal setting as identifying specific academic objectives, while a wider definition

encompasses specific short- or long-term life or career objectives. This means every student is expected to identify what they hope to achieve in every course within a specified period. However, Brown and Latham (2000) indicated that in conditions where individuals set specific, difficult, but realistic goals, performance is higher than when individuals are just asked to do their best without specific goals.

### **Types of Academic Goal-Setting**

According to Gaumer, Erickson and Noonan (2018) and McGurn (2022), there are three essential components of goal setting: meaningful goals, personal improvement goals and data-based goals. According to them, meaningful goals bring intrinsic motivation and add exponential value over the years by making individuals more effective at what they do while guiding them to be more authentic with themselves.

Personal development goals are designed to help individuals improve themselves and increase their values. Thus it entails students creating plans and developing goals in their personal lives that will positively impact their academics and overall success.

Data-based goals are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) goals that are based on data analysis and insights. According to Muhammed, Olayiwola-Adedjoja and **Iretor-Oscar** (2021), this type of goal-setting orientation helps students align their actions with their desired outcomes and track their progress and performance. Students need to set SMART goals where S stands for specific, M – measurable, A – attainable, R – reliable and T – timely. In addition, such skills and possession of special abilities as determination, interest, self-motivation, hard work, persistence and focus, all of which are intrinsic to goal setting are likely to be developed, thus leading to improved academic performance. It helps to initiate students' self-appraisals as learners monitor their progress towards meeting clear endpoints of their efforts in their academic performance.

According to goal orientation theories, there are two identifiable achievement goal orientations: mastery (learning or task) and

performance (ego-involved) goal orientation (Moreno, Cervello & Gonzalez-Cutre, 2008; Pintrich & Schunk, 2003). A mastery goal orientation focuses on learning and mastering the task, developing new skills and enhancing understanding (Ames, 1992). However, a performance goal orientation represents a focus on demonstrating competence or ability and how ability will be judged relative to others (Ames, 1992; Ames & Archer, 1988). In addition, Elliot and Church (1997) made a distinction between two different types of performance goals: Performance-approach goals, in which students emphasize besting others, attaining competence relative to others and demonstrating superior ability and performance-avoidance goals, whereby students are negatively motivated to avoid negative judgments of their competence. Because students' goal orientations link to various motivational, affective, cognitive and behavioural outcomes (Pintrich & Schunk, 2002) investigating variables related to goal orientations is important.

### **Theoretical Framework of Academic Goal Setting by Locke and Latham (1990)**

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on the goal-setting theory of Locke and Latham (1990). This theory provides one of the most influential and practical accounts of motivation in managerial and academic contexts as its postulations affirm that the process of setting goals and targets makes individuals to be focused on providing a sense of direction to achieve their aims without any form of distraction. It also builds self-confidence and improves performance as one recognizes the ability and competence to achieve set goals. Thus, the context of the goal-setting theory of Locke and Latham (1990) emphasizes the need for year-one students of Lagos State University of Education students need to be focused and set attainable goals to have a direction, which will guide them to achieve these goals.

## **Empirical Framework**

### **Academic goal setting among university students**

The study of Rowe, Mazzotti, Ingram and Lee (2017) revealed a positive relationship between goal-setting and student engagement. The results support previous research which concluded that goal-setting instruction effectively benefits academic engagement, motivation and performance. Hall (1990) also found that college students in remedial writing classes increased the amount of journal writing when a goal was set for the number of lines to be written each day.

Latham and Brown (2006) also demonstrated that goal setting enhanced the academic performance of MBA students who set their own proximal and distal learning goals (compared with students who merely set distal goals, or were urged to do their best). Kruglanski (2002) also found that students who have set clear goals can better withstand the temptation to procrastinate or distract themselves with other activities (for example, watching television).

### **Academic Goal Setting and Gender Differences among University Students**

Gender is one of the personal factors that have been related to differences found in academic goal-setting and motivational studies. However, while some studies have shown significant gender differences, some have not. For instance, Chan, Leung and Lai (2004) found that females tended to be more performance goal-oriented than male students, the studies of Phan (2008); Abrahamsen et al (2007); Smith and Sinclair (2005) reported no significant gender differences on task, performance-approach, or performance-avoidance goal orientations. Pintrich and Schunk (2002) also adduced that some researchers (Ryan & Pintrich, 1997) have not found any significant differences in the type of goal pursued as a function of gender. In addition, the study of Fouladchang, Marzooghi and Shemshiri (2009) found that the effect of gender differences on goal orientation indicated significant differences between males and females. Specifically, the results indicate that male students have a greater

performance approach orientation. Thus, the inconclusiveness of academic goal setting and gender differences suggests the need to explore gender differences in goal orientation. Conclusively, there is a paucity of relevant research on academic goal-setting practices of Lagos State University of Education students. Therefore, to fill this gap, this study investigated goal setting as a predictor of the academic performance of university undergraduate students in Lagos state, Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The study made use of a descriptive survey design to seek descriptive and self-reported information from year one students of Lagos State University of Education (LASUED). A quantitative approach which is grounded on a positivist paradigm was employed through descriptive statistics. This approach and design were the best, most suitable means to better investigate students' data-based and personal improvement goal setting in (LASUED).

#### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study was all the 3,101 male and female first-year students of Lagos State University of Education.

#### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

A sample of four Colleges (College of Management and Social Sciences Education, College of Language and Communication Arts Education, College of Specialised and Professional Education and College of Vocational Education in LASUED) was selected from the population. The sample size of this study was 500 year-one students'. Proportional sampling and simple random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents for the study. The proportional sampling technique was used to pick representatives based on the population of each College, while a simple random sampling technique was later used to select the proportioned number in each College randomly. Below is the distribution of participants' biodata:

**Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Participants' Bio-Data**

S/N	College	Gender	
		Male	Female
1	College of Management and Social Science Education	32	93
2	College of Language and Communication Arts Education	30	96
3	College of Specialised and Professional Education	50	75
4	College of Vocational Education	39	86
<b>Total</b>		<b>151</b>	<b>350</b>

**Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2023)**

### **Research Instruments**

The main instruments used for this study were adopted from the Formative Goal Setting Questionnaire titled 'FGSQ'. This questionnaire was initially developed in 2015 by Research Collaboration. It measures students' proficiency in the three essential components of goal setting: meaningful goals, personal improvement goals and data-based goals. The items are completed by self-rating on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (not very like me) to 5 (very like me). To ease interpretation, results are displayed on a 100-point scale, which can be interpreted similarly to grades (e.g., 70–79 is a C).

The researchers made use of FGSQ because Research Collaboration (2015) found that the scale has sound psychometric properties. The relevance of the scale is further justified by other researchers (Gaumer & Noonan, 2018 McGurn, 2022), among others. The questionnaire was tested for reliability using Cronbach's coefficient alpha with 3,486 students in fourth grade through post-high school. When converted to a 100-point scale, the bottom quartile ranged from 22 to 71, and the top quartile ranged from 88 to 100.



### **Data Collection**

The researchers used two research assistants to administer and retrieve the instruments from the respondents in the four Colleges selected for the study. These assistants were thoroughly trained on how respondents ought to respond to the instrument to ensure the research's effectiveness. Three days were used for the distribution and analysis of the data and five hundred and ten (510) copies of the questionnaire were distributed, out of which ten copies were invalid and five hundred (501) were valid.

### **Data Analysis**

The data were collected and analysed through descriptive paired sample statistics and inferential statistics of ANOVA, while the hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. These data analysis methods were suitable because of the need to evaluate the mean, a descriptive statistic, and the relevance of estimating the relative effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

### **Results**

**Research Question 1:** What is the degree of data-based goals set by male and female year one students of Lagos State University of Education?

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of data-based goals for year one male and female University students.**

	<b>N</b>	<b>Minimum</b>	<b>Maximum</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Goals that are Data Based Male	151	0	35	24.05	7.893
Goals that are Data Based Female	348	0	37	25.22	8.286
Valid N (listwise)	150				

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2023).

Results in Table 2 above show that the data-based goals set by female year-one students are higher than those set by male students, with  $25.22 > 24.05$ . This means the degree of data-based goals set by female students is higher than that of male students.

**Research Question 2:** What is the degree of personal improvement goals set by male and female year one students of Lagos State University of Education?

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Personal Improvement goals set by Year One Male and Female University students in LASUED.**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Goals on Personal Improvement Male	151	0	25	16.66	6.095
Goals on Personal Improvement Female	350	0	25	17.55	6.290
Valid N (list-wise)	151				

Source: Researcher's Field Survey Result (2023)

Results in Table 3 above show that personal improvement goals set by female year one students are higher than those of male students, with  $17.55 > 16.66$ . This means the degree of personal improvement goals set by female students is higher than that of male students.

### Hypotheses Testing

**Hypothesis 1:** There is no significant gender difference in the data-based goals set by male and female year one students of Lagos State University of Education

**Table 4: One-Sample Test of Data-based Goals set by Year One Male and Female University students in LASUED.**

Test Value = 0						
Data-Based goal Setting Formation by Gender	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Data-Based Goal Setting of Male Students	37.446	150	.000	24.053	22.78	25.32
Data-Based Goal Setting of Female Students	56.786	347	.000	25.224	24.35	26.10

Source: Researcher’s Field Survey Result (2023)

In Table 4 above, the difference in the male and female students' data-based goal-setting formation is statistically significant ( $p= 0.000$ ) as the result showed a higher mean difference of  $56.786 > 37.446$ . This implies that female students in LASUED can set higher data-based goals than male students. This mean difference is, however, significant enough for goal-setting formation implications.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant difference in the Personal improvement goals set by year one male and female University students in LASUED.

**Table 5: One-Sample Test of Personal Improvement Goals of male and female Year one students in LASUED**

Test Value = 0						
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Goals on Personal Improvement Male	33.580	150	.000	16.656	15.68	17.64
Goals on Personal Improvement Female	52.202	349	.000	17.551	16.89	18.21

**Source: Researcher’s Field Survey Result, 2023**

In Table 5 above, the difference in the male and female students' personal improvement goal-setting formation is statistically significant, as shown in Table 5, which showed a higher mean difference of 52.202 > 33.580. This implies that females can set higher data-based goals than male students.

**Discussion of Findings**

This study aimed to investigate the data-based and personal improvement goal settings of Lagos State University of Education year one students. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study, and findings were based on the results of the descriptive statistics, mean ratings and ANOVA analyses as presented in the previous section. The results of the two research questions showed that female students had higher data-based and personal improvement goal settings than male students. It also showed that year one students of Lagos State University of Education had higher data-based goals than personal improvement goals. Although both types of goals are important, students' ability to set higher data-based goals means they can set specific, measurable, attainable, reliable and time-bound (SMART) based on insights. According to Muhammed, Olayiwola-Adejoja and Ireto-Oscar

(2021), such goals help students align their actions with their desired outcomes and track their progress and performance apart from enhancing their ability to develop skills like determination, interest, self-motivation, hard work and persistence which eventually leads to improved academic performance.

The results of the two hypotheses found significant gender differences in both data-based and personal improvement goal-setting formation of year one students and that the female students had higher data-based and personal improvement goal-setting formation than their male counterparts. These findings are similar to those of Fouladchang, Marzooghi and Shemshiri (2009), Phan (2008), Abrahamsen, Robert and Pensgaard (2007) and Smith and Sinclair (2005) who found significant gender differences in goal orientation of male and female students. Furthermore, while studies like those of (Meece & Holt, 1993; Nolen, 1988) have found that females have a greater need for setting academic goals, others like Rusillo & Arias, 2004; Anderman & Anderman, 1999; Midgley and Urdan, 1996) found that males show higher need for academic goal setting

The obvious reason for this finding, as suggested by most researchers (Gaumer, Erickson & Noonan, 2018; McGurn, 2022; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Ryan & Pintrich, 1997) is that males are more competitive than females, males might be more likely to adopt goals of trying to be better than others and trying to achieve the highest grades in contrast to goals that are data-based and of personal improvement. However, the studies (Ryan & Pintrich, 1997) have not found any significant differences in this type of goal pursued as a function of gender.

### **Conclusions**

Results of the present study showed that year one students of Lagos State University of Education have high academic goal setting as their data-based (specific, measurable, attainable, reliable and time-bound) and personal improvement goals are high (even though those of the female students were higher than their male counterparts).

Nevertheless, the fact that the personal improvement goal setting of respondents of this study is lower than their data-based goal setting speaks volumes of the need to increase the human, material and financial resources needed to improve the counselling activities and programmes provided for the institution's students. This is a typical need in higher institutions, as counselling has not been accorded its rightful place. The time has come when counselling must be taken seriously and linked with sustainability in Nigeria and other nations to guarantee students' future academic success. Thus, effective counselling must be a central feature of the Nigerian educational programme if this must happen. One can conclude that academic goal setting and effective counselling emancipation are essential. This study, therefore, concludes with the following implications for counselling:

#### **Implication for Counselling**

- i. Therapeutic techniques that can help to change adolescents' faulty thinking and challenge their lack of desire for personal improvement should be sought to treat students who have problems with setting high personal improvement goals.
- ii. Counsellors need to advocate continued research into how to increase the goal-setting ability of male students.
- iii. Counsellors should make students (male) aware of the significance of setting higher academic goals that are specific, measurable and focused on personal improvement as opposed to outperforming others.
- iv. Counsellors should continue to increase their level of awareness about the most recent data on the influence of students' academic goal-setting and success.
- v. Relevant questionnaires could be developed to identify students with lower academic goal setting (and the like) to enhance discussion with students.
- vi. Create more awareness and opportunities to talk to parent groups, school boards and other organisations about the importance of high academic goal-setting for students.

- vii. This research should complement the various efforts of those in the helping professions in gathering numerous remediation techniques for assisting students in developing higher academic goals.

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## **Career Decision-Making and School Business Succession Plans among Children of Private School Owners in Osun State, South-West, Nigeria**

**3**

**NOAH A. O. K and ADEYEMI S. O.**

### **Abstract**

*A career is a pattern of work career comprising the entire life span of a person and which is generally seen in several stages reflecting the transition from one stage of life to the next while decision-making is an essential part of planning. This study examines the role career plays in the succession plans for the continuity of private school business. The design adopted for the study was a descriptive research design, using the survey method. The population for this study comprises all government-approved Private School Owners in Osun State, South-West Nigeria. The Sample for this study was the Osun Central Senatorial District which comprises of Osogbo and Ikirun Educational zones. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used, and a stratified procedure was also used to select private school owners. Osun Central has a total number of one thousand seven hundred and six (1676) private schools (data obtained from Osun State Ministry of Education) and out of these schools, three hundred and thirty (330) were sampled. The instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire titled **Succession Planning of Private School Owned Business Questionnaire (SPPSOBQ)**. The instrument is self-designed. The reliability coefficients of the instrument were 0.75. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study.*

*Descriptive Statistic of standard deviations and Inferential Statistics of Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to analyse the data. It was discovered that the socio-economic status of a school owner leads to the sustainability and continuity of the school business. And recommendation was provided based on these findings.*

**Keywords:** Business continuity career decision-making, school owners, socioeconomic status, succession plans,

### **Introduction**

A career is a pattern of work experiences comprising the entire life span of a person and which is generally seen in several stages reflecting the transition from one stage of life to the next while decision-making is an essential part of planning. Decision-making and problem-solving are used in all management functions, although usually they are considered a part of the planning phase. Decision-making is a dynamic process whereby an individual, group or organization reaches conclusions about what future actions to pursue given a set of objectives and limits on available resources.

However, career decision-making (CDM) is a process that examines how individuals make decisions or the circumstances of the career that lead to their choices (Swanson & D'Achiardi, 2005; Levin et al., 2020). This cannot be left out of the school business succession plans among children of private school owners. The school prepares young people for their future, it socialises the young into the basic values of society. The school is seen as an important mechanism for the selection of individuals for their future role in society and this can take place through formal education.

Education assists the child in living a useful and effective life and enhances societal development. It strengthens the capacities of children to act progressively on their own through the acquisition of relevant knowledge, useful skills and appropriate attitudes. The family is an integral part of the society which is the aggregate of the well-being of the individual's families that make up the society, it has

often been regarded as the cornerstone of the society. In pre-modern and modern societies alike, it has been seen as the most basic unit of social organisation and one which carries out vital tasks such as socialising children (Haralambos & Holborn 2008).

Choosing a career is an extremely important decision that impacts an individual's entire future. Career plays a very fundamental and significant role in the life of the individual not only because it determines the pattern of income but also because it affects the individual personality and concepts in life. The educational pursuit of every child is relatively determined by the parents, parents have vital roles to play in the life of the child. Parents' participation in their children's education is an important variable that positively influences their children's education (Epstein, Coates and Salina, 2017). Studies have shown that parents have the greatest impact on their children's career selection. Ajila and Olutola (2007) indicate that there is an awareness of the importance of the home environment or background on a student's academic achievement and also that the home has a great influence on the psychological, emotional, social and economic state of the child. Parents serve as a major influence in their children's career development and career decision-making.

In the light of this, Qaiser, Hassan, Ishtiaq, Muhammad and Zaibun-Nisa (2012) posit that socio-economic status is the combination of economic and sociological measures of an individual work experience and the economic and social position of an individual or family about others based on income, educational level and occupational status. For the analysis of a family's socio-economic status, the household income, education of the earner, and occupation are checked as well as combined income compared with an individual, when their attributes are assessed. Socio-economic status is a definite background variable that represents a feature of the social structure in society (Oakes & Rossi, 2003, Qaiser, et.al, 2012). It is a fact that families where the parents are privileged educationally, socially, and economically, promote a higher level of achievement in their offspring, they perhaps play the most significant role in the development of an individual. The type of family a student comes

from may largely affect the student either positively or negatively, the home factors, emotional factors, pattern of child-bearing, parental environment, and parental mode of behaviour are significant in determining the choice of career of students. A student from a high socio-economic background or family has advantages over a student from the socio-economically lower class. Studies have repeatedly found that parental socioeconomic status affects students' outcomes in education (Baharudin & Luster, 1998, Jeynes 2002, Eamon 2005).

Schooling plays a significant role in the world of business today. It develops human personality and thoughts in dealing with others in society and prepares people for life experiences. Higher education contributes to human resources and development (Mohammed 2022). Succession planning is the process of identifying and developing potential future leaders to take charge of the school business in the future. A succession plan could establish an orderly transfer of the management and ownership of the school to new managers and owners to avoid liquidation of the school. Selecting a school's next owner is one of the most crucial and significant decisions in a school's life. In every school, it is critical to find the right person for the job. The success and sustainability of the family's main asset and source of income, and a significant piece of their identity, rests largely in the hands of the individual selected to be the successor of the family-owned business.

Every family business today must pay close and special attention to the selection of its next leader, and the succession process. This begins with the recognition that succession is a dynamic process, rather than a pre-determined decision. (Pascale et.al 2022). The current study was designed to explore career decision-making, socio-economic status and school business succession plans among children of private school owners in Osun State, South-West, Nigeria. The researchers expect that this study will be useful for school owners in Osun State and Nigeria as a whole as it will suggest some remedial measures for effective school business succession plans. The way and manner in which schools that were once thriving do not survive the retirement or the demise of the owner in Osun State, South-West Nigeria has prompted this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Schools folding up after the demise or retirement of the owner has been a major issue among school owners in Osun State. The survival of private schools in Osun State South-West, in particular, and Nigeria as a whole has become under serious scholarly examination, many private schools are struggling to grow with very disturbing survival rates. Close observation of schools in the state has shown that most of the private schools owned fold up after the death of the owner or the retirement of the owner due to old age or inactivity. Some notable schools that were owned by individuals in the 80s and 90s are no longer in existence in the state except for those that are owned by religious bodies. Thus, survival and decision-making a major problems among private school owners. Sometimes the head teacher or principal put in charge of the school leaves to start his/her school making the business to fold up, for this not to happen the school owner needs a plan that should be put in place for the school to continue to exist. Given this state of affairs, there is a need to draw up succession plans for the survival of the school.

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Orientation**

#### **Conceptual clarification**

##### **Career**

The term career can be seen as the sequence of interaction of individuals with society, education and organisations throughout their life span. It is important however, to emphasise that the majority of the responsibility now rests on the individual for their career progression, which requires sustained employability (Beukes, 2009; Herr, Cramer, & Niles, 2004)

##### **Career decision making**

Studies have shown that parents have the greatest impact on their children's career selection. Ajila and Olutola (2007) indicated that there is an awareness of the importance of the home environment or background on a student's academic achievement and also that the home has a great influence on the psychological, emotional, social

and economic state of the child. Parents serve as a major influence in their children's career development and career decision-making. It is a choice from multiple options open to the career decision-maker.

### **Parent's Socio-economic Status: A Determinant Factor for the Career of a Child**

Different scholars see socioeconomic status in different ways. Some scholars believe that socioeconomic status is the total household income while other scholars include other variables i.e., parental educational levels. In addition to the widely used income variable, some other variables are also considered i.e., family and parental educational attainment; total family income; living in poverty; living in a single-parent household; motivation for learning, and so on (Qaiser, et.al,2012). Parental education is also an important aspect of the socio-economic status of school students because it is expected that parental and student education are significantly correlated. Peters and Mullis (1997) as cited in Qaiser, et.al, (2012) conclude that parental education had a significant effect on the academic achievement of the students. A study by James (2002) as cited in Qaiser, et.al, (2012) also shows that parental education levels exposed the clearest patterns of variation in student attitudes towards school and post-school options.

Family dynamics are patterns of relations or interactions between family members. Each family system and its dynamics are unique. Family dynamics often have a strong influence on the way young people see themselves, others and the world. And this influences their relationships, behaviour, well-being and probably what they will become in the future. The role of the family in the choice of career of a student cannot be over-emphasised, this is because the foundation of education and what a student will become starts from the home.

Career selection is one of many important choices students will make in determining their plans since this decision will impact them throughout their lives. Hairston (2000) stated that of the factors that influence career choice processes, family members particularly parents are the most influential determinant of career plans,



occupational aspiration and occupational expectations. This is also supported by Otto (1989) when he asserted that even if schools had the resources with which to meet young people's career guidance needs, neither teachers nor counsellors can replace the influence parents have on their son's and daughters' career plans.

### **Factors influencing decision-making while making a career decision**

***Social self-concept:*** is one of the factors influencing decision-making. This involves relationships with others. Our self-concept influences who we see as different or similar to us, who we trust, and the network of people we create and assumptions we have on others this can affect school business, especially on succession plans for private school owners. The biggest challenge in a student's life is choosing a career. It involves the interaction of numerous, highly interwoven elements. It is a challenging task that requires a decision-making process. A person's environment, talents, skills, and academic accomplishments have an impact on their professional decision, according to Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara, and Pastorelli (2001).

***Making the wrong decision:*** this can result in failure and disappointment. According to research, a person's career choice is influenced by their homes, schools, and social environment. Men's work decisions are influenced by their financial situation since they must support their families, but women place more importance on social ideals and utility (Sax, 1994). Sadly, some School business owners, make decisions about careers without much consideration of the real world (Caplow, as cited in Bright, Pryor, & Harpham 2005). Some children of private schoolowners make important selections at a time when they might not be fully aware of their options or else, they are prevented from achieving their objectives by unpredicted circumstances.

Making decisions requires careful consideration of the level of interest in a particular field. If a child of private school owners is pressured into a career, he or she could perform poorly and have low

self-esteem in the school business. According to Suutari (2003), numerous studies have shown a strong correlation between hobbies and professional choices. A youngster who grows up with supportive parents and a peaceful home life is more likely to follow their rules. In this case, the parent's occupation is most likely to have an impact on the child's occupational aspirations.

The social learning theory, like others, is rather old, and based on a largely discredited view of learning based on a sophisticated version of behaviourism (Krumboltz, 1979). This theory does address the interaction of social and cultural factors on decision-making and acknowledges that they become enmeshed in an individual's identity, as life develops and experiences are accumulated. However, social experiences are seen as external influences on decisions, whereas data suggest they are an integral part of the decision-making process itself.

All these three models retain a strong sense in which:

- i. Decision-making is fundamentally an individual process,
- ii. It should and can contain large elements of technical rationality, and the prime factors determining choice remain within the influence, if not the control, of individuals.

However, Baumgardner (1977, 1982) and Miller (1983) argued that models of planned decision-making bear no relation to how career decisions are made. They emphasize the importance of 'happenstance', as people react to serendipitous opportunities.

### **Succession**

Succession, in organizational theory and practice, refers to the process of transferring managerial control from one leader or one generation of leaders to the next. It includes the dynamics preceding the actual transition as well as the aftermath of the transition (Shepherd and Zacharakis 2000 in Oludare, Ojo & Oladipupo, 2016). In the context of the family business, Sharma et al. (2001) as cited in Oludare, Ojo and Oladipupo (2016) define succession as the actions and events that lead to the transition of leadership from one family member to another.

### **Succession Planning**

Planning is a roadmap for success. The success and continued existence of a family business depends on the ability of the owner/founder to start planning for succession early in the life of the business. In this study, most of the participants who interacted had succession planning in mind; however, the succession plan was not formalized and was not a part of the business strategic plan. Succession in family-owned businesses occurs at the levels of ownership and management or leadership. Ownership succession refers to the transfer of assets and liabilities of the business from the incumbent to the successor while management succession involves the transfer of the leadership (management) positions and responsibilities from the incumbent to the successor, (Agbim, 2019).

As noted by Ungerer and Mienie (2018) “succession planning is critical to the survival of the family business as it is associated with the transfer of ownership of the business to the next generation. According to Wang et al (2004), succession planning has multiple purposes such as:

- i. Efficiently distributing the assets of the predecessor among successors
- ii. Passing control of the business and ensuring business leadership and
- iii. Maintaining and promoting family harmony.

Selecting a successor is one of the most significant decisions in an organisation's life. Many owners simply assume their children will take over the business one day but fail to develop a plan to make it happen. The succession process for the business begins earlier than one might think.

The success and sustainability of the family's main asset and sources of income, and a significant piece of their identity rest largely in the hands of the individual selected to be the successor or chief executive officer of the family-owned business (Rhoda Saan et al 2018).

Changes in school leadership are inevitable, no position is more important to the success of the school than its head, so the best time for a school owner to begin succession planning is when it does not need it. A succession plan serves as a framework for thinking about the school's future and a guide for the school owner. Systematic planning for the inevitable change in a school is important for the continuity of the school

Roberts (1968, 1975), in the only explicitly sociological analysis of career decision-making in the literature, argues that decisions are not determined by the individual but by 'opportunity structures' in the youth labour market, which are strongly influenced by the nature of industrial organization and employment, government regulation and social class. The study reviewed related literature; despite the relevance of the review, most of the works of literature reviewed did not examine career decision-making, socio-economic status and school business succession plans among children of private school owners in Osun State, South-West, Nigeria; and that is the gap this study is set to examine. The study is rooted in social learning theory.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to:

- i. ascertain if the socio-economic status of a school owner influences the choice of career of the children
- ii. examine the role of succession plans for the continuity of a private school business

### **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses are tested:

- H<sub>01</sub>*:** There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of a private school owner and continuity of a private school business.
- H<sub>02</sub>*:** There is no significant relationship between succession plans of a private school owner and sustainability of a private school business.

***H<sub>03</sub>*:** There is no significant relationship between the role of a private school owner and the career choice of the child

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

A descriptive research design was used to describe the phenomenon being studied. The population of this study comprises all approved Private Secondary School Owners in Osun State, South West Nigeria. Osun State has six Educational Zones, two Zones each from the three Senatorial Districts of Osun Central, Osun East and Osun West. Osun Central comprises Osogbo and Ikirun Zones, Osun East comprises Ilesa and Ife Zones while Osun West comprises Ede and Iwo Zones respectively.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

**Sample and Sampling procedure:** the sample for this study was Osun Central Senatorial district, Osun Central comprises Osogbo and Ikirun Educational Zones. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used in carrying out this study and a stratified procedure was used to select private school owners in Osun Central of Osun State. Osun Central has a total number of one thousand seven hundred and six (1676) private schools (data from Osun State Ministry of Education) and out of these schools, three hundred and thirty (330) were sampled.

### **Research Instrument**

The instrument used was a self-designed questionnaire with a four-point rating Likert scale options of Strongly Agreed (SA) =4, Agreed (A) =3, Strongly Disagreed (SD) =2 and Disagreed (D) =1.

A pilot study was carried out to determine the reliability of the instrument and to find out participants would have any problem answering any item in the instrument. 20 Participants were selected randomly from Atakunmosa East local Government of Ilesa zone of Osun East Senatorial district. The research instrument was developed by the researcher and the validity of the instrument was ascertained

through the review by an expert in the field of measurement and evaluation. The instrument was critically examined to determine its relevance, the clarity of the statement and whether it is appropriate for the study. To ascertain the degree to which the instrument consistently measures what it meant to measure, the questionnaire was subjected to a test-retest method of reliability.

The instrument was administered to participants twice within an interval of three weeks. The reliability coefficients of the instrument with an overall reliability coefficient of 0.75 were obtained.

#### **Procedure for data collection**

The researcher employed research assistants for the effective administration of the research instruments. The questionnaire was given to the School owners personally to ensure that the questionnaires were properly filled and returned.

#### **Method of Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics of standard deviations, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used for data analysis.

#### **Hypotheses Tested**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of a school owner and the continuity of a private school business.

To test hypothesis 1, the data collected were subjected to Pearson's Test of Correlation. The result is presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: The Pearson Correlation of the socio-economic status of a school owner and the success of a private school business**

		Socio-economic status of Private school Owner	Continuity of a private school business
Socio-economic status of Private school Owner	Pearson Correlation	1	.011
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.837
	N	330	330
Continuity of a private school business	Pearson Correlation	.011	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.837	
	N	330	330

Table 1 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of private school owners and the continuity of private school business, that is, [ $r = 0.011$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ]. This means that there was no indication that a positive relationship exists between the socio-economic status of a private school owner and the continuity of a private school business which were statistically not significant.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the succession plans of a school owner and the sustainability of a private school business.

To test hypothesis two, the data collected were subjected to Pearson's Test of Correlation.

The result is presented in Table 2 below.

**Table 2: The Pearson Correlation succession plans of a school owner and sustainability of a private school business**

		Succession plans of Private school Owner	Sustainability of a private school business
Succession plans of Private school Owner	Pearson Correlation	1	.075
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.176
	N	330	330
Sustainability of a private school business	Pearson Correlation	.075	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.176	
	N	330	330

Table 2 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the succession plans of private school owners and the sustainability of private school business, that is, [ $r = 0.075$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ]. This means that there was no indication that a positive relationship exists between the succession plans of a private school owner and the sustainability of a private school business which were not statistically significant.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the role of a private school owner and the career choice of the child.

To test hypothesis three, the data collected were subjected to Pearson's Test of Correlation. The result is presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: The Pearson Correlation of the role of private school owner on career choice of the child**

		The role of Private School Owner	The career choice of the child
The role of Private school Owner	Pearson Correlation	1	.044
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.426
	N	330	330
The career choice of the child	Pearson Correlation	.044	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.426	
	N	330	330

Source: fieldwork 2023

Table 3 reveals that there is owners significant relationship between the role of private school owners and the career choice of the child, that is, [ $r = 0.044$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ]. This means that there was no indication that a positive relationship exists between the role of private school owner on the choice of career of their children which was statistically not significant

### Discussion of Findings

In line with the hypotheses tested for this study the following responses were obtained.



**Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of a school owner and the continuity of a private school business

Table 1 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of private school owners and the continuity of private school business, that is, [ $r = 0.011$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ]. This means that there was no indication that a positive relationship exists between the socio-economic status of a private school owner and the continuity of a private school business which were statistically not significant. A study revealed that a family's socio-economic status correlates with the academic achievements of their sibling at the secondary level. That status is based on family income, parental education, occupation and social status (Anderson & Sullivan, 1998 as cited in Memon, Muhammad & Muhammad, 2010). Families with high socio-economic status often are more successful in preparing their young children for school because of the access they enjoy to harness resources responsible for promoting and supporting young children's development. They can provide their young children with the quality of necessary education requirements and equipment. Families with lower socioeconomic status often lack education to achieve the goal of obtaining the financial, social and educational support that students in higher technical and professional education characterize families with high socio-economic status.

**Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the succession plans of a school owner and the sustainability of a private school business  
Table 2 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the succession plans of a private school owner and the sustainability of a private school business, that is, [ $r = 0.075$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ]. This means that there was no indication that a positive relationship exists between the succession plans of private school owners and the sustainability of a private school business which were not statistically significant.

**Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the role of private school owners and the career choice of the child. Table 3 reveals that there is no significant relationship between the role of private school

owners and the career choice of the child, that is, [ $r = 0.044$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ]. This means that there was no indication that a positive relationship exists between the role of a private school owner and the choice of career of the child which was statistically not significant.

The findings of a research conducted by Keller (2004) showed that the key parental influence on a student's career choice include the attitude and behaviour of the parents, reward or punishment, approve or disapprove of, the expectations parents have for their children's education and career, the examples they set for their children, the values they show to their family, friends and society, the opportunities they offer their children to learn and develop themselves and the kind of parent in child relationship they develop. Also, investigation into the factor that influences career choice and the expectations of parents could be traced to individual families or homes. Choosing a career is an extremely important decision that impacts an individual's entire future.

### **Conclusion**

This study sought to establish career decision-making, socio-economic status and school business succession plans among children of private school owners in Osun State, South-West, Nigeria. Results have shown that the socio-economic status of a school owner leads to the continuity of the school business. Specifically, the findings have indicated that succession plans lead to the sustainability of a private school business. To sum it up, it simply means that the private school owners have a role to play in the choice of career of their children in all the ten selected Local Government Areas in Osun, South-West, Nigeria.

### **Recommendations**

With the above, findings, the study recommends the following ways to sustain private schools' business.

- i. School business owners need to develop and implement succession plans for the creation of the family-owned business.

- ii. Mentoring of potential successors should be encouraged by school owners to ensure successful management transference in the event of retirement or death of the school owner.
- iii. A written succession plan should be prepared at the early stage of the business to guide the business for successful transfer.
- iv. Private school owners should make wise decisions about the careers of their children that can lead to the sustainability of the school.
- v. The role of the family in the choice of their children's career should not be taken for granted, this is because the foundation of education and what a child/student will become starts from the home.

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## **Treating Adolescent/Adult Drug Addicts with Narcotics Anonymous (NA) Counselling Package**

**4**

**OLAOGUN Ganiyu Olakunle, EKUNDAYO Doyin Adebola  
OLAGUNJU M. K.O**

### **Abstract**

*Available data on drug (narcotic) abuse, misuse and addiction worldwide, present a picture of an epidemic that threatens human safety, survival and productivity. Drug misuse is a major underlying factor in rising cases of terrorism and criminality in most third world countries including Nigeria with several adolescents and adults of both genders as victims. The demography of abusers cuts across socio-economic, cultural and religious divides. While drug traffickers turn in huge profits from sales of illegal drugs, men and women with potential productive capacities, become 'inducted'; willingly or ignorantly and constitute a nuisance to society or die prematurely. While proceeds from drug trafficking are used to sponsor terrorist activities across the globe, individuals, governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), donor agencies and philanthropists spend a fortune on drug enforcement, treatment and rehabilitation of victims. Several counselling treatment packages are available for treating drug misapplications with reported successful results; however, little awareness is available of an anonymous treatment package that protects the identity of the victim. The Narcotics Anonymous (NA) package is a Counselling*



*programme that plays a vital role in treating drug abusers; NA is a spiritually rooted package that has produced excellent results in the treatment of drug addicts worldwide. The paper examined misconceptions in the terminologies used to define drug misapplications, and how the NA package works. Conclusions from the study showed that drug abuse, misuse and addiction cut across mixed demography, victims are prone to crime, and are largely influenced by peer pressure, social media and the environment. Drug abusers are susceptible to multiple losses including premature death, debilitating health conditions and criminality. However, treating and providing counselling support to abusers can reduce the human and material losses associated with drug misapplication.*

**Keywords:** abuse, addiction, adolescents, adults, counselling programmes, drug, misuse

### **Introduction.**

It is almost impossible to discuss crime and criminality without attributing it to the influence of drug abuse, misuse and addiction. There are avalanche of evidence to support the fact that, crimes have their roots in the stimulation propelled by drug abuse as criminals involved in kidnapping, terrorism, prostitution, internet fraud and armed robbery are known to have links with drug producers, barons, traffickers and peddlers. Figures provided by Razaiee et al, 2003 on the relationship between drug misapplications and criminality are alarming, here ported that in the United States, 70% of male prisoners were drug abusers while criminals who had abused drugs and alcohol simultaneously were 21.4% and had committed aggressive crimes. These figures appear consistent in almost all climes where drug misapplications strive. In Nigeria, 90% of crime is linked to drug abuse, (Akpan, 2021).

Drug abuse, misuse, and addiction are largely influenced by the availability of the substance in the environment of the abuser. There is a close relationship between drug abuse and drug presence and collaboration between abusers and traffickers. The demography of

drug abusers (narcotics) is wide and cut across a range of lines along age, gender, family socio-economic status, education, tribe and religion. Ajibola et al, (2018), reported that drug abuse in Nigeria is prevalent across educational levels and reaches down to the secondary school level. The World Drug Report 2019 reported that 2.6 million people worldwide, in the 10 to 24 years age bracket (adolescents and adults), die yearly from drug and substance abuse. Earlier in 2017, drug abusers were approximately 0.9% of the world's population, alcohol abuse accounts for 3.3 million deaths annually and 31 million people are documented to suffer from drug use, (UN, 2019). In Nigeria, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime indicated that 14.4 % (14.3 million) of the people aged between 15 and 64 years abuse, drugs. However, the southwest zone, comprising Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Osun and Oyo is reported to have the highest prevalence of drug and substance use with 22.4% or 4382000 users, ncbi, 2022.

This situation calls for attention and the need for a counselling solution to save the large number of drug abusers in the populace and prevent further recruitment of potential abusers. Teenagers and young adults are the most at risk in this group. They will be the leaders of the country in the future, and the country's future workers are counting on them. The list of commonly abused drugs includes refined and raw vegetables like marijuana, skooches, cocaine, hashish, crack, heroin, hallucinogens, inhalants, or psychotherapeutic medications not taken under a health provider's supervision (Murphey, Barry, Vaughn, Guzman & Terzian, 2013).

### **Conceptualisation of Drug**

A drug is a chemical substance used or injected by human beings to alleviate physical or emotional pain and discomfort, Fatai-Balogun (2016). Ordinarily, drugs can serve as a necessary supplement to human and animal diets for healthy living when used as prescribed. In the Oxford English Dictionary, a drug is defined as an original simple organic or inorganic substance used in medicine. It can be described as any chemical agent which affects living protoplasm

beneficially when administered in small concentrations. The etymology of the word simply describes it as a complementary dietary supplement required for promoting a healthy life and treatment of conventional and chronic ailments among humans and animals. Drug has its root in the French word, **Drogue**, meaning dry herbs. In primordial existence, drugs served as food supplements to treat diseases and consist of a combination of herbs, animal products, plants and minerals,(Abdul Wadud et al, 2007). A drug according to the World Health Organization (WHO) is any chemical entity or mixture of entities, other than those required for the maintenance of normal health (like food), the administration of which alters biological function and possibly structure, UN,2019. The need to clarify the relationship between drugs and medicine is necessary to avoid referring to the two as synonyms. The World Health Organization (WHO) recognized this fact and submitted that medicines are used for restoring mental and physical stability to persons while drugs are used to gain control over the body or mind, (langeek.co, 2023). Differentiating between the substances is significant in that a better understanding of the functions of each of the substances on the human functioning is understood. While medicine is useful and has longer, positive effects on human metabolism, drugs on the other hand may have temporal and negative effects on the body's function. When abused, the drug can temporarily alter the state of the mind and allow the abuser to behave abnormally for as long as the effect lasts, this is what makes it useful in criminality.

### **Effects of Drugs on the Body System**

The effects of drugs on human metabolism can be positive when regulated and used under prescription but negative when abused with consequences such as loss of lives, insanity, impotence and loss of properties. The increase in the menace of drug misuse, abuse and addiction among adolescents and adults necessitated this enquiry and the concepts used must be clearly understood in the context of the remediation to be applied. Drugs are necessary for different reasons

in human life. Wilson (1968) said that an effective drug does what the doctor wants it to do and says when it should be used: to prevent, diagnose, or treat disease. The Oxford English Dictionary also says that the qualities of a good drug include those used to keep people healthy. Wilson also said that when a good doctor in these conditions gives the drug, it has an effect or set of effects that get the desired results with the most benefit and the least harm for the patient who receives it in a clear and specific clinical setting. But if a drug is used for something other than what was listed above and not with a prescription, it is called abuse or misuse and can lead to addiction.

### **Drug Abuse**

When there are discussions on drug misapplications, there usually arises, the question of what makes a drug good, bad, misused, abused or an addiction. Drug use becomes abusive at the appearance of dependence, and when it affects the physiological, behavioural and cognitive manifestations of the person who uses the drug. The most highly addictive and abused drugs are broadly classified into three groups stimulants, sedatives and narcotics: heroin, cocaine, tobacco, street methadone, barbiturates, alcohol, benzodiazepines, amphetamine, buprenorphine, and cannabis, Hudson, (2024).

The individual that abuses drugs is always in the needs to consume more of a substance to achieve the effects of previous use, Shyamu Aryal (2021). **In another vein**, Thomas(2012) argued that; when a dependent person does not consume the abused drug, withdrawal syndrome begins to appear. This is reflected in a cluster of symptoms that affect an individual who is suddenly deprived of any toxin or drug on which he/she is physically dependent and which previously had been consumed regularly. Drug abuse or drug addiction is a situation when a person is addicted, he cannot control the situation of his drug use rather his nature of using drugs gets control over him. In other term, when a drug abuser loses the capability to make a rational choice about whether or not to use drugs or alcohol, he or she is addicted. Drug abuse may be considered as using a drug for a purpose other than its intended use so that negative

consequences occur. It has been obvious that drug abuse poses serious health risks to the abuser and may turn out to be fatal.

### **Drug Misuse**

Drug misuse occurs when a prescribed drug is used outside of a medical prescription. For example, taking six (6) tablets of painkillers, five times a day, against the doctor's prescription. Doctors will not prescribe that; instead, they will prescribe an alternative pain reliever for severe pain. Drug misuse refers to overdose, under dose and the use of the wrong drug for a particular ailment

### **Drug Addiction**

Drug use is generally concerned with the use of drugs against certain illnesses. This may involve the drug being injected, inhaled, swallowed or as such. Drug addiction is a condition whereby a person experiences an overpowering thirst to look for and use drugs or alcohol regardless of the negative physical and mental consequences. Typically, drug abuse is accompanied by physical and psychological dependence on the drug and the person suffers withdrawal symptoms when the frequency or the content of the use of the drug is rapidly decreased or stopped Thomas,(2016). Drug Addiction is a progressive, primary chronic disease characterized by compulsive behaviour such as loss of control over drug-induced behaviour, how much drug to use when to use it and inability to stop its use, Agwogie (2011).

### **Factors influencing drug abuse, misuse and addiction/ commonly abused drugs**

Mainly teens and adults are the age group that abuse drugs the most. The number included people of all ages and income levels. The National Adolescent Health Policy considers ages 10-24 years as a more appropriate range for Adolescence in Nigeria (2018) According to Old field et al. (2016), teens and young adults tend to look to their friends for advice instead of their family, and they become less dependent on parental control. The teenage years are also a time to try

out dangerous habits (Feldstein & Miller, 2006; Morojele & Ramsoomar, 2016). Trucco (2020) says that drug use during youth can continue into adulthood, which makes it more likely that the person will become dependent on the drug.

Misusing drugs is a problem all over the world. In Sierra Leone, the use of kush, which is made of dried leaves mixed with a mix of chemicals that make people feel like zombies, is rising. Recently, the bones of buried people have been crushed and added to the drug. This is done to get a high-level result. Sulphur from human bones is added to the mixture and makes users feel high when taken in large amounts. When inhaled, the sulphur goes straight to the brain. Friends of the Dead, the year 2023. The situation is not different in Nigeria where the NDLEA, the nation's narcotic enforcement agency, raised concern that youths in Borno state, northeast, drink fermented human urine, preserved over 10 days, as an alternative to hard drugs, Abubakar, (2024).

### **Treating drug abuse, misuse and addiction**

Drug addiction is one great cankerworm the world is battling through a variety of treatment options with little or no success, instead; there appear reports of newer variations of drugs entering the market daily with the cartel making fortune from the destruction the drugs exert on the addicts. Newer variants of drugs among youths/adults in Nigeria include cloud, gum etc. The level of mental health challenges facing the adolescents of our time is unimaginable. There is a rise in cases of kidney damage and several associated illnesses.

Exploring medical and non medical remediation remains the major approach to treating the drug scourge.

Information on abuse, misuse and addiction of drugs by individuals is often shrouded in secrecy. Gerstein and Green (1993) stated that research on drug abuse prevention is haunted by a double vision that emerges from epidemiologic studies. There seem to be two worlds of drug abuse. In one world, that of relatively low-intensity consumption (*drug use*) among individuals who can be found in schools and households, drug experience is self-reported

more frequently by the wealthy than the less wealthy and by whites than Hispanics or blacks. In this world, there have been steady and cumulatively very marked declines in the prevalence of marijuana use since the late 1970s and of cocaine since the middle 1980s, and heroin use is as rare as to be barely measurable. In the world of emergency rooms, morgues, drug clinics, juvenile detention centres, jails, and prisons, where signs of heavy drug use (abuse and dependence) are collected, most of the people who are there are poor, and the numbers of black and Hispanic people there are much higher than in their homes or schools. Marijuana and heroin use are common, though not as common in some places as they were in the 1970s. In addition, cocaine use exploded in the 1980s and 1990s.

### **Drug Addiction Treatment Options**

A variety of treatment packages is available for each level of drug misapplication- from misuse, abuse and addiction. These include counselling, medication, rehabilitation and spiritual cleansing. For adolescents and adults grappling with drug addiction, counselling plays a vital role in the recovery process. Substance abuse treatment modalities, including detoxification, medication-assisted treatment, and residential programmes, often incorporate counselling to address the complex psychological, social, and behavioural aspects of addiction.

The Narcotics Anonymous (NA) plan is a treatment choice that isn't very popular in Nigeria, but it is very popular in the US and Europe. People have said that the ideas and methods behind drug addiction have religious undertones, but the results seen in the more than 144 countries where it has been used are undeniable. The authors of Olaogun and Abegunrin (2011) said that religious beliefs were behind the criticism of a similar treatment package. They said that even though the Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) package has had a lot of success in treating alcoholism, critics of the package still say that AA only works in places where religion is very important. Irrespective of these criticisms, the likelihood of better results for the rehabilitation of drug addicts in a multi-religious society like Nigeria

by using the NA is high. Nigeria is a multi-religious state with an average citizen professing strong belief and practice in each of Christianity, Islam and Traditional religions. Nigeria is even classified by the Pew Research Centre as the second most prayerful nation in the world after Afghanistan, (Vanguard, 2023) to show the religious pride of the citizenry. Prayer is an important element in religious worship. It has been established that religion can support positive change during the counselling process. A person's spiritual beliefs and faith community are sources of strength in the course of therapy. Religious involvement creates feelings of belonging and connection. Personal spirituality, meanwhile, can provide meaning and purpose, carlow.edu, 2022. Some counselling associations like the Association of Professional Counsellors in Nigeria (APROCON) openly profess the involvement of a higher power in the result of the counselling process with the client. The association's motto is 'WECOUNSEL, GOD SUSTAINS', APROCON, (2017)

#### **Narcotic Anonymous (NA) Package.**

Narcotics Anonymous (NA) was designed with the same model as Alcoholics Anonymous, which is the longest-running and most popular addiction support group in the United States. **Narcotics Anonymous (NA)**, founded in 1953, describes itself as a nonprofit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. Membership of the group consists mainly of addicts who are individually and voluntarily convinced that they need rehabilitation and recovery from their substance use. Identities of victims remain anonymous and meetings are conducted according to the guiding procedure and its book of reference, *Narcotics Anonymous (Basic Text)*. Meetings are usually either discussion or speaker meetings. In discussion meetings, members share their personal stories of addiction and recovery as they relate to their lives. In speaker meetings, one or more members are asked to share for the majority of the meeting his experiences as an addict requiring recovery. New attendees aren't required to share, though they are usually welcome to if they so choose. Sharing is done one at a time,



and members are asked to only share their own experience and not comment on others'—conversations can be had during breaks or after the meeting. Parts of the NA meeting usually include references to “God” and a prayer at the closing of the meeting. However, some people replace “God” with “higher power” or “good orderly direction.” The higher power aspect is meant to be a set of guiding morality and strength and is not based on any religion, Bhandari Smitha, 2022

### **What Are the 12 Steps of NA?**

Narcotics Anonymous package uses a 12-step model developed for people with varied substance use disorders and is the second-largest 12-step organization. The 12 steps of NA are a step-by-step checklist to help you on your recovery journey. Members will complete each step before moving on to the next in line.

**Step 1: Powerlessness.** During step one, you acknowledge that you are powerless in your drug addiction. Admitting to yourself that you have a drug problem and are powerless on your own is the key to recovery.

**Step 2: Hope.** Next, step two asks you to look to a higher power for guidance and support. This higher power can be religious, such as a god or deity, or it can be a powerful concept that reminds you that you don't have all the answers.

**Step 3: Surrender.** By surrendering to a higher power, you admit that there is something out there that is greater than you are. It also reminds you that there is more to life outside of your addiction.

**Step 4: Inventory.** Doing an inventory is an exercise in self-reflection. During step four, you examine the mistakes you have made throughout your addiction.

**Step 5: Confession.** Step five takes place shortly after step four and asks you to be honest about your mistakes. At first, telling the truth might be hard, but it is an important part of living honestly, while you're in rehab.

**Step 6: Acceptance.** Once you acknowledge your flaws and mistakes, you will then take time to accept yourself for who you are. Everyone has good and bad characteristics, and our mistakes do not define us.

**Step 7: Humility.** Step seven asks you to turn to your higher power for support and inspiration. You might pray for guidance or examine a deeply held philosophy and see how it inspires you to acknowledge that you don't have to carry the weight of the world on your shoulders.

**Step 8: Amends List.** During step eight, you will make a list of the people you might have hurt as a result of your drug addiction.

**Step 9: Make Amends.** Now that you have created a list of those you have wronged, step nine asks you to reach out to those people and offer them an apology. (Sometimes, people on your list may not be open to having a conversation. It is more important that you try to make amends rather than receive forgiveness.)

**Step 10: Maintain Inventory.** Step ten encompasses your entire recovery process. You will continually check in with yourself during your recovery journey and remain honest about your progress.

**Step 11: Reflect.** For step eleven, you will engage in prayer or meditation to consider your life's purpose.

**Step 12: Be of Service.** Many people likely helped you throughout your recovery journey. Step twelve asks you to take the new chance at life that you've been given and use it to help others

The popularity and acceptability of the 12-step NA curriculum stem from the contributions that were made to its original draft by people and organizations across the globe. For instance, when the Approval Draft for the treatment package came out in 2006, 7,500 copies were distributed (4,493 copies were mailed and 3,009 copies were electronic copies downloaded by members). The approximate number of inputs received was 350 pieces, of which 60 per cent came from individuals, 17 per cent came from groups, and 23 per cent came from committees. More than 20 per cent (161) of the personal stories submitted came from outside of the United States. Submissions were

received from the following countries, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh and several others countries.

The major criticisms against the NA package are its closeness to spirituality and the reliance on the individual as the source of his recovery without the application of any known counselling theory. However, the group continues to make an impact on victims' rehabilitation and recovery faster than most medical addiction treatment plans. In terms of acceptability, the NA had grown tremendously, in 1978, there were fewer than 200 registered groups in three countries, in 1983, more than a dozen countries had 2,966 meetings, in 1993, 60 countries had over 13,000 groups holding over 19,000 meetings, in 2002, 108 countries had 20,000 groups holding over 30,000 meetings, in 2005, 116 countries had over 21,500 groups holding over 33,500 weekly meetings, in 2007, over 25,065 groups were holding over 43,900 weekly meetings in 127 countries in 2012, there were over 62,700 meetings worldwide in over 142 countries, in 2018, there were more than 70,000 weekly meetings in 144 countries, *Narcotics Anonymous. 1996*

### **Advantages of Narcotics Anonymous**

The NA package offers a protective haven for members and forbids the disclosure of identities. It has special codes that protect identity concealment, unlike medical rehabilitations. When compared with other treatment options for drug and alcohol addiction, NA offers the cheapest and most resourceful path to addicts' recovery. The advice, support, and fellowship provided by NA groups are often hugely beneficial to individuals going through recovery – or attempting to do so – who need and value the encouragement and sponsorship of others who understand their situation and have been through similar experiences. The no-pressure format of meetings free membership, and the commitment to confidentiality, make NA an extremely inclusive organization backed up by the reassurance that attendance will not become public knowledge. The programme is done at no cost to the addict and has wider coverage since meetings are held in clusters of volunteers in the neighbourhood. NA helps in reducing the

cost of governance and budgetary allocations for health, reduced crime rate and reduced crime rate.

### **Conclusions**

Promoting the use of the NA package in treating various levels of drug misuse is important given the rising rate of abuse of narcotics among adolescents and adults in the country in co-temporal time. The National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA)'s efforts at reducing drug availability, trafficking and abuse have led to discoveries and the designation of Nigeria as not only a transit point for drugs but, a major producer of illicit drugs. A report by the United Nations Office on Drug and Crime in Nigeria indicates that 14.4% (14.3 million) of people aged between 15 and 64 years abuse drugs, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov>. The conviction of drug addicts and barons through the law to address the problem of drug misuse is not yielding the expected results considering the amount of personnel and financial resources committed to the fight. In this era of reduced income to the government to fight the scourge and rehabilitate addicts, the suggestion to adopt other treatment plans has become imperative. This is the attraction of this paper.

The meetings of the NA are like the prayer and confession meetings that people of Nigeria's two most popular religions go to all the time. Some Muslims and Christians believe that a higher power, God, can heal all illnesses better than anyone else. Others believe that they are helpless and express hope that the higher power can help them get better. To do this, they admit their flaws and weaknesses, reflect on their lives, and are told to be honest about their mistakes. They also accept and believe that everyone has good and bad character. The workability of the NA package in a multi-religious society like Nigeria has a great prospect since most religious clerics are leaders to some of these addicts, they know them and have interacted with them severally. The NA package is non-compulsive and persuasive, the meetings can be held in Mosques Churches and schools at no cost to the victim. Follow-up is also easier to monitor recovery since the group members live in neighbourhoods that are

almost closely knit. The essential need for treating addicts is the personal willingness of the victim to surrender for rehabilitation to a trusted group that guarantees the safety of his identity, and this is the hallmark of the idea behind the NA. Trained, professional and experienced counsellors can support in building the capacities of clerics to implement the NA package successfully with support from governments, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Faith-based organizations (FBOs), development partners, millennium development agencies (MDAs) and philanthropists. Departments of counselling education can also support the capacity building of volunteer group leaders in the implementation of the NA package

### **Recommendations**

Based on the workability of the NA drug abuse, misuse and addiction package in Nigeria to rescue adolescent/ adult victims, the following recommendations are

, clerics, mental health practitioners and psychiatrists can collaborate to include NA training in their treatment procedures,

5. Prevention is better than cure, student clubs warning on drug misuse should be supported in basic and tertiary schools, supported by counsellors and officials of the National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) to create awareness of the ills of drug abuse.
6. Communities should create space for relaxation and play by youths and adults to ease stress. These centers should be supervised and managed by counsellors and drug enforcement officers to prevent the abuse of drugs in the facilities.
7. Rehabilitated victims should be empowered with skills to earn a living and consciously reintegrate into their families and society.
8. The conventional and new media can assist in promoting the workability of the NA package with results from climes where it is practised.

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## **5** Impact of Information Technology on Family Dynamics: Implication for Counselling

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### **Abstract**

*The paper explores the impact of technology, encompassing smartphones, social media, and video games, on the dynamics of families, with a particular focus on family communication and conflict. Smartphones and social media platforms have facilitated unprecedented connectivity, allowing family members to maintain contact regardless of geographical distances. The paper emphasised that individuals who use social media platforms report higher levels of perceived family support and emotional closeness. There are challenges associated with technology's role in communication. Excessive smartphone use can lead to distractions during face-to-face interactions, potentially diminishing the quality of in-person conversations. The prevalence of video games and the time spent engaging with screens have introduced concerns about their impact on family dynamics. Excessive gaming, in particular, has been linked to heightened family conflict, especially among adolescents. Digital parenting presents a unique set of challenges, as parents strive to manage their children's screen time and online activities. This often leads to disagreements and conflicts within the family unit. Social media platforms have altered parent-child relationships, particularly among adolescents. The sharing of personal information online can*

*create conflicts over privacy, as parents and adolescents may have differing perceptions of boundaries in the digital realm. The paper concluded that technology has brought both positive and negative changes to family dynamics. It enhances connectivity and communication, introduces challenges in terms of managing screen time and resolving conflicts over technology use. Striking a balance between reaping the benefits of technology and maintaining healthy in-person relationships remains crucial for families in the digital age.*

**Keywords:** Counselling implications and technology, family dynamic,

### **Introduction**

The rapid evolution of technology in recent decades, encompassing smartphones, social media platforms, and video games, has profoundly transformed the fabric of family life. This transformation extends to two critical dimensions of family dynamics: communication and conflict. As we delve into this exploration, it is essential to recognize that these changes are not one-dimensional; rather, they are multifaceted, offering both opportunities and challenges for families in today's digital age. The ubiquity of smartphones and the rise of social media have reshaped the landscape of family communication. These digital tools have enabled family members to bridge geographical distances, fostering connections that might have been otherwise strained. Mesch (2016), posited that individuals who utilize social media platforms often report heightened levels of perceived family support and emotional closeness. The ability to share daily experiences, photographs, and life updates in real time has enriched family interactions, strengthening bonds in an increasingly globalized world.

However, this technological advancement is not without its complexities. While smartphones and social media facilitate connections, they can also inadvertently impede in-person interactions. The phenomenon known as "phubbing," where

individuals prioritize their smartphones over face-to-face conversations, can diminish the quality of family communication (Roberts & David, 2016). This dual nature of technology's impact on communication underscores the need for a nuanced examination.

Parallel to these communication dynamics, the proliferation of video games and screen time has raised concerns regarding the family conflict. Video games, often a source of entertainment for both children and adults, can sometimes lead to disputes over the amount of time spent gaming. Coyne (2019), found that video game addiction can be associated with increased family conflict, particularly among adolescents. As screen time becomes an integral part of family life, it necessitates a closer examination of its repercussions.

The challenges posed by technology are not limited to children's screen time. Parents find themselves navigating the intricacies of digital parenting, grappling with questions of how to set appropriate screen time limits and monitor online activities (Radesky, 2015). These efforts to strike a balance between fostering digital literacy and maintaining family harmony underscore the ever-evolving nature of parenting in the digital age. Moreover, the use of social media platforms introduces novel dynamics to parent-child relationships. Adolescents, in particular, navigate a digital landscape where sharing personal information online can lead to conflicts over privacy. Moreno (2016), opined that the divergence in perceptions of privacy boundaries between parents and adolescents, emphasises the need to navigate these digital spaces with sensitivity.

In the 21st century, technology has become an integral part of daily life, profoundly impacting various aspects of society, including communication, entertainment, and leisure. This paper focuses on three major technological components that have redefined how individuals interact with the digital world: smartphones, social media, and video games.

**Smartphones:** Smartphones have transformed the landscape of communication and personal connectivity with the advent of these pocket-sized devices, individuals can access the internet,

communicate with others, and access a myriad of applications on the go. The impact of smartphones on daily life is profound, as they have become indispensable tools for work, socialization, and entertainment. It enables instant communication through calls, text messages, and various messaging apps. They have made geographical barriers almost irrelevant, allowing people to stay in touch with family and friends across the globe (Mesch 2016). Access to a vast amount of information through web browsing and mobile apps has transformed the way individuals acquire knowledge and stay informed about current events.

**Social Media:** These platforms include Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter (now X), Instagram, Snap chat and YouTube have redefined how individuals connect and share their lives with others. These platforms enable users to create and share content, connect with friends and acquaintances, and participate in online communities. It fosters social connectivity by allowing individuals to maintain relationships, share updates, and engage in real-time conversations with friends and family members. It also provides opportunities for networking and connecting with like-minded individuals (Mesch, 2016). It serves as a platform for the rapid dissemination of information, news, and trends. However, it also raises concerns about the spread of misinformation and echo chambers.

**Video Games:** This evolved from simple forms of entertainment into immersive and interactive experiences that cater to a diverse audience. They offer various genres, from action-packed adventures to educational games. It provides entertainment and relaxation for players of all ages. They offer immersive narratives, engaging gameplay, and a sense of achievement (Granic, 2014). Excessive gaming, particularly among adolescents, has raised concerns about addiction and its potential impact on academic performance and family dynamics (Coyne, 2019).

Thus, smartphones, social media, and video games have become integral components of modern life, reshaping how individuals communicate, connect, and entertain themselves. While they offer

numerous benefits, including enhanced communication and entertainment options, they also come with challenges, such as screen time management and potential addiction. Awareness multifaceted nature of these technologies is essential for individuals and families as they navigate the digital landscape.

### **Family Dynamics: Navigating Relationships and Change**

Family dynamics, the intricate patterns of interactions, roles, and relationships within a family unit, play a pivotal role in shaping individual development and well-being. These dynamics are influenced by a multitude of factors, including cultural norms, socioeconomic status, and life events. Understanding family dynamics is essential for comprehending the functioning and health of a family system.

**Roles within the Family:** One of the fundamental aspects of family dynamics is the assignment of roles to its members. Each family member typically assumes certain roles, such as caregiver, breadwinner, or mediator. These roles can change over time due to life transitions and evolving family structures (Minuchin, 2018).

**Communication Patterns:** Effective communication is the cornerstone of healthy family dynamics. Open, respectful, and empathetic communication fosters understanding and connection among family members. Conversely, poor communication can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts (Falicov, 2017).

**Conflict Resolution:** Conflicts are a natural part of family life. How a family manages and resolves conflicts significantly impacts its dynamics. Families that employ constructive conflict resolution strategies tend to maintain healthier relationships and navigate challenges more effectively (Olson & Olson, 2000).

**Family Structures and Diversity:** Family dynamics are highly diverse, reflecting the changing nature of family structures in today's society. Families may be nuclear, extended, single-parent, or blended, each with its unique dynamics. Recognizing and respecting this diversity is crucial for promoting inclusivity and understanding (Boss & Greenberg, 2020).

**Developmental Transitions:** Family dynamics often undergo significant shifts during key life transitions, such as marriage, parenthood, and empty nesting. These transitions can be both sources of stress and opportunities for growth within the family unit (Carter & McGoldrick, 2001).

**Culture and Values:** Culture plays a substantial role in shaping family dynamics. Cultural norms and values influence parenting styles, gender roles, and expectations within the family. Families from diverse cultural backgrounds may have distinct dynamics (Oravec, 2000).

**Challenges to Family Dynamics:** External factors, such as economic hardship, illness, or loss, can challenge family dynamics. Resilient families adapt to these challenges by leveraging their strengths and support networks (McCubbin, & Patterson, 2014).

Hence, family dynamics are complex and multifaceted, encompassing roles, communication, conflict resolution, and cultural influences. Fostering healthy family dynamics is essential for promoting emotional well-being and cohesion within the family unit.

### **Theoretical Framework**

Several theoretical frameworks can help to understand and address communication and conflict within families concerning technology usage which includes smartphones, social media, and video games. This theory holds a prominent position:

#### **Conflict Resolution Theory**

Conflict Resolution Theory provides strategies for managing and resolving conflicts within families. It emphasizes the importance of effective communication, negotiation, and compromise to reduce conflict (Olson & Olson, 2000). In the context of technology-related conflicts, this theory can guide families in discussing their concerns openly and seeking mutually acceptable solutions. For example, when disagreements arise over screen time limits for children,

conflict resolution strategies can help parents reach a consensus (Gentile, 2017).

### **Effect of Technology on Family Communication and Conflict**

Technology, including smartphones, social media, and video games, exerts a substantial influence on family communication and conflict dynamics.

#### **1. Family Communication**

- a. **Facilitating Communication:** Smartphones enhance family communication by providing instant connectivity regardless of geographical distances. Video calls, text messages, and messaging apps enable family members to stay in touch (Mesch, 2016). Social media platforms offer a digital space for family members to share updates, photos, and messages, fostering continuous interaction (Vaterlaus, 2016).
- b. **Disrupting In-Person Interaction:** Excessive smartphone use can hinder face-to-face conversations, leading to reduced quality of in-person interactions (Roberts & David, 2016). The constant need to check social media notifications may divert attention during family gatherings and conversations, affecting engagement (Primack, 2017).

#### **2. Family Conflict**

- a. **Conflict over Screen Time:** Excessive video game usage, particularly among adolescents, can lead to conflicts over time spent online and neglecting other responsibilities (Coyne, 2019).  
**Smartphones:** Parents may face challenges in managing their children's screen time, leading to conflicts over device use (Radesky, 2015).
- b. **Privacy and Social Media:** Adolescents' use of social media can introduce conflicts over privacy when parents and adolescents have differing perceptions of boundaries in the digital realm (Moreno, 2016). The presence of smartphones in family settings may lead to concerns about privacy and

boundaries, especially when family members use their devices during private moments (Ferrer-Torres, 2021).

- c. **Digital Parenting Challenges:** in the use of Smartphones and Video Games, Parents often struggle to navigate digital parenting, including setting appropriate screen time limits and monitoring online activities, leading to disagreements and conflicts within the family (Radesky, 2015; Coyne, 2019).

Technology's impact on family dynamics is not uniform across all cultural backgrounds and generations. Oravec (2000), argued that cultural values and norms influence family attitudes toward technology. Katz and Aakhus (2002), further emphasized the role of generational differences in shaping family interactions in the digital age. Awareness of these variations is essential for tailoring interventions and counselling approaches.

However, technology, including smartphones, social media, and video games, has a profound impact on family communication and conflict dynamics. While these technologies can enhance connectivity and communication, they can also introduce challenges related to screen time management, privacy, and digital parenting. Recognizing and addressing these challenges is necessary for families to maintain healthy relationships in the digital age.

### **Implications for Counselling**

1. *Digital Parenting Education:* Counsellors can provide parents with education and guidance on effective digital parenting strategies, including setting screen time limits, monitoring online activities, and fostering healthy technology use habits. Many conflicts arise from parents' uncertainty about managing their children's technology use. Educating parents equip them with the tools to navigate these challenges effectively (Radesky, 2015; Coyne, 2019).
2. *Conflict Resolution Skills:* Counsellors can teach family members, both parents and children, conflict resolution and communication skills to address technology-related conflicts constructively.



Technology-related conflicts often stem from misunderstandings or miscommunications. Equipping family members with conflict resolution skills can help prevent and resolve conflicts more effectively (Olson & Olson, 2000).

3. *Balancing Screen Time:* Counsellors can assist families in creating balanced screen time schedules that allocate time for both online and offline activities, promoting healthier family dynamics. Striking a balance between online and offline activities is crucial for maintaining family cohesion and ensuring that technology does not disrupt quality family time (Granic, 2014).
4. *Privacy and Boundaries:* Counsellors can help families establish clear privacy boundaries regarding the sharing of personal information on social media and other online platforms. Addressing privacy concerns proactively can reduce conflicts related to the dissemination of personal information and online interactions (Moreno, 2016; Ferrer-Torres, 2021).
5. *Promoting Offline Bonding:* Counsellors can encourage families to engage in shared offline activities, such as board games, outdoor outings, and quality face-to-face interactions. These activities promote family bonding, enhance satisfaction, and counterbalance the potential negative effects of excessive screen time (Granic, 2014).
6. *Cultural Sensitivity:* Counsellors should be culturally sensitive and consider the cultural background of the family when addressing technology-related issues. Cultural variations in attitudes toward technology and family dynamics should be respected and integrated into counselling approaches (Oravec, 2000).
7. *Monitoring and Support:* Counsellors can provide ongoing support to families, offering a safe space for them to discuss technology-related concerns and challenges. Regular check-ins with families can help identify emerging issues and ensure that strategies and interventions remain effective over time.

8. *Collaboration with Technology Experts:* In complex cases, counsellors can collaborate with technology addiction specialists or experts in digital well-being to address severe technology-related issues. In cases of technology addiction or severe conflicts, a multidisciplinary approach may be necessary to provide the most effective support (Gentile, 2017).

By incorporating these counselling implications into the family dynamic practice, therapists and counsellors can help families navigate the evolving challenges and opportunities presented by technology while fostering healthier and more harmonious family relationships.

### **Conclusion**

Technology's influence on family communication and conflict is complex, offering both opportunities for enhanced connectivity and challenges related to screen time, privacy, and digital parenting. Effective strategies and interventions are needed to harness the benefits of technology while minimizing its disruptive effects on family dynamics. Families need to strike a balance between the benefits of technology and maintaining healthy in-person relationships.

### **Recommendations**

These are recommendations for individuals, families, educators, counsellors, and policymakers to navigate the impact of technology on family communication and conflict:

#### **For Families:**

- *Establish Open Communication:* Foster open and honest communication within the family about technology use, concerns, and expectations. Regular discussions can help address conflicts proactively.
- *Set Technology-Free Times:* Designate specific times or areas in the home as technology-free zones to encourage face-to-face interactions and quality family time.

- *Model Healthy Behaviour:* Parents should model responsible technology use to set a positive example for children. Avoid excessive screen time or distracted device usage during family activities.
- *Digital Parenting:* Educate yourself about digital parenting strategies. Implement guidelines for age-appropriate technology use and monitor online activities to ensure safety.
- *Balance Online and Offline Activities:* Encourage a balance between online and offline activities. Engage in shared offline experiences like family outings, board games, or cooking together.

**For Educators:**

- i. *Digital Literacy Education:* Incorporate digital literacy and responsible technology use into school curricula to equip students with the skills to navigate the digital world safely and responsibly.
- ii. *Parent Workshops:* Organize workshops and seminars for parents to educate them about digital parenting, privacy concerns, and strategies for managing technology within families.

**For Counsellors:**

- i. *Family Counselling:* Offer family counselling sessions to help families address technology-related conflicts and improve communication. Teach conflict resolution skills and provide a safe space for open dialogue.
- ii. *Tech Addiction Support:* Provide counselling and support for individuals, especially adolescents, struggling with technology addiction or excessive screen time.

**For Policymakers:**

- *Digital Literacy Policies:* Advocate for policies that promote digital literacy and responsible technology use in schools and communities. Support initiatives that teach individuals to navigate the digital world safely.

- **Privacy Regulations:** Enforce privacy regulations to protect personal information online and minimize the risk of privacy-related conflicts within families.
- **Accessible Mental Health Services:** Ensure access to mental health services, including tech addiction treatment, to support individuals and families dealing with technology-related challenges.

**For Media and Technology Companies:**

- **User-Friendly Parental Controls:** Develop and promote user-friendly parental control features and tools that empower parents to manage and monitor their children's online activities effectively.
- **Digital Well-Being Features:** Integrate features that encourage responsible and mindful technology use, such as screen time tracking and digital detox options.
- **Privacy Protections:** Prioritize user privacy by implementing robust data protection measures and transparent data-sharing policies.

Consequently, these recommendations aim to strike a balance between harnessing the benefits of technology for family connectivity and addressing the challenges it poses. By implementing these strategies, individuals and stakeholders can navigate the digital landscape more effectively and maintain healthy family relationships in the digital age.

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# **Self-Concept and Value as Predictors of Primary School Pupils' Academic Achievement in Social Studies in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State**

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and  
IBHAFIDON Henry**

## **Abstract**

*The study investigates self-concept and value as predictors of primary school pupil's academic achievement in social studies in Ojo Local Government Area of Lagos State. The researcher adopted a Survey research design for this study. The population for the study comprised all primary school pupils in public primary schools in Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos State. A simple random sampling technique was used to select forty pupils from each of the four selected schools to arrive at a sample size of 120. A self-structured instrument titled "Self-Concept and Value as Predictors of Pupils Academic Achievement Questionnaire (SCVPPAAQ) was used for data collection. The instruments were validated by three experts in the field of Educational Measurement and Evaluation at the University of Lagos, Akoka. With the split-half reliability technique, reliability forms the index  $r = 0.892$  and  $r = 0.817$  was obtained showing that the items in the instrument are reliable and suitable for the study. The data was analysed through Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Linear Regression analysis and tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that self-concept and value are good Predictors of a pupil's academic achievement. However, value*

*contributes the most to the positive relationship as self-concept contributes the less respectively. The study then concludes that the place of value cannot be underestimated as it is a good predictor of pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools.*

**Keywords:** Academic achievement, predictors, pupils, self-concept, value

### **Introduction**

Self-concept has traditionally been defined as the perception or self-perception and knowledge we have for ourselves, which we create based on the experiences and interpretations we make of our context. Following the definition of García, Canuto, & Palomares-Ruiz, (2019), it is a cognitive dimension generated by our mental image and lacks a moral component as it does not include negative or positive value judgments. Self-concept arises as a result of children's lived experience about their environment and is therefore a factor that greatly influences their development (Sánchez, Cachón, Sanabrias, & Zagalaz 2019). For decades, self-concept has been conceived as a multidimensional construct (Shavelson, Hubner, & Stanton, 1976). The balanced construction of self-concept depends, to a large extent, on the positive development of the different dimensions that make up an individual's perception and appraisal of him/her. These dimensions vary in number and identity according to the model of self-concept adopted. One of the most common taxonomies in the literature is that of Marsh et al. (1983), who classify self-concept in four dimensions: physical, social, academic and personal, the latter dimension including emotional, ethical and moral perceptions.

Along the same lines, García & Musitu (1999) also define self-concept taking into account the physical, social and academic dimensions, adding, in addition, the family and emotional dimensions. In this sense, the physical dimension refers to the self-perception that students have about their physical appearance, as well as their involvement in sporting activities; the social dimension is the perception that the subject has about their way of relating to others;



the academic dimension refers to the student's perception of their achievement at school; the family dimension is defined as the student's perception of their relationship with their parents in terms of trust and affection; However, the emotional dimension is how students perceive their emotional state and how they feel about the responses they give to different situations that may occur in their environment (García & Musitu 1999).

Self-concept can be classified in a broader and more comprehensive can be classified into six factors: a first factor is behavioural self-concept, which refers to how the student perceives his or her behaviour at school and at home; the second factor is intellectual and scholastic status, related to the academic self-concept of the models explained above and referring to the perception of achievement, abilities and the opinions others have about his or her achievement at school; the third factor is appearance and physical image, which would correspond to physical self-concept, emphasizing the student's appearance; the fourth factor is absence of anxiety, which would correspond to physical self-concept, emphasizing the student's appearance; the fourth factor is the absence of anxiety, similar to the emotional self-concept, and refers to the perception of emotional stability in situations where emotions are disturbed; the fifth factor is popularity or social acceptance, linked to the social self-concept of the models explained above, and is the child's perception of relationships with peers in the school environment; finally, the sixth factor is happiness and satisfaction, or the degree to which students perceive their well-being and are satisfied with the life they have.

Along the same lines, the meta-analysis by Möller et al. (2020), which analyses the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement through 121 correlational studies carried out on primary school students in the subjects of language and mathematics, obtains a positive, significant relationship between the variables, with moderate intensity in both mathematics ( $\beta = 0.57$ ) and language ( $\beta = 0.46$ ). In Huang's (2011) longitudinal meta-analysis conducted with 39 samples of pre-adolescent students, it is concluded that the

longitudinal relationship between self-concept and academic achievement is between 0.20 and 0.27. An important consideration is the subject-specific nature of the self-concept. The relationships between self-concept and academic achievement depend on the comprehensiveness/specificity of the self-concept measure. This is why some studies have found different results depending on the school subject. The study by Cárcamo et al. (2020) stands out for finding differences in the relationship between self-concept and achievement in the subjects of mathematics and language, being significant and positive in all cases, with a correlation of medium.

However, the place of value in child learning cannot be underestimated as it goes a long way to positively reposition and build their mentality level towards work. Value as a belief system is designed to set precedents and actions expected in society. In any society climate values can be seen to include greetings, living a responsive life, diligence, hard work, devotion, selflessness, industriousness, and sincerity. As envisaged, value is perceived as a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group of the desirable, which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of a given action. Yusoff (2014) stated that value can also be seen from the perspective of virtue morality due to its direct impact on the academic achievement of children. Exposure of pupils to actions that would help and guide them in living a moderated lifestyle and being focused in their dealings are all driven by an act called value. Enu and Esu (2011) after broad consideration of various conceptions of value see value as traits, practices, acts, ideals, beliefs, attitudes, and principles that a group or society considers to be of merit, worthwhile, dear, acceptable and right.

Similarly, Mezieobi, Danladi (2012); and Ibikunle (2016) posit that value as a process involves the systematic inculcation of measures that make individuals useful in the affairs of a country. To them, value is concerned with the mobilization and enablement of learners to cultivate an awareness and understanding that would transform them into citizens with skills, competencies, positive

values and reasoned judgments to effectively live, interact, interrelate and contribute positively to the socio-economic, political and cultural development of the society. Haste (2018) admits that through value, individuals in a nation can direct their social evolution by guiding young people to develop into individuals of integrity who can face and tolerate the demands of a dynamic society, who can commit themselves to responsible group behaviour and can cope with emerging problems creatively and emphatically for socio-civic living in their community. Hence value is the basic beliefs and attitudes in a society whether of individual or group which are considered worthwhile and which serve as a guide to choices and behaviour in daily life.

As a comprehensive component, the core values of every society were the primary content of Social Studies Education which const child upbringing (socialization) and emphasised the need for the development of attitudes such as hard work, open competition, high achievement orientation and communal cooperation. Within this world view, the worth of every individual was measured by the extent to which he/she contributed to the progress and welfare of society and not by the amount of personal wealth amassed (Gelen, 2014). The proper acquisition and development of enduring values such as love, sympathy, tolerance, justice, honesty, integrity, cooperation, trust, patriotism, hard work, development of positive self-concept, and self-reliance among others as a result of values will ensure national development in the political and socio-economic life of any nation (Arisi, 2013).

Emphatically the objectives of values education according to Iwelli (2012); Usasra (2012); Mezieobi (2012); and Ikwumelu (2015) include:

- Reawakening interest is the main thrust of Social Studies and Values Education which has hitherto been ignored in the teaching-learning interactive process.
- Drawing attention to the fact that all other skills learning in social studies or educational domain cognitive, psychomotor emphases

in social studies interactive process have any meaning only as “far as they help in facilitating the development of values.” (Iwele 2011).

- Exposing people to Nigerian society's cherished values which are commonly shared by a large segment of the population and which are distinctive of our society and to which all educational endeavours are geared.
- Educating people on how society's group's values are identified and sourced for the common good of all and the society.
- Equipping the students with the intellectual capacities to seek ways and means, in a pluralistic society such as Nigeria with varying and competing value systems of steaming our value conflicts and value confusion which are pervasive to the overall development of the society (Usara 2012).

### **Social Studies and Place of Value**

The value we place on a particular item dictates how jealous we are of it. For instance, we place so much value on money and academic certificates. Hence, we keep them in secure places. This, however, is in line with Abegunrin (2016) who says that value refers to criteria for determining the level of goodness, worth or beauty of a thing. Social value, however, can be described as moral principles and standards which guide our interactions with people in society (Aboluwarin, 2020). Scholars like Ogunbiyi et al. (2020) opined that the rationale for the inclusion of Social Studies education into the school curriculum in Nigeria is governed by the belief that Social Studies can positively influence, modify and change pupil's behaviour in the direction of acceptable norms, values, beliefs, and attitudes of the society. Efforts are being directed towards the development of good and positive values in the Nigerian society. This is the sequel to the belief that Social Studies deals with the inculcation of positive societal values and attitudes designed to make an individual a functional member of society. In this line of thought Ikwumelu, et al. (2015) affirm that one of the aims of Social Studies is to make

students loyal to their society and to develop a commitment to act responsibly and reasonably. The desire is to enable an individual to be capable of distinguishing between negative and positive actions and thereby adhere to those values and attitudes that are positive for the individual in particular and the society in general. Social Studies education focuses on values and attitudinal change to enable man to cope with the diverse problems in his environment. Ogunbiyi et al. (2020) further observed that the development of values occupies a special place in Social Studies. More than any school subject, Social Studies emphasizes the inculcation of moral values into the learners. The objective of Social Studies is to prepare its learners for effective participation in society. A good citizen should not only possess the requisite knowledge and skills that would enable him or her to live a meaningful life in society, but learners should also imbibe those values and attitudes that are treasured by the hallmark of civic responsibility.

Empirical studies were undertaken by Kennedy and Joshua (2022) on value education and the challenges of Nigeria Diversity: Focus on Social Studies for Sustainable National Development. Through a position paradigm, they affirmed that pupils who display a high level of value always perform better in their academic tasks. This is because stability, preparedness, seriousness, punctuality to school activities, continuous engagement in reading, and perseverance among others are values which ultimately end up motivating their pupils towards good grades. Ikwumelu, Mbang, & Ogene (2015) investigated Social Studies Education and the Need for value-based education in Nigeria. A descriptive research design was used as a population comprised of pupils in public primary schools in Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Through a stratified technique where Basic 5 pupils from six public schools were selected, a sample size of 240 pupils was selected. Their study revealed that social studies education just like every other education type drives the teaching and internalisation of values to pupils at a very early age in life. The place of value in a school system cannot be underestimated due to the

dynamics surrounding its contribution to pupils' academic achievement.

### **Statement of the Problem**

It is no news again that the foundation of our educational system has been weakened over the years and needs to be strengthened if we dream of having improved academic achievement. Abimbola et al. (2014), claimed that respect for elders, honesty and accountability, cooperation, industriousness, discipline, self-confidence, moral courage and self-concept are gradually eroding in our schools. This is because pupils find it difficult to develop their self-concept which is an important aspect of self-development and continuous enlightenment on the impact of value to children. Failure to address and manage our self-concept and be enlightened on the impact of value may likely lead to poor academic achievement of pupils in classrooms. In order to achieve higher level of achievement for children in public primary schools, the researcher investigated self-concept and value as predictors of academic achievement in public primary schools.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The major objective of the study was to investigate self-concept and value as predictors of academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools. The specific objective was to:

1. Determine the degree to which self-concept and value contribute towards the academic achievement of pupils in Public Primary Schools.

### **Research Hypotheses**

- H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools.
- H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no significant predictive contribution on self-concept and the impact of values on the academic achievement of pupils in public primary school.

### **Significance of this study**

The outcome of this work would be relevant to stakeholders in both academics and other works of life. Prominent among them include researchers, pupils, teachers, and government among others.

- To the Researchers, this study would aid in updating the literature on contemporary issues surrounding how self-concept and values predict pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools.
- Pupils too would also find the outcome of this work useful as it would lead to knowledge acquisition and expansion through schema (as it concerns self-concept and acquisition of value).
- Teachers would also find the outcome of this study relevant as it would address issues of personality identification, development of self-confidence and academic achievement.

### **Methodology**

#### **Research Design**

The survey research design was used by the researcher in this study. This design type helps to gather, organize and analyse data obtained from a pool of respondents and generalise its outcome on the larger population.

#### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study comprised all primary school pupils in public primary schools in Ojo Local Government Area, Lagos State. The choice of this local government area lies on the premise that public primary schools in this area have been known to produce a mix of good and bad pupils after post-primary education.

#### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

In the selection of samples, two sampling techniques were employed in this study. A purposive sampling technique was used to select four public primary schools in the Ojo Local Government Area. A simple random sampling technique was used to select forty pupils from each of the four selected schools and 120 pupils were sampled for the study.

### **Research Instrument**

A self-structured instrument titled “Self-concept and Value as Predictors of Pupils’ Academic Performance (SCVPPAAQ) was used to collect data for the study”. The Questionnaire was divided into two sections (A and B). Section A focused on respondents' bio-data while Section B generated 20 closed-ended statements that centre on self-concept and values. Section B was further divided into three sections of B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub> and B<sub>3</sub>. The Questionnaire was designed on a 4-point Likert Scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) respectively. Positive items were scored 4-3-2-1 while negative items were reversely scored 1-2-3-4 respectively. Also, a teacher-made Achievement Test on Social Studies for Basic 5 pupils was used to generate pupils' academic achievement. This test contained 20 objective items on 4 response patterns of A, B, C and D. The Questionnaire and Test were validated by three experts in Educational Measurement and Evaluation of the University of Lagos, Akoka. The reliability coefficient of 0.892 and 0.817 were obtained, showing that the items in the instrument were reliable and suitable for the study.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

The data was analysed through linear regression analysis and tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

### **Results**

**H<sub>0</sub>1:** There is no significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools.



**Table 1: Summary of Pearson Product Moment Correlation showing the relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools**

Variables	N	Mean	Std.D	r	Sig	Remark
Self-Concept	120	20.72	11.58	4.36	0.000	significant
Academic Achievement of Pupils	120	17.24	9.60			

The table above shows that there is a positive significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement of pupils in public primary schools ( $r = 4.36$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Therefore hypothesis one is rejected. The positive relationship implies that an important consideration is the subject-specific nature of the self-concept. The relationships between self-concept and academic achievement depend on the comprehensiveness/specificity of the self-concept measure.

**H<sub>0</sub>2:** There is no significant predictive contribution on self-concept and the impact of values on the academic achievement of pupils in public primary school.

**Table 2: Showing a Regression of Self-concept and Values on Pupils' academic Achievement in social studies**

	The model	sum of squares	mean squared	F	Sig (2-tailed)	Decision
Regression	2.666		5.33			
Residual	158.958		.491	51.087	.062 <sup>b</sup>	Not-Significant
Total	161.624		329			

$$\alpha = 0.05, r = .955 \quad r^2 = .912$$

- a. Dependent Variable: Achievement
- b. Predictors: (Constant), self-concept and values.

Table 2 shows that the r-value is .955 and r<sup>2</sup>- value is .912 respectively. The r value of .955 indicates that there is a positively strong correlation between the dependent variable (academic

achievement in social studies) and the independent variables (Self-concept and values). The  $r^2$  value of 0.912 shows that 91.2% variation in the dependent variable (Academic achievement) can be explained by self-concept and value; testing at the alpha level of 0.05, the  $P$ -value is higher than the alpha level. Therefore, the null hypothesis which stated that self-concept and values do not significantly predict academic achievement of pupils in public primary school is rejected. Hence self-concept and values significantly predict the academic achievement of pupils.

**Regression Analysis**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-3.621	.175		9.677	.000
Value	.763	.016	.865	6.050	.081
Self-concept	.890	.027	.594	12.255	.069
Parenting styles	.149	.019	.210	4.869	.041

From the regression model above, it was revealed that self-concept and values contributed the most to the academic achievement of pupils in social studies. However, value contributed the most to the significance then followed by self-concept while parenting styles contributed the least looking at the chain of contribution.

**Discussion of Findings**

It has already been stated that self-concept is a construct that plays a fundamental role in pupils' academic achievement. Self-concept is one that most influences achievement, as it largely conditions school learning (Loayza, 2019). The systematic review carried out by Mansilla et al. (2021) with 20 studies from different educational stages concludes that there is dependence between both variables, with a positive and direct relationship between both variables regardless of the context, the focus of the study or the characteristics of the participants. From the study, the findings confirm with that of

Möller et al. (2020) who stated that there is a significant relationship between self-concept and achievement. They claimed that pupils with a good understanding of themselves alongside those who have developed a high level of confidence in their ability level and what they are capable of doing usually excel in academic activities as against those with less knowledge and understanding of themselves. Pupils with good Self-concept always have self-esteem and self-efficacy. They have also shown to have a positive relationship such that any rise in one will bring about a rise in the other; likewise does value and academic achievement of pupils. Studies conducted by Kennedy and Joshua (2022) also affirmed that pupils who display a high level of value always perform better in their academic tasks. This is because stability, preparedness, seriousness, punctuality to school activities, continuous engagement in reading, and perseverance among others are values which ultimately end up motivating them towards good grades.

### **Conclusion**

From the study, the researcher concluded the following:

1. The place of value cannot be underestimated as it is a good predictor of pupils' academic achievement
2. Value acquisition contributes the most to improved pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools.
3. Self-concept contributes the least to the improved pupils' academic achievement in public primary schools.

### **Recommendations**

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

1. The study should be replicated using a truly experimental approach to determine the extent of predictions of these two variables i.e. self-concept and value
2. Value as a concept should be taught at the primary school level irrespective of the circumstance before the pupils

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**AJAYI Rachael Adejoke, ARANMOLATE Temitope Rasheedat  
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***Abstract***

*Inclusive education has gained prominence as a transformative approach to fostering an equitable learning environment for individuals with special needs. This paper examines the inclusion of adults with special needs in adult literacy centres in Nigeria. However, Inclusive education goes beyond mere accommodation; it embodies a fundamental shift towards embracing diversity, promoting equity, and challenging societal norms. The benefits are far-reaching, encompassing enhanced learning opportunities, social integration, empowerment, and the cultivation of a more compassionate and empathetic society. The inclusion of adults with special needs in adult literacy centres serves as a beacon of progress, reinforcing the idea that every individual, regardless of their abilities, deserves access to a type of education that empowers and enriches their lives. As educators, administrators, policymakers, and advocates collaborate to overcome attitudinal barriers, provide adequate training and resources, and design flexible and inclusive curricula, they contribute to a brighter future where education truly knows no boundaries. Therefore, policymakers should advocate for the development and implementation of inclusive education policies*



*at local, regional, and national levels. Government should provide continuous training for educators to enhance their understanding of inclusive practices and develop the skills needed to address diverse learning needs.*

**Keywords:** Adult, Centre, Inclusion, Literacy, Special needs,

### **Introduction**

In today's rapidly evolving society, the significance of education is universally acknowledged as a cornerstone of personal and societal development. Adult literacy centres play a pivotal role in providing education and skills to individuals who, for various reasons, do not have the opportunity to access quality education in their formative years. However, within the diverse spectrum of adult learning, a significant segment comprises individuals with special needs. These needs encompass a range of cognitive, physical, sensory, and emotional challenges that necessitate tailored approaches to education (Bunch & Valeo, 2017). The inclusion of adults with special needs in adult literacy centres is an imperative endeavour that not only upholds the principles of equitable education but also cultivates a more inclusive and compassionate society.

Adult literacy centres serve as critical hubs for individuals seeking to enhance their literacy and numeracy skills, equipping them with the tools necessary to navigate modern life effectively. While conventional education often focuses on younger learners, adult education acknowledges the diverse circumstances adults face as they embark on their learning journeys (Pijl & Frostad, 2018). In recent years, the concept of inclusive education has gained prominence, emphasizing the need to provide equal opportunities for all learners, regardless of their abilities or challenges. The rationale for inclusive education is rooted in principles of human rights and social justice. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities explicitly states the right of individuals with disabilities to education that is inclusive at all levels (UNESCO, 2017). Beyond legal and ethical considerations, inclusive education

fosters social cohesion by breaking down stereotypes and fostering empathy among individuals with varying abilities. Therefore, the primary objective of this paper is to delve into the realities of the inclusion of adults with special needs in adult literacy centres in Nigeria.

### **Defining Special Needs in the Context of Adult Education**

In the realm of adult education, the term "special needs" encompasses a diverse range of challenges that can impact an individual's ability to access and benefit from educational opportunities. Special needs extend beyond traditional disabilities and include cognitive, physical, sensory, emotional, and social barriers that require tailored support to facilitate effective learning (Hart & Saxton, 2019). These needs can stem from various factors such as neurological conditions, physical impairments, learning difficulties, and mental health conditions. In the context of adult education, special needs often manifest as unique learning styles, varying paces of learning, the need for assistive technologies, and accommodations to ensure equal access to educational content and experiences (Jang & Yin, 2019). Addressing these needs requires a holistic approach that recognizes the individuality of each learner and seeks to create an inclusive environment that promotes equitable learning outcomes.

### **Different Types of Special Needs in Adult Education:**

In the context of adult education, special needs encompass a wide range of challenges that individuals may face. These challenges can be broadly categorized into various types, including cognitive, physical, sensory, and emotional/psychological needs. Understanding the diversity within each category is crucial for developing effective strategies to ensure inclusive education for all. According to the American Psychiatric Association (2013), the following are the types of special needs in Adult education;

**Cognitive Needs:** Cognitive needs refer to challenges related to thinking, learning, and understanding. These can include learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and autism spectrum disorders.

**Physical Needs:** Physical needs pertain to challenges related to mobility, coordination, and physical functioning. Examples include mobility impairments, cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy and spinal cord injuries.

**Sensory Needs:** Sensory needs involve challenges related to one's senses, such as vision, hearing, and touch. These can include visual impairments, hearing impairments, deaf-blindness and sensory processing disorders.

**Emotional/Psychological Needs:** Emotional and psychological needs refer to challenges related to mental health, emotions, and social interactions. Examples include anxiety disorders, depression, bipolar disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

### **Challenges faced by adults with special needs in accessing education**

While the importance of education is universally recognized, adults with special needs often encounter unique challenges that can hinder their access to quality education. These challenges stem from various factors and can significantly impact their ability to engage in lifelong learning and personal development. These challenges according to Schalock & Verdugo (2012) are as follows:

#### **1. Lack of Accessibility:**

- Physical barriers in educational institutions, such as inaccessible buildings and classrooms, can limit the participation of individuals with mobility impairments.
- Limited availability of assistive technologies and learning materials can hinder access to educational content for individuals with sensory impairments.

#### **2. Stigma and Discrimination:**

- Negative attitudes and stereotypes surrounding disabilities can lead to social isolation and hinder individuals from seeking education.
- Discriminatory practices can lead to exclusion from mainstream educational settings and opportunities.

**3. Inadequate Training and Support:**

- Educators and support staff may lack the necessary training and awareness to effectively accommodate the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities.
- The absence of specialized training can hinder the development of inclusive teaching strategies and classroom management techniques.

**4. Financial Constraints:**

- Individuals with special needs may require additional resources, assistive devices, and support services, leading to increased financial burdens.
- Limited access to scholarships, grants, or funding for accommodations can pose financial barriers to education.

**5. Limited Access to Information:**

- Lack of accessible information and communication can prevent individuals with sensory impairments from receiving essential information about educational opportunities.
- Inaccessible websites and communication channels can hinder the application process and enrolment.

**6. Lack of Tailored Curriculum:**

- Curriculum and instructional materials may not be designed to meet the diverse learning needs and styles of individuals with special needs.
- The absence of individualized learning plans can impede the progress of learners with unique challenges.

**7. Transportation Challenges:**

- Inadequate transportation options that are accessible and accommodating can limit the ability of individuals with disabilities to physically attend educational programmes.

**8. Healthcare and Well-being:**

- Medical and healthcare needs may require flexible scheduling or accommodations making consistent

attendance challenging for individuals with chronic health conditions.

#### **9. Transition and Post-Education Support:**

- Lack of transition planning and support after completing an educational programme can hinder individuals from successfully integrating into the workforce or society.

#### **Benefits of Inclusion in Adult Literacy Centers**

The practice of inclusion, which involves integrating individuals with special needs into mainstream educational settings, holds numerous advantages for both the learners and the educational community as a whole. In the context of adult literacy centres, promoting inclusion can lead to transformative outcomes that enhance learning experiences, foster social integration, and contribute to a more equitable society. Other benefits of the inclusion of people with special needs in adult literacy centres according to Ainscow (2005) include;

**Enhanced Learning Opportunities:** Inclusion exposes learners to diverse perspectives, learning styles, and experiences, enriching the overall educational environment. Individuals with special needs can benefit from tailored instructional approaches that address their unique learning requirements, leading to improved comprehension and skill development.

**Fostering Social Integration:** Inclusion facilitates interactions and collaborations among learners from diverse backgrounds, breaking down barriers and promoting understanding. Individuals with special needs have the opportunity to develop social skills, build friendships, and feel valued as contributing members of the learning community.

**Breaking Down Stereotypes and Bias:** Exposure to individuals with special needs challenges stereotypes and misconceptions, fostering a more inclusive and empathetic society. Through shared learning experiences, learners can recognize and appreciate the capabilities and contributions of all individuals.

**Empowerment and Improved Self-Esteem:** Successful participation in an inclusive environment boosts the self-esteem and confidence of individuals with special needs. Accomplishments in literacy and numeracy build a sense of achievement and empowerment, enhancing overall well-being.

**Skill Diversification:** Inclusion supports the development of a wider range of skills, as learners with different abilities contribute unique perspectives and talents to the learning process. Peer learning and collaboration enable the exchange of knowledge and strategies, benefiting all participants.

**Preparation for Real-World Inclusion:** Inclusive education prepares individuals with special needs for active participation in society, including the workforce and community engagement. Skills developed in an inclusive literacy centre translate to greater independence and meaningful inclusion in everyday life.

**Promotion of Equity and Social Justice:** Inclusion aligns with principles of equity and social justice, ensuring that individuals with special needs have equal access to educational opportunities. It promotes the idea that education is a fundamental right for everyone, regardless of their abilities.

**Positive Impact on Teaching Practices:** Educators gain insights into diverse teaching methodologies and adaptability, fostering professional growth. Instructors learn to accommodate varying learning styles, leading to improved pedagogical approaches that benefit all learners.

**Cultivation of Inclusive Mindsets:** Inclusion in adult literacy centres fosters a culture of inclusivity that extends beyond the educational setting, influencing broader societal attitudes toward diversity.

### **Strategies for Inclusive Education in Adult Literacy Centers**

Creating an inclusive educational environment for adults with special needs in literacy centres requires a multifaceted approach that encompasses instructional, organizational, and attitudinal considerations (UNESCO, 2019). By implementing a range of

strategies, adult literacy centres can effectively accommodate diverse learning needs, promote participation, and ensure equitable learning outcomes. These strategies according to UNESCO (2019) are as follows:

- a) **Individualized Learning Plans:** Develop personalized learning plans for each learner, considering their strengths, challenges, and goals. Collaborate with learners to set achievable objectives and tailor instructional strategies to their unique needs.
- b) **Accessible Learning Materials and Technology:** Provide materials in various formats (audio, large print, digital) to accommodate diverse sensory needs. Utilize assistive technologies such as screen readers and speech-to-text software to enhance accessibility.
- c) **Trained Instructors and Support Staff:** Ensure instructors receive training in inclusive teaching methods and strategies. Designate support staff or teaching assistants to provide individualized assistance during lessons.
- d) **Collaborative and Peer-Assisted Learning:** Encourage peer mentoring and collaborative learning among diverse groups of learners. Pair individuals with different abilities to promote mutual support and skill sharing.
- e) **Flexible Assessment Methods:** Offer a variety of assessment formats, allowing learners to demonstrate their knowledge in ways that align with their abilities. Focus on formative assessment and constructive feedback to support continuous improvement.
- f) **Universal Design for Learning (UDL):** Implement UDL principles by providing multiple means of representation, engagement, and expression. Ensure content and activities are adaptable to different learning styles and abilities.
- g) **Physical and Environmental Considerations:** Modify physical spaces to be accessible and navigable for individuals with mobility impairments. Provide seating arrangements

that accommodate diverse needs, such as those requiring sensory support.

- h) Transparent Communication and Clear Instructions:** Use plain language and visual cues to enhance communication and comprehension. Clearly articulate expectations and instructions to avoid ambiguity.
- i) Cultivate an Inclusive Culture:** Promote awareness and understanding among learners and staff about the diverse range of abilities. Organize workshops and awareness sessions to challenge biases and stereotypes.
- j) Collaboration with External Resources:** Establish partnerships with disability organizations and experts to enhance inclusive practices. Seek guidance on adopting materials and strategies to address specific needs.
- k) Continuous Professional Development:** Provide continuous training opportunities for instructors to stay updated on inclusive practices. Encourage reflective practice and sharing of successful strategies among colleagues.
- l) Inclusive Curriculum Design:** Develop a curriculum that includes diverse voices and perspectives, reflecting the experiences of individuals with special needs. Incorporate real-life scenarios and practical applications that resonate with learners' experiences.

### **Challenges and Considerations in Implementing Inclusive Education in Adult Literacy Centers**

Implementing inclusive education in adult literacy centres can bring about numerous benefits for learners with diverse backgrounds and needs. However, it also comes with its own set of challenges and considerations. According to Florian (2008), here are some key points to keep in mind:

#### **Challenges**

- 1. Diverse Learning Needs:** Adult learners in literacy centres come from a wide range of backgrounds, with varying levels of literacy,



language proficiency, and learning styles. Meeting the diverse learning needs of all learners can be a significant challenge.

2. **Limited Resources:** Many adult literacy centres operate with limited resources, including funding, staffing, and instructional materials. Providing appropriate support for learners with disabilities or special needs might require additional resources that the centre may struggle to obtain.
3. **Training and Awareness:** Instructors and staff at adult literacy centres may not be adequately trained to address the specific needs of learners with disabilities or those from marginalized communities. Training programmes on inclusive teaching practices may be necessary.
4. **Stigmatization and Discrimination:** Some learners may face stigmatization and discrimination due to their disabilities, socio-economic status, ethnicity, or other factors. This can create an unfriendly environment and hinder their learning experience.
5. **Physical Accessibility:** Many adult literacy centres might not be physically accessible to learners with mobility impairments. Ensuring facilities are accessible can be a considerable challenge, especially in older buildings or resource-constrained settings.
6. **Lack of Materials:** Adult literacy materials that are inclusive and culturally relevant might be scarce. Customizing materials to cater for different learners' needs and backgrounds can be time-consuming.
7. **Language Barriers:** Inclusive education involves considering the linguistic diversity of learners. Some learners might have limited proficiency in the primary language of instruction, which requires additional strategies for effective teaching.

#### **Considerations:**

1. **Needs Assessment:** Conduct a thorough needs assessment to understand the specific needs of the learners in the centre. This can guide the development of inclusive strategies and support systems.

2. **Professional Development:** Provide continuous professional development for instructors and staff on inclusive teaching practices, understanding diverse learning needs, and addressing potential biases.
3. **Flexible Curriculum:** Develop a flexible curriculum that can be tailored to individual learners' needs and learning styles. This might involve using a variety of teaching methods and materials.
4. **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Collaborate with local disability organizations, community groups, and experts to develop a holistic approach to inclusion. They can provide valuable insights and support.
5. **Accessible Facilities:** Ensure that the physical facilities are accessible to learners with disabilities. This includes ramps, elevators, accessible bathrooms, and other necessary accommodations.
6. **Culturally Relevant Materials:** Create or adopt instructional materials that are culturally relevant and sensitive to learners' diverse backgrounds, which can enhance engagement and learning outcomes.
7. **Support Services:** Provide additional support services, such as tutoring, counselling, or assistive technology, to learners who require them.
8. **Open Communication:** Foster an environment of open communication where learners feel comfortable discussing their needs and challenges. This can help in addressing issues promptly.
9. **Inclusive Assessment:** Adopt assessment methods to accommodate different learning styles and abilities. Avoid assessments that unfairly put certain groups of learners at a disadvantage.
10. **Continuous Improvement:** Regularly assess and adopt inclusive education strategies based on feedback, outcomes, and changing learner demographics.

Implementing inclusive education in adult literacy centres requires a holistic, and sensitive approach that will take into account the diverse needs and backgrounds of the learners. While challenges may arise, the benefits of providing equitable learning opportunities make the effort worthwhile.

### **Theoretical Model of Psychotherapy**

It is necessary to illustrate the application of a theory towards achieving stability, peace and harmony in Adult literacy centres in Nigeria. Attachment theory was considered relevant to the present study on coping strategies for better literacy centres in Nigeria. Attachment theory was propounded by Bowl in Florian (2008), the theory proposed that humans are born with a repertoire of attachment behaviours such as vigilance and clinging designed by evolution to ensure proximity to supportive orders in times of need. The theory explains the fact that an individual possesses psychological and behavioural responses and these increase the chance of the individual being protected from physical and psychological threats, and encourages the development of coping skills related to emotion regulation and healthy exploration of the physical and social environment. The application of this theory is relevant to the present study. Application of attachment therapy could provide safety, comfort, encouragement and positive regard making it possible for the individual to manage anxiety, conflict insecurity and distress associated with insecurity, painful memories, conflict, doubt and confusion.

### **Conclusion**

The journey towards establishing inclusive education in adult literacy centres is a complex yet immensely rewarding endeavour. Inclusive education goes beyond mere accommodation; it embodies a fundamental shift towards embracing diversity, promoting equity, and challenging societal norms. The benefits are far-reaching, encompassing enhanced learning opportunities, social integration, empowerment, and the cultivation of a more compassionate and

empathetic society. As educators, administrators, policymakers, and advocates collaborate to overcome attitudinal barriers, provide adequate training and resources, and design flexible and inclusive curricula, they contribute to a brighter future where education truly knows no boundaries. The inclusion of adults with special needs in adult literacy centres serves as a beacon of progress, reinforcing the idea that every individual, regardless of their abilities, deserves access to education that empowers and enriches their lives. By taking these strategies and considerations to heart, adult literacy centres can become catalysts for positive change, shaping a world where every voice is heard, every mind is valued, and every individual has the opportunity to thrive. As we move forward, let us remember that inclusive education is not only a goal to aspire to but a pathway to a more just and equitable society for all.

### **Recommendations**

- i. Policymakers should advocate for the development and implementation of inclusive education policies at local, regional, and national levels.
- ii. The government should provide ongoing training for educators to enhance their understanding of inclusive practices and develop the skills needed to address diverse learning needs.
- iii. There should be collaboration between government bodies, educational institutions, and advocacy organizations to ensure legal support and resource allocation for inclusive practices.
- iv. Government should develop individualized learning plans that cater for each learner's strengths, challenges, and goals.
- v. Government should allocate sufficient resources to procure assistive technologies, modify facilities for physical accessibility, and provide support staff.

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## Availability and Deployment of Employability Skills among Students in the Sociology of Education

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### Abstract

*This study examined the availability and deployment of employability skills among students in Sociology of Education at Lagos State University of Education. Three hypotheses guided the study descriptive survey research design was adopted. The population consisted of all the Sociology of Education students both in NCE and degree. The sample consists of one hundred and fifty using simple random sampling techniques. A questionnaire titled Availability and Deployment of Employability Skills Questionnaire (ADESQ) was used to collect data. A reliability estimate of 0.8 was obtained with the Cronbach Alpha technique. Data were analysed using an independent t-test for hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. Results revealed that students in Sociology of Education have a high level of availability of employability skills and the extent of deployment of these skills is high. Furthermore, the male students have higher levels of both availability and deployment of employability skills than the females. Therefore, it was suggested that employability skills should be set as a priority in university courses and special programmes should be organized for female students to help train them to acquire and deploy more advanced employability skills.*

**Keywords:** Availability, deployment, employability skills, Sociology of Education Students,

### **Introduction**

In a dynamic world of continuous changes, there is a need for continuous improvement both socially, economically and especially individually. This improvement is a skill in progress, as more individuals are continuously trained to fit into the fast-changing society and to also contribute eminently to the economy. This is only possible when the trained individuals in the long run possess the necessary skills for effective progress in society. Thus for graduate students to overcome the challenges and thrive in the dynamic society, they ought to have some skills developed in them and these can be referred to as employability skills. Research has proven that the quality of the workforce is greatly improved by including employability skills in the Curriculum (Sarfraz, Hewege and Rajendran, 2018 as cited in Eugene, Beneth, Ndidigwe and Eliachi, 2020).

According to Orji (2013), employability skills consist of self-esteem, self-confidence development, interpersonal skills and the ability to cope with the real world of work. These skills are developed in school during presentations, cooperative assignments and the assigning of leadership roles among students. Thus, students develop employability skills through learning activities (Learner, 2012, as cited in Chukwurah and Akpo, 2019). A report from the University of Georgia (2014, as cited in Smart, 2017) revealed that Sociology Education students' employability skills are improved through oral and written presentations, extensive works on research and design work and group work. George (2010) opines that students must have an appropriate level of these skills to become employable. These employability skills are the skills employers of labour in the field of Sociology Education look out for before employing graduate students in Sociology Education.

Employability skills are skills and personal mannerisms acquired by students to be employed in and to remain employed such as

communication skills, problem-solving skills, leadership skills, personal management skills, and time management skills, among others. Saad and Majid (2014) observed that young graduate students entering the workforce can make themselves valuable to their organization by utilizing the employability skills they possess and which are required by the organization. These employability skills can also be referred to as the transferable skills required by an individual to make him/herself employable (Desai and Remisetty-Mikler, 2017). Geel (2014) defined employability skills as those skills employers deem necessary for the successful functioning of newly appointed graduate students in the work environment.

Employability skills according to Leroux and Lafleux as cited in Agrawal and Dasgupta (2018) can be grouped into three namely;

- a. Academic skills - critical thinking, communication, life skills, problem-solving
- b. Teamwork skills – Leadership skills, learning skills, interpersonal skills, respect for others.
- c. Personnel management skills – positive attitude, goal setting, initiative, self-esteem.

Priority is given to higher-order thinking skills and personal qualities by employers while finding competent workers (Saladin and Salahun, 2014), as cited in Agrawal and Dasgupta, 2018). This implies that employability skills are of paramount importance in job seeking.

Gender, a cultural construct and psychological term was established by society to distinguish the mental and emotional characteristics of males and females (Okorie, 2016). Pearson Education (2003) as the condition of being male or female defines gender. Gender can thus be conceptualized as a set of personal characteristics—behaviour, attitude, and abilities—established by society to distinguish males from females. As a sociocultural construct, employability is inherently a gendered environment (Ahi, 2004, as cited in Louise, 2009). This research delves deeper into the impact of gender on the accessibility and utilization of employability



skills. Theoretically, the results of this research will lend support to John Dewey's theory that optimal pupil learning occurs through active engagement with the school curriculum and interaction with the environment. Fundamentally, students should not adopt a passive stance during the learning process; rather, they should actively engage in hands-on activities that facilitate a multifaceted understanding of reality and foster a sense of accountability for their education. The results of the investigation will thus provide support for this theory. According to the findings of Atah and Abeng (2019), classroom climate and instructional methods have a substantial impact on the acquisition of employability skills by Business Education students.

The above authors recommend that instructors consistently employ practical methods of instruction, which enable students to apply and solidify the knowledge they acquire in real-world scenarios. Similarly, research has demonstrated that the provision of instructional facilities and the quality of the student-teacher relationship have a substantial impact on the acquisition of employability skills by Business Education students (Chukwurah and Akpo, 2019). Therefore, it is imperative to furnish students with instructional facilities, including but not limited to computers, to facilitate the development of these skills. The perceptions of students and employers regarding employability skills for entry-level marketing and sales positions were investigated by Chowdhury and Miah (2019). An important distinction exists between the perspectives of employers and pupils, as demonstrated by the findings. Proficient abilities such as planning and organizing, work experience, professionalism, the nature of one's main coursework, and a positive work attitude were given precedence by managers. According to Desan and Ramisetty-Makler (2017), every student believes they possess employability skills, and there is no statistically significant distinction in the employability skills of male and female management students.

According to Emmanuel (2016), the primary cause of graduates' deficiency in employable skills is inadequate primary and secondary

education, which is characterized by incompetent instructors and inadequate facilities. Additionally, according to a study, chemistry students in their final year of secondary school demonstrate proficiency in approximately 32 statements that signify the possession of ten (10) employability skills. These skills are ranked as follows: problem-solving ability, time management, information and communication technology, self-management, planning and organizing, planning and organizing, and planning and organizing. Gender and age have a substantial impact on the acquisition of employability skills, with male students having a distinct advantage, according to research by Idaka and Uzoechi (2016). The level of employability skills acquisition among university students is notably high. In a similar vein, Uzoechi (2015), as referenced in Idaka and Uzoechi (2016), discovered that male students exhibited superior proficiency in acquiring employability skills, including communication skills, planning and organization, self-management, decision-making, and computer proficiency, in comparison to their female counterparts. Conversely, females demonstrated superior performance in problem-solving, initiative, and enterprise. Conversely, regarding all sub-variables, Guardian (2013, as cited in Idaka and Uzoechi, 2016) found no distinction in the employability skills of male and female students. The findings of Uchendu (2015) indicate that the degree to which university students acquire employability skills is notably inadequate. Furthermore, the study found no statistically significant distinction in this regard between students attending traditional universities and those attending specialized universities. According to Dania, Bakar, and Mohamed (2014), vocational students in Malaysia possessed a moderately high degree of employability skills. This conclusion was reached based on the students' self-perception, the extent of their industrial training, and their engagement in career development initiatives. In a similar vein, Akpan (2012) demonstrated that there existed a correlation between the employable skills attained by students and variables such as workshop equipment, instructional materials, instructor quality, and teaching methods.

Geel (2014) observed that concerning self-awareness, it was found that most participants want a job when they graduate, but they are unsure and unspecific regarding their career goals. Also, it was found that students are reluctant to take risks out of fear of uncertainties while others would research risk to determine the financial implications and the potential consequences of the risks. Finally, with regards to goal setting, participants are unsure what they want to achieve in the short and longer term and they feel slightly anxious and unsure of the future it was found that time management is a challenge for business management students. Despite the rigorous courses undergone by students they still find it difficult to reflect these skills in the labour market. Could this be that students have the necessary skills but find it difficult to reflect these skills in the labour market?

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to determine

1. The level of availability of employability skills among Sociology of Education students.
2. The extent of deployment of employability skills among students in Sociology of Education

### **Hypotheses**

1. There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male students in Sociology of Education on their level of availability of employability skills.
2. There is no significant difference between the mean rating of female and male students in Sociology of Education I on their extent of deployment of employability skills.
3. Availability of employability skills has no significant influence on the deployment of employability skills among students in the Sociology of Education

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

The study employed a survey research design.

### **Population of the Study**

The population of the study consists of all N.C.E and degree students in Sociology of Education.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample consists of one hundred and fifty using simple random sampling techniques.

### **Research Instrument**

The questionnaire was divided into three(3) sections. Section A elicits information on demographic information of students, Section B consists of items on the availability of employability skills and Section C extracts information on the students' extent of deployment of employability skills. Experts validated the instrument and the experts corrected it based on the clarity of the statement, the interrelatedness of the items to the interest of the study and the overlapping of items among others. The questionnaire was distributed to the respondents was online form. For the reliability test, the instrument was administered to twenty (20) Sociology of Education students from another school. The ratings of the data collected were subjected to split-half reliability, using the Cronbach Alpha technique. The overall reliability coefficient was 0.82, which shows that the instrument is reliable.

### **Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected was analysed using percentages and t-tests.

## Results

**Table 1: Respondents' Distribution by Gender**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	70	46.6
Male	80	46.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100%</b>

Out of the total one hundred and fifty (150) respondents, Seventy (70) representing 46.6% were female students while Eighty (80) representing 53.4% were male students.

### Hypothesis One

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male students in Sociology of Education on their level of Availability of Employability skills.

**Table 2: T-test analysis of the difference in the mean ratings of male and female students in Sociology of Education on their level of Availability of Employability Skills.**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Female	70	4.22	0.52	148	3.124	0.041	Significant
Male	80	4.51	0.36				

P < 0.05 - significant.

Table 2 revealed that the mean rating of female students is 4.22 with a standard deviation of 0.52 while the mean rating of male students is 4.51 and a standard deviation 0.36. The t-calculated is 3.124 which is greater than the t-tabulated of 0.041 and therefore significant at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This indicates that female students in Sociology of Education have a

lesser level of availability of employability skills compared to the male students in Sociology of Education.

**Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of female and male students in Sociology of Education on their level of deployment of employability skills.

**Table 3: T-test analysis of difference in the mean ratings of male and female Sociology of Education students on their extent of Deployment of Employability skills**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t-cal	t-tab	Decision
Female	70	4.30	0.43	148	3.245	0.038	Significant
Male	80	4.21	0.28				

P < 0.05 - significant.

Table 3 reveals that the mean rating of female students is 4.30 with a standard deviation of 0.43 while the mean rating of male students is 4.21 with a standard deviation of 0.28. The t-calculated is 3.245 which is greater than the t-tabulated of 0.038 and therefore significant at 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. This indicates that male students in Sociology of Education have a higher extent of deployment skills in Sociology of Education.

**Hypothesis Three**

The availability of employability skills has no significant influence on the deployment of employability skills among students in the Sociology of Education.

**Table 4: Correlation of Availability of Employability Skills and Deployment of Employability Skills.**

Correlations		Availability	Deployment
Availability	Pearson Correlation	1	.638 <sup>xx</sup>
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	150	150
Deployment	Pearson Correlation	.638 <sup>xx</sup>	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	150	150

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4 shows the probability associated with the calculated value  $r$  (.438) is 0.000. This implies that there exists a significant moderate positive influence of the availability of employability skills on the deployment of employability skills among students in Sociology Education since the probability value of 0.00 is less than 0.05 level of significance.

### Discussion of Findings

Result presented in Table 1 showed that male students in Sociology Education were more than the female students. The result in Table 2 shows that students in Sociology education have high employability skills. That is to say, their level of availability of employability skills is at a high level. This is in support of Mohd, Hazwan and Ahmad (2019) whose findings indicated that the level of employability skills of the students is high in terms of teamwork, communication among others and Desai and Remisetty–Milkler (2017) reported that all students perceive themselves as definitely having employability skills. Similarly, findings of Dania, Bakar, and Mohamed (2017) showed that vocational students in Malaysia had a moderately high level of employability skills. This result however negates the findings

of Uchendu (2015) who found that the level of University student's skill acquisition for employability is significantly low both in conventional and specialized universities.

The result in Table 2 also reveals that students in sociology education have a high extent of deployment of all the employability skills measured. This result is in support of the findings of Idaka and Uzoechi (2016) who revealed that the extent of employability skills acquisition among university students is significantly high. Table 2 also indicates that there is a significant difference in the mean rating of female and male students in sociology education on their level of availability of employability skills. Therefore, the male have higher employability skills. This result is in agreement with Idaka and Uzoechi (2016) who revealed that gender has a significant influence on employability skills acquisition, in favour of male students. This result negates the findings of Mohd, Hazwan and Ahmed (2019) who revealed that there was no significant difference in employability skills scores between men and women.

The result of Table 3 reveals that there is a significant difference in the mean rating of female and male students in sociology education on their extent of deployment of employability skills, in favour of the males. This result is in agreement with Uzoechi 2015, as cited in Idaka and Uzoechi, (2016) who found that male students were better than their female counterparts in employability skills acquisition in terms of communication skills, planning and organization, self-management, decision making and computer skill. This result negates the findings of Guardian (2013) who reported that there are no differences between male and female students in their employability skills in terms of all the sub-variables.

The result in Table 4 showed that there is a significant moderate positive influence of the variability of employability skills on the deployment of employability skills among students in sociology education. This result is in agreement with (Chukwurah and Akpo, 2019) who revealed that there is a significant influence of student-teacher relationship and provision of instructional facilities on employability skills acquisition among Business Education students.



This implies that the more student-teacher relationship is strengthened, the more instructional facilities are provided then the more students will acquire employability skills that will be of great help in their work field.

### **Conclusion**

Based on these findings, it was concluded that students in Sociology Education have a high level of availability of employability skills and they also exhibit a high extent of deployment of employability skills. Furthermore, male students in sociology education have a higher level of availability and deployment of employability skills.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the above findings, it is recommended that:

1. Employability skills should be given priority in Universities, by creating core courses at various levels to help students acquire these skills before graduation, to produce experts that will be competent and resourceful anywhere they find themselves.
2. Female students should be given a special programme where they can be trained to be more skilled in having and deploying these employability skills, to catch up with their male counterparts and with the demanding society.
3. The present and subsequent government through the various school authorities should create programmes that will acquire students to have enough skills before graduation and strategies which will imbibe them with a growing self-efficacy towards competency and resourcefulness anywhere.
4. Workshops, seminars and conferences should be organized from time to time for students to acquire more skills on employability before they graduate from school.

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## **9** The Use of Culturally Relevant Mathematics Activities in Nigerian Early Childhood and Primary Education Classrooms

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**ISHOLA Adelodun Akeem**

### **Abstract**

*This paper employed the use of descriptive design to examine the use of culturally relevant mathematics activities in Nigerian early childhood and primary education classrooms. The research involved a sample of two hundred and fifty (250) in-service mathematics teachers, with data collected through a 15-item questionnaire known as the "Culturally Relevant Mathematics Activities Questionnaire (CRMAQ)." The findings underscore a proactive approach by educators, with high mean scores reflecting the inclusion of culturally diverse content and a strong belief in its positive impact. Collaboration among teachers and commitment to professional development further highlight the dedication to enhancing pedagogical skills. The study demonstrated a generally high level of adoption, while also emphasizing the need for improved involvement of students and their families in curriculum decisions. In conclusion, these findings emphasize the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices in primary school mathematics education and its potential to enrich students' learning experiences.*

**Keywords:** culture, culturally relevant mathematics, culturally responsive teaching, early childhood, primary education,

## **Introduction**

In the ever-evolving landscape of education, mathematics stands as a cornerstone in the early years of a child's cognitive development. As scholars like Neil & Claire (2006) have underscored, this foundation not only equips young minds with problem-solving skills but also facilitates the connection between abstract mathematical concepts and real-world applications, nurturing their critical thinking abilities and logical reasoning from a tender age (Erdoğan & Baran, 2009; Swanson, 2006). The importance of this mathematical bedrock extends beyond the confines of the classroom; it transcends into the realms of future careers and personal growth (Hevy, 2014).

In Nigeria, where the significance of mathematics education is widely acknowledged, there exist both challenges and opportunities. The shortage of qualified mathematics educators, especially in rural areas, poses a significant hurdle in delivering quality instruction to young learners. Additionally, an updated and comprehensive curriculum, aligned with global standards and practical real-life applications, is imperative (Alabdulaziz, 2021; Hassan & Gimba, 2009). However, amidst these challenges, Nigeria is witnessing promising efforts aimed at bridging these gaps through teacher training programs and technological innovations like online platforms and educational apps.

Yet, within this milieu, a critical aspect remains unexplored – the integration of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) in mathematics education. While these frameworks have been extensively studied in the broader field of education, their impact on mathematics teaching practices remains underrepresented and fragmented. CRP and CRT empower learners by emphasizing the multifaceted importance of mathematics, fostering belief in their abilities, and linking mathematical concepts to problem-solving and understanding the world (Gutstein, 2009). Furthermore, these frameworks recognize the contextual, cultural, and social factors that shape students' identities and experiences in mathematics. They acknowledge the significance of students' backgrounds, experiences, and cultural contexts in shaping their

mathematical journey. Thus, mathematics teaching becomes a fluid, adaptive process that defies universality, with diverse ideas, experiences, and backgrounds contributing to the rich tapestry of mathematical understanding (Mukhopadhyay, Powell, & Frankenstein, 2009; Lampert, 2001; Moll & Gonzalez, 2004).

In this dynamic landscape, mathematics education is far from culturally neutral, and the idea of universal truths in teaching practices is challenged. Research reveals that meaningful connections between mathematics teaching and learners' cultures, lives, and experiences can be forged through the incorporation of identity, language, and culture (Bonner, 2014; Civil & Khan, 2001). These findings underscore the importance of adapting mathematical education to the diverse contexts and backgrounds of learners. This article examines the uncharted territory of the intersection between mathematics education, CRP, and CRT, aiming to synthesize, analyse, and interpret existing research to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these frameworks can transform mathematics teaching practices. By embracing the multifaceted nature of mathematics education in Nigerian early childhood and primary school classrooms, we aim to contribute to the discourse on fostering culturally relevant, inclusive, and effective mathematical instruction for young learners in a globalized world.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Conceptual Framework**

Education is not a one-size-fits-all endeavour, and the recognition of this fact has been a driving force behind the exploration of culturally responsive mathematics education. Students bring with them a unique perspective shaped by their cultural backgrounds, and this lens profoundly influences their understanding of mathematical concepts. As we delve into the literature, it becomes clear that culture is not merely a superficial layer but a profound foundation upon which mathematical knowledge can be built.

Culture, in the context of education, goes beyond the confines of traditional definitions. It encompasses the rich tapestry of each

student's life experiences, world views, and histories. This cultural reference frame, as highlighted by Tileston and Darling (2008), plays a pivotal role in shaping how students perceive the world, where they choose to direct their attention and the value they attach to learning. Indeed, mathematics itself is acknowledged as a "cultural product" with complexities and contestations, making it a crucial aspect of mathematics education (Presmeg, 2007). This recognition underscores the importance of integrating students' cultural backgrounds into the mathematics classroom. Culturally responsive teaching becomes the conduit through which students' prior knowledge is harnessed and utilized to enhance mathematical comprehension. As Gay (2010) elucidates, it encompasses various facets of education, including curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessment. Culturally proficient teaching goes a step further, fostering an understanding of both the teacher's and learner's worlds and embracing the value of diversity (Nuri Robins et al., 2006).

Jenni (2014), citing the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, emphasizes the necessity of connecting mathematics education to the backgrounds, needs, and cultures of all learners, advocating for an inclusive approach that benefits all students. This stands in stark contrast to the cultural deficit paradigm, which disregards the diverse knowledge, skills, and cultural experiences that students from various backgrounds bring to the classroom (Taylor & Sobel, 2011).

Culturally responsive mathematics instruction transcends mundane teaching acts, embodying a professional, political, cultural, ethical, and ideological disposition that elevates the learning experience (Howard, 2010). It unleashes the higher learning potential of ethnically diverse students while cultivating their academic and psychosocial abilities (Gay, 2010). This approach permeates all aspects of teaching and learning, including dialogue and interaction, leading us to explore how culturally responsive teaching is currently being utilized in elementary mathematics classrooms.



Culturally relevant pedagogy, as introduced by Gloria Ladson Billings (1994), represents a pivotal concept in this journey towards inclusive education. Rooted in critical race theory, CRP empowers students on intellectual, social, emotional, and political fronts by incorporating cultural referents into knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Its three core principles—academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness—form an interconnected framework for opposition and collective empowerment (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Despite its potential to revolutionize education, culturally relevant pedagogy has, to some extent, remained on the margins of educational research and practice. Factors contributing to its marginalization include simplistic conceptions of CRP, limited large-scale research connecting CRP practices to student achievement, a focus on specific contexts or ethnicities, and hesitance to politicize the classroom through CRP (Sleeter, 2010). Sleeter (2010) urges a clearer definition of CRP and its classroom implementation, cutting through the political turmoil to highlight how CRP can challenge unjust social relations.

In examining culturally relevant teaching practices, we find that the three prongs of CRP—academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness—are rarely found together in research. While cultural competence is a frequent focus, involving the infusion of students' cultural habits and behaviours into teaching practices and curriculum materials, academic achievement and critical consciousness receive comparatively less attention (Benson, 2003; Enyedy & Mukhopadhyay, 2007; Hastie, Martin, & Buchanan, 2006; Hefflin, 2002; Young, 2010). This imbalance can be attributed to teachers' potential cultural bias or unpreparedness to address racially and socially charged issues (Young, 2010).

In a descriptive study conducted by Olaoye (2016) to assess the efficacy of employing a cultural relevance approach in mathematics instruction within heterogeneous classrooms involving a sample of 245 mathematics teachers (176 males and 69 females), the researcher developed a 10-item instrument adapted from this pedagogical approach. The study's findings illuminated the challenges associated

with the diverse cultural backgrounds of students in the context of mathematics education. It underscored that mathematics instruction often encounters cultural diversity, which can, at times, impede the seamless transmission of mathematical knowledge due to symbolic barriers. In essence, the study emphasized the importance of acknowledging and integrating cultural perspectives in mathematics teaching. Hence, the researcher suggests that teaching mathematics in today's multicultural society necessitates an approach that not only aligns with academic standards but also respects and accommodates the cultural beliefs and tenets of students. This aligns with the broader discourse on culturally relevant teaching practices, emphasizing the imperative of bridging the gap between mathematics education and diverse cultural backgrounds for the betterment of all students.

A similar concept to CRP and CTR is the Ethno-mathematics approach. Several studies have investigated the impact of ethno-mathematics on students' achievement and retention of various mathematical concepts within the Nigerian educational context. Ozofo and Onos (2018) conducted research in Abia State, Nigeria, to assess the efficacy of ethno-mathematics in enhancing students' performance in probability. Their findings indicated a positive influence of the ethno-mathematics approach on students' achievement in this mathematical area. Similarly, Umar et al. (2019) explored the effects of ethno-mathematics on student performance and retention in trigonometry in Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria. Their study revealed that students who received instruction through ethno-mathematics demonstrated improved performance and better retention of trigonometric concepts compared to their peers taught using conventional methods.

Furthermore, Adamu (2022) conducted a study in the Makurdi metropolis, Benue State, Nigeria, focusing on the impact of ethno-mathematics on students' achievement, interest, and retention in geometry. Adamu's research unveiled the beneficial effects of ethno-mathematics in geometry education, particularly in enhancing students' interest and long-term retention of the subject matter.

Collectively, these studies underscore the potential of ethnomathematics as an effective pedagogical approach in the Nigerian educational context, particularly in improving students' understanding, interest, and retention of mathematical concepts. These findings provide valuable insights into the broader discussion of employing culturally relevant mathematics activities in Nigerian early childhood and primary classrooms.

In summary, the literature review reveals the profound impact of culture on mathematics education and the potential of culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant pedagogy to enhance the learning experiences of diverse students. However, it also highlights the need for a more balanced approach that incorporates all three prongs of CRP—academic achievement, cultural competence, and critical consciousness—into mathematics education.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The theoretical framework guiding this research on "The use of culturally relevant mathematics activities in Nigerian early childhood and primary classrooms" draws upon two influential frameworks within the field of education: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT). These frameworks, as articulated by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994) and Geneva Gay (2010), respectively, provide a comprehensive lens through which we can understand and evaluate mathematics teaching practices in culturally diverse classroom settings. These frameworks go beyond traditional pedagogical approaches and emphasize the role of education in fostering social change and social justice.

Gloria Ladson-Billings' CRP is defined as a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by utilizing cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. To engage in CRP effectively, teachers must develop sociocultural consciousness and a holistic caring perspective. The three core tenets of CRP, as emphasised in Thomas & Berry (2019), are:

1. **Academic achievement:** This tenet centres on helping learners realize their potential for high levels of achievement. Teaching practices associated with this aspect involve setting high expectations, providing support mechanisms, assisting students in defining long-term goals, and promoting self-advocacy.
2. **Cultural competence:** Teachers practising CRP keep their students' cultures at the forefront of their interactions and instruction. They honour and respect students' home cultures while helping them navigate dominant cultural influences to attain academic success.
3. **Socio-political consciousness:** This dimension of CRP empowers historically marginalized students to understand and change the world for the better. Teaching practices linked to socio-political consciousness aim to help students recognize, understand, and critique social inequalities.

Geneva Gay's CRT, on the other hand, focuses on leveraging the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective. CRT, as highlighted in Thomas & Berry (2019), encompasses six dimensions:

1. **Validation of cultural heritages:** CRT bridges the gap between home and school experiences by validating students' cultural backgrounds through instructional strategies, multicultural resources, and curricula.
2. **Comprehensive learning opportunities:** Culturally responsive teachers create holistic learning environments that consider the intellectual, social, emotional, and political aspects of the whole child, allowing students to maintain their cultural identities.
3. **Multidimensionality:** CRT extends across various aspects of education, including curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques, classroom management, and performance assessments.

- 4. Self-determination and empowerment:** CRT encourages self-belief and empowerment, fostering high academic and social expectations for students.
- 5. Transformation:** CRT challenges traditional educational practices and cultural hegemony, promoting social consciousness, intellectual critique, and personal efficacy.
- 6. Emancipation and liberation:** CRT challenges the idea of absolute authority in scholarly truth and encourages critical thinking, rejecting the notion of universal truths and the permanence of knowledge.

In the context of this research, CRP and CRT serve as essential theoretical frameworks to explore how culturally relevant mathematics activities can be effectively integrated into early childhood and primary classrooms in Nigeria. These frameworks guide the examination of teaching practices, the promotion of culturally inclusive instruction, and the potential for mathematics education to contribute to broader societal changes and social justice. In light of the above, the following questions are answered in this study:

### **Research Questions**

1. To what extent do teachers use culturally relevant mathematics activities in primary schools?
2. What culturally relevant mathematics activities do teachers adopt in teaching primary school students?
3. What are the effects of using culturally relevant mathematics activities in primary schools?

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

In conducting this research, a descriptive research design was used. This design is suitable because it makes specific aspects of a population possible. Moreover, utilizing a selected sample as representatives of the larger whole is also enhanced. Descriptive

research, as outlined by Nworgu (2015), is distinguished by its commitment to collecting data without any manipulation, allowing researchers to comprehensively explore various facets of a subject or phenomenon without introducing any artificial alterations (McCombes, 2020).

### **Population of the Study**

This research focused on public primary school teachers across all five educational districts within Lagos State, Nigeria, serving as the population of interest.

### **Sample and Sampling Technique**

From this population, a sample of two hundred and fifty (250) in-service mathematics teachers who participated in our study was carefully selected. A 15-item questionnaire, the Culturally Relevant Mathematics Activities Questionnaire (CRMAQ) was administered to gather the necessary information. This questionnaire employed a 4-point Likert scale, where respondents indicated their agreement or disagreement using the categories of "Strongly Agreed" (4), "Agreed" (3), "Disagree" (2), and "Strongly Disagree" (1). The CRMAQ was meticulously designed to capture the essence of culturally relevant approaches in mathematics education. To ensure the reliability of the CRMAQ, we utilised Cronbach's Alpha method, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.81, signifying a high level of internal consistency. The administration of the CRMAQ was carried out by the researchers themselves, alongside research assistants who were postgraduate students specializing in mathematics education. The process resulted in a 100% retrieval rate of the instrument from the sampled mathematics teachers in Lagos. To analyse the data obtained, we employed the Special Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. Descriptive statistics, including measures such as the mean and standard deviation, were used to address the research questions.

### Method of Data Analysis

For interpreting the research questions, a criterion mean of 2.50 and above was established. Mean ratings falling within this range indicate that respondents accepted the statements in the questionnaire to a high degree (HD) (2.50 - 2.99) or a very high degree (VHD) (3.0 and above). Conversely, mean ratings below 2.50 signify that respondents expressed a lower degree (LD) of acceptance (1.50 – 2.49) or a very low shallow VLD) of acceptance (1.49 and below) for the questionnaire statements.

### Results

Data collected from 250 respondents in two Local Government Education Authorities (LGEAs) are analysed below. The LGEAs include; Badagry Local Government Education Authority and Ojo Local Government Education Authority of Lagos State. The presentation is done as follows: analysis of demographic information, answering the research questions, and lastly discussion of findings.

**Table 1: Demographic Information of the Respondents**

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>	Male	98	38.2
	Female	152	60.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Teaching Experience</b>	5 years	65	26
	10 years	115	46
	20 years & above	70	28
	<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>LGEAs</b>	Badagry	112	44.8
	Ojo	138	52.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100.0</b>

In Table 1, we presented the demographic information of the respondents. The gender distribution revealed that female teachers constituted the majority, representing 60.8% of the respondents, while male teachers made up 38.2%. When we examined teaching

experience, those with 10 years of teaching experience emerged as the largest group at 46%, followed by educators with 20 years or more of experience at 28%, and those with 5 years of teaching experience accounted for 26%. Finally, when considering the distribution among local government education authorities, it was evident that Ojo local government education authorities dominated, accounting for 52% of the teachers surveyed, whereas Badagry local government education authorities represented 44% of the total.

### Answering the Research Questions

**Research Question 1:** To what extent do teachers use culturally relevant mathematics activities in primary schools?

**Table 2: Teachers' Use of Culturally Relevant Mathematics Activities in the Classroom**

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN
1.	I incorporate culturally relevant mathematics activities in my primary school classroom.	131 (52.4)	68 (27.2)	34 (13.6)	17 (6.8)	3.25
2.	I use culturally relevant teaching materials that reflect the diverse backgrounds of my students.	98 (38.2)	109 (43.6)	20 (8.0)	23 (9.2)	3.12
3.	I believe that integrating cultural elements into mathematics lessons enhances students' learning experiences.	88 (35.2)	102 (40.8)	28 (11.2)	32 (12.8)	2.98
4.	I adapt mathematics lessons to align with the cultural backgrounds of my primary school students.	82 (32.8)	114 (45.6)	38 (15.2)	16 (6.4)	3.04
5.	I regularly include culturally relevant stories or examples in mathematics instruction.	117 (46.8)	79 (31.6)	24 (9.6)	30 (12.0)	3.13
<b>Weighted Average =</b>		<b>3.10</b>				

Table 2 shows the extent to which teachers used culturally relevant mathematics activities in the classroom. The detailed analysis revealed that teachers incorporated culturally relevant mathematics



activities in the primary school classroom (Mean= 3.25). Teachers regularly included culturally relevant stories or examples in mathematics instruction (Mean= 3.13), used culturally relevant teaching materials reflecting the diverse backgrounds of their students (Mean= 3.12), believed that integrating cultural elements into mathematics lessons enhanced students' learning experiences (Mean= 3.04), and adapted mathematics lessons to align with the cultural backgrounds of primary school students (Mean= 2.98). The weighted average of the table was 3.10, indicating that the extent to which teachers used culturally relevant mathematics activities in the classroom was high.

**Research Question 2:** What culturally relevant mathematics activities do teachers adopt in teaching primary school students?

**Table 3: Relevant Mathematics Activities Teachers Adopt in Teaching Primary School Students**

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN
1.	I seek input from students and their families about culturally relevant mathematics topics.	47 (18.8)	89 (35.6)	76 (30.4)	38 (5.2)	2.58
2.	I encourage students to share their cultural perspectives when discussing mathematical concepts.	99 (39.6)	112 (44.8)	19 (7.6)	20 (8.0)	3.16
3.	I believe that culturally relevant mathematics activities can improve students' mathematics achievement.	129 (51.6)	77 (30.8)	20 (8.0)	24 (9.6)	3.24
4.	I have observed increased engagement and interest in mathematics when using culturally relevant activities.	56 (22.4)	68 (27.2)	73 (29.2)	53 (21.2)	2.50
5.	I think culturally relevant mathematics activities help bridge the cultural gap between students and the subject.	125 (50.0)	53 (21.2)	32 (12.8)	40 (16.0)	3.05

**Weighted Average = 2.9**

Table 3 shows the relevant mathematics activities that teachers adopted in the teaching of primary school students. The detailed analysis revealed that teachers believed that culturally relevant

mathematics activities could improve students' mathematics achievement (Mean= 3.24). Teachers encouraged students to share their cultural perspectives when discussing mathematical concepts (Mean=3.16), thought that culturally relevant mathematics activities helped bridge the cultural gap between students and the subject (Mean= 3.05), sought input from students and their families about culturally relevant mathematics topics (Mean= 2.58), and observed increased engagement and interest in mathematics when using culturally relevant activities (Mean= 2.50). The weighted average of the table was 2.9, indicating that the relevant mathematics activities teachers adopted in the teaching of primary school students were at a high level.

**Research Question 3:** What are the effects of using culturally relevant mathematics activities in primary schools?

**Table 4: Effects of Using Culturally Relevant Mathematics Activities in Primary Schools**

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	D	SD	MEAN
1.	I have received training or professional development in implementing culturally relevant mathematics activities.	113 (45.2)	86 (34.4)	24 (9.6)	27 (10.8)	3.14
2.	I believe that culturally relevant mathematics activities positively impact students' attitudes toward mathematics.	121 (48.4)	74 (29.6)	24 (9.6)	31 (12.4)	3.14
3.	I am confident in my ability to effectively integrate culturally relevant mathematics activities into my teaching.	104 (41.6)	95 (38.0)	11 (4.4)	40 (16.0)	3.05
4.	I collaborate with other teachers to share culturally relevant mathematics activity ideas.	122 (48.8)	89 (35.6)	29 (11.6)	10 (4.0)	3.29
5.	I am open to feedback from students and colleagues regarding the use of culturally relevant mathematics activities.	111 (44.4)	77 (30.8)	37 (14.8)	25 (10.0)	3.09
<b>Weighted Average = 3.14</b>						

Table 4 shows the effects of using culturally relevant mathematics activities in primary schools. The detailed analysis revealed that teachers collaborated with other teachers to share culturally relevant mathematics activity ideas (Mean= 3.29). I had received training or professional development in implementing culturally relevant mathematics activities (Mean= 3.14). Teachers believed that culturally relevant mathematics activities had a positive impact on student's attitudes toward mathematics (Mean = 3.14), were open to feedback from students and colleagues regarding the use of culturally relevant mathematics activities (Mean= 3.09), and were confident in their ability to effectively integrate culturally relevant mathematics activities into their teaching (Mean= 3.05). The weighted average of the table was 3.14, indicating that the use of culturally relevant mathematics activities in primary schools was at a high level.

### **Discussion and Implications**

The results presented in Tables 2, 3, and 4 provide valuable insights into the integration of culturally relevant mathematics activities within primary school education. Table 2 signifies a proactive approach by educators, with an average score of 3.25, indicating the deliberate inclusion of culturally relevant mathematics activities in the classroom. The inclusion of culturally resonant stories and examples in mathematics instruction further underscores the commitment to diversifying the pedagogical landscape. Table 3 reveals a noteworthy aspect of teachers' beliefs and practices related to culturally relevant mathematics activities. The findings suggest a prevailing belief in the positive impact of such activities on students' mathematical achievement (Mean= 3.24), as well as their effectiveness in bridging the cultural divide between students and the subject (Mean= 3.05). However, the slightly lower mean score for seeking input from students and their families (Mean= 2.58) highlights an area for potential enhancement, emphasizing the importance of involving students and their families in curriculum development. In Table 4, the results indicate a high level of collaboration among teachers in sharing culturally relevant mathematics activity ideas (Mean= 3.29), signifying a sense of

community and knowledge exchange. Furthermore, teachers reported receiving training and professional development in the implementation of culturally relevant mathematics activities (Mean= 3.14), which underscores their dedication to enhancing their pedagogical skills in this domain.

The weighted average across these tables suggests a prevailing inclination towards the adoption and application of culturally relevant mathematics activities within primary schools, reflected in an overall average of 3.14. These findings underscore the critical role of culturally responsive teaching practices in mathematics education and the potential benefits for students' attitudes and engagement with the subject. However, it is essential to acknowledge areas that may warrant further development, particularly in involving students and their families in curriculum decisions. These findings underscore the importance of infusing cultural diversity into the realm of mathematics education and the promising outcomes it holds for both pedagogical practices and students' learning experiences. The broader implication is that educators and educational institutions should persist in their efforts to promote and sustain inclusive practices, ensuring a comprehensive and culturally responsive approach to mathematics education at the primary school level.

### **Conclusion**

This study underscores the importance of integrating cultural diversity into mathematics education at the primary school level. It illuminates the path toward a more inclusive, engaging, and effective mathematics education that not only serves the academic needs of students but also nurtures a deeper understanding of the subject in the context of diverse cultural backgrounds. In light of these findings, educators and educational institutions must continue to champion and support the inclusive practices observed in this study. Furthermore, addressing the identified areas for improvement, particularly in involving students and their families in curriculum development, can lead to an even more enriched and culturally responsive mathematics education.

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**Texting and Abbreviations in Pre-Service  
Teachers' Writing Skills: A Study of  
A Nigeria Higher Institution  
Students' Essays**

**10**

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**Abstract**

*The increasing popularity and use of texting language have become a subject among linguists and language educators. While some scholars consider it a threat to language learning, others see it as a useful tool for language learning. Because of these divided opinions, this study investigated the effects of short messaging service (SMS) on the essays of pre-service teachers in a higher institution in Nigeria. This research examined the effects of texting language on the writing skills of advanced language education students. The objectives of the study were to determine whether SMS language is used in the academic writing of the pre-service teachers and if it is, what kinds are used and whether they are minimal or otherwise. Do they have positive or negative effects on their writing skills? 165 essays from pre-service teachers in a higher institution in Lagos were collected and used as data for the study. Descriptive and quantitative analyses were used to identify the level of SMS interference, and the kinds of SMS language in their essays. Analysis revealed that there were more essays without the language of SMS than those that contain it. The use*

*of SMS is minimal and the type found, which is in contraction has no negative effect on their academic writing skills. These results suggest that SMS language has minimal effect on pre-service teachers' essays and such effect might have a more positive impact than negative on their writing skills. This study aligns with the position that SMS language does not pose any threat to language learning and might be a contributing factor or tool to effective language learning.*

**Keywords:** Language teaching, learning, pre-service teachers, SMS language, writing skill, Nigeria

### **Introduction**

The use of the language of text messages in essays written by students of higher institutions is becoming a growing concern to (English) language educationists. This is a result of its perceived adverse effects on language learners 'writing skills. Our previous study on this subject using a questionnaire shows that the students are aware of short messaging service (SMS) language interference in their writing. However, in this study, we explored their essays to determine the level of SMS language, and the kinds of SMS language used therein. In other words, does what we have in their essays support their claims in the questionnaires?

Texting language is the latest language variety that comes into sight with the arrival of technologies such as mobile phones, the internet, and digital media. Texting is one of the most recent forms that people use to communicate. Much like other new technologies, texting has generated its style of language, which includes abbreviations and graphics. Texting differs from other forms of written communication to a great extent. It is a form of language that has developed a unique variety of English, which separates it from the other languages. This language is common among mobile users, internet users, chatters, and bloggers—who are, in most cases, youngsters; especially students in higher institutions. These activities resulted in the creation of a new body of “discourse, identity, authorship, and language” (Kern, 2006).

People use several different terms to describe this new language variety like: texting language, internet language, SMS language, or digital language. “Texter” are always criticized for their use of texting language, as people hold a common belief that it is damaging students' writing skills, especially formal or academic writing. However, other scholars who are opposed to this popular belief opine that texting does not pose any serious threat to the use and learning of writing skills in English. For example, Crystal (2011) states that “All the popular beliefs about texting are wrong; or, at least, debatable”

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is a growing concern among English language educationists about the effects of short messaging services (SMS) language on the writing skills of language learners/users. This concern has been expressed in many studies. For example, Humphrys (2007) studies how texting is wrecking our language. Lytle's (2011) examines how slangs affect students in the classroom.

### **Objective of the Study**

The objectives of this study are:

- i. To identify the frequency of SMS language in students' written works.
- ii. To find out the kinds of SMS language in their works, to determine to what extent they affect (positively or negatively).
- iii. To identify the types of the SMS language and their word-formation processes.
- iv. To suggest the way forward on how to handle the SMS language in the writing skills of learners.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant, in that it will:

- i. Confirm (or do otherwise) whether students infuse SMS language into their essays.

- ii. Check whether SMS language affects their essays (writing skills) positively or negatively.
- iii. Add to the body of studies that either support or negate the positive or negative effect of SMS language in language teaching and learning and use.

### **Scope of the Study**

This study covers pre-service teachers in a higher institution Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, with particular attention to their writing skills in English. It concentrates on 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. The study is domiciled within educational sociolinguistics, which—among other concerns—investigates registers in (English) language learning environments.

### **Definition of Terms**

**SMS/Text Message:** SMS stands for the Short Message Service. Short Message (or Messaging) Service is a system that enables mobile phone users to send and receive text messages (according to the Oxford English Dictionary). It is commonly referred to as a text message; and is a part of mobile phones, the internet, or mobile communication systems. It is a fast and convenient way of sending a short message to someone, mostly on wireless networks. These text messages must not be longer than 160 characters per text. SMS can contain letters, numbers, punctuations, and emoticons.

**Texting/Text Messaging:** A mobile phone service enables a user to send short written messages to other mobile users (Crystal, 2008). Texting or text messaging is the act of typing and sending brief typed messages from one wireless cell phone set to another using the Short Message Service or SMS (Brown, Shipman & Vetter, 2007). The term 'text' messaging refers to messages that are not lengthy, or that do not extend beyond a hundred characters. This title is usually applied to messaging that takes place between two or more two mobile devices.

**Texter:** Texter is a general word used for those who send text messages. Texter refers to a person who prefers to send text messages, instead of picking up the phone (Urban Dictionary). Texters are

known to develop a language that is different from Standard English based on the usage of smileys, abbreviations or other similar techniques.

**Texting Language:** Text language can also be identified as txt-speak, text chat, text lingo, net lingo, chat speak, texting language, SMS language, txtslang, or txt-talk. It is the name “for the kind of abbreviated language used in text messaging, and sometimes for any kind of text messaging, whether abbreviated or not.” Text language is the English language slang used when communicating through text messages on a mobile phone (Bryant, et al, 2006). Texting language is the latest language variety that comes into sight with the arrival of text messaging, the internet, and digital media. Texting has developed its lingo, including abbreviations and graphics. It is much different from other forms of written communication. This language has developed a unique style, which separates it from the daily written language.

**Standard/Formal English:** This form is commonly used by educated users of the English language. It is the language variety of formal context, education, business, and other official purposes. Formal language has its grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation and spellings. The standard form of English is usually the formal variety.

**Abbreviations:** Abbreviation according to Crystal (2011) is “... a reduced version of a word” (2011). An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word used to represent the whole word. A word is abbreviated by omitting letters from one or more parts of the whole word. There are four main kinds of abbreviations: 'shortenings', 'contractions', 'initialisms', and 'acronyms'. Initialism is a kind of abbreviation, consisting of only the first letters that are pronounced separately, such as CPU for *Central Processing Unit*, and OMG for *Oh My God*. The acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of all words and pronounced as a whole word; for example, LOL for *Laugh Out Loud*, and YOLO for *You Only Live Once*. Shortenings are words with missing end-letters (Thurlow & Brown, 2003). Days and months are commonly shortened in SMS; for example, "Sun/Sunday", and "Feb/February." While contractions are

words with omitted middle letters, usually vowels (Crystal, 2008). It is like contracting or combining two words to make it a single word; for example, using 'Don't' instead of *Do not*, and 'I've' for *I have*. Text language also uses contractions like 'gonna' for *going to*, and 'wanna' for *want to*.

**Students' Writing Skills:** Harmer (2007, p. 33) defines writing skills as specific abilities which help writers put their thoughts into words in a meaningful form, and to mentally interact with the message. There are some different definitions of writing explained by some different linguists. Writing is an integral part of a larger activity, where the focus is on something else; such as language practice, acting out, or speaking. Closely related to students' writing skills is Academic writing.

**Academic Writing** is a formal style of writing used in universities and scholarly publications, journals, articles and books on academic topics—as we have in academic essays, research papers, and dissertations in academic communities. Academic writing follows the same writing process as other types of texts; but, it has specific conventions in terms of content, structure, and style.

**Pre-service Teachers:** These are teachers in training undertaking a course of study in colleges of education. After their programme, they are awarded a National Certificate in Education. Pre-service teachers according to (NCCE 2008) are candidates who have gained admission in the colleges of education to study a programme or course of his/her choice for Three (3) years to enable them to teach effectively at the basic education level.

### **Literature Review**

This section reviews some previous studies on the effect of SMS language on students' essays. Literature on texting and its impact on student's essays are reviewed under the following sub-headings:

- Trends in texting and abbreviations
- Different views on texting and abbreviation
- Texting and literacy

### **Trends of Texting and Abbreviations**

Many theories have been proposed to explain the different aspects of texting language. The debate is whether texting language hurts the English language or not; and its impact on learners and users of English. According to McCrindle (2006), technology has some impact on language in the 21st century, and the English language is no exception to this powerhouse. The role of English and all languages in general is mainly for interaction and communication. And because of technology, the internet, the cell phones and how we communicate are dramatically altered. Technology and new inventions have changed people's lives, speech styles, jobs, hobbies, communication and education. Modern smartphones and other communication sites Facebook, WhatsApp, SMS and other new devices, have affected the way we use language. People communicate with each other through e-mail, instant messaging (IM), and text messages. They 'chat' in different chat rooms on the internet, join interesting online groups, comment on different websites and Facebook, and write in blogs and "wikis". These practices construct new forms of "discourse, identity, authorship and language" (Kern, 2006). These practices which are texting, chatting, and commenting online can be held responsible for the creation and development of a new variety of interaction, communication, personality and even new language.

Crystal (2006) reports a study in the UK, saying that 80% of people below 25 years preferred texting rather than calling. On the other hand, so did the 14% of people above 55. This, undoubtedly, demonstrates that texting is not just a passing teenage trend; but, alongside the teenagers, our older people also make use of it. Texting, however, is not just something for private lives. Baron (2008) notes how texting has made its way into the place of work, as well. She elaborates on the use of texting with business partners, as well as within the offices to maintain contact with co-workers. Seeing the popularity of texting across many genres of society, it is apparent that it is making its way into various facets of life on a global level. Crystal (2006), in his article, explains that with the arrival of texting, a new language makes its appearance by the name of text language. It is



more like decoding or translating a message; they require a different and special understanding of the language. There is a different usage of symbols and punctuation that the traditional language does not use, and it is a whole new way of thinking about language that has never been used.

According to Crystal (2008), text language is different from the conventional language varieties. He further identifies some ways in which it differs, or forms its unique identity concerning the conventionally used language:

- **Abbreviations:** An abbreviation is a shortened or contracted form of a word, used to represent the whole word as Dr. for Doctor, or Msg. for Message.
- **Initialisms:** A kind of abbreviation consisting of only the first letters that are pronounced separately, such as CPU for *Central Processing Unit*, and OMG for *Oh my God*.
- **Acronyms:** Acronym is an abbreviation formed from the initial letters of other words, and pronounced as a whole word; for example, LOL for *Laugh Out Loud*, YOLO for *You Only Live Once*.
- **Shortenings:** Shortenings are words with missing end-letters (Thurlow, 2004). Days and months are commonly shortened in SMS and IM; for example, “Sun/Sunday”, and “Feb/February.”
- **Contractions:** Contractions are words with omitted middle letters, usually vowels (Crystal, 2008). It is like contracting or combining two words to make it as a single word; for example, using "don't" instead of "do not"; and “I've” for “I have”. Text language also uses contractions like *gonna* for 'going to'.
- **Clippings:** In clipping, a word is reduced or shortened without changing the meaning of the word. Examples of clipping are *going* for 'going', *ad* for 'advertisement', and *photo* for 'photograph'.
- **Single Letter/Number Homophones:** Also termed logograms, phonetic reductions, or letter/number homophones, it use a

letter or number to represent a word or part (Thurlow, 2004). Examples are 'c' for *see*, 'u' for *you*, '2' for *to*, and 'l8r' for *later*.

- **Emoticons:** Emoticons are symbols or combinations of symbols used to convey an emotion, with the use of punctuation marks or other objects like: :- ) (*happy*), and :-( (*sad*).
- **Typographic Symbols:** Typographic symbols are single or multiple characters which represent whole words (Verheijen, 2013). A popular example is one or several "x" used to symbolize a *kiss*; or "zzzz's" to suggest *sleep, tiredness, or boredom*; "@ "for *at*; and "<3" for the *heart*.
- **Accent stylization:** Replacing the alphabet with others to obtain a stylized look like *yew* for 'you', *dat* for 'that', and *xmart* for 'smart'.
- **Excessive use of punctuation:** The excessive and useless use of punctuation or capitalization for expressing emphasis or intensity of emotion, such as 'what!!!!' for '*what!*' or '*NEVER*' for '*never*'.
- **Repetitions:** Repeating some letters to mirror lengthening sometimes for emphasis, such as *soooo* for 'so', *grrreeeeenn* for 'green', and *yesssss* for just 'yes'.

In text language, the standard spelling conventions and grammar rules are overlooked; and the use of "textisms" or "text slang" is widespread. As stated by Kemp (2011), these orthographically unconventional language forms are used for several reasons. They function as shortcuts to reduce writing time for a quick response. As the main purpose of language is communication, and the main purpose of a text message is just to share some information, or to convey a message; so, if that purpose is being achieved in less writing time than necessary there should be nothing to worry about.

Another reason for using text language is the restriction of the 160-character text message limit; hence, the text language is used to achieve the shortness and economy required. A small screen and an alphanumeric keypad contain both numbers and letters on the same

keys. It makes it difficult for the 'texter' to type; so, text language can help reduce the texter's difficulty. It can save time, space, and money; it is considered 'cool', stylized', and 'modern' by many young people.

According to the University of Alabama (2009) “Text messaging has surely given our society a quick means through which to communicate; taking out the need for capitalization, punctuation, the use and knowledge of sentence”. The texting trend has provided our generation with a new kind of trend that makes communication easier, simpler, and faster. In the course of texting, we can ignore the need for capitalisation punctuation, grammar, and other conventions related to the Standard English language. According to Collister (2015), these emoticons and symbols are not destroying language; actually, they show a kind of creative repurposing and are a part of this new era of technology. Aside from ignoring all these rules and regulations, the texter is always aware of the fact that he or she must also be understood; and that the text message must be intelligible.

Today's youngsters, according to Nikirk, symbolize the millennial generation, or Net generation (those born after the 1980's or early 1990's). This generation is kind of unique generation, whose life is, and has always been set in media and technology (Oblinger&Oblinger, 2008); and for that reason, the quick acceptance of text messaging may perhaps be a result of a somewhat natural tendency to turn towards internet and communication technologies (ICTs). Keeter& Taylor (2009) assert that millennials are the first generation in the whole human history not to regard activities—such as text messaging, Facebooking, and tweeting—as remarkable innovations, but rather as a fundamental part of social life.

### **Views of Texting**

Various researches on the impact of texting and abbreviations have also been carried out and findings have been published in journals, newspapers, and other platforms. These studies address the positive and negative impacts of text messaging and abbreviations on various aspects of social life, including the academic works of students. Newspaper headlines support both the viewpoints that messaging

helps language skills, and that messaging is destroying language skills. “*The Globe and Mail*”, for example, published an article titled “Texting helps teens' grammar” (Alphonso, 2006); and another one titled “Texting, Twitter contributing to students' poor grammar skills, Profs say” (Kelley, 2010). The question is whether texting language should be considered language progress or decay. The different views on texting and abbreviation are discussed in the subsections below:

### **Studies on the Positive Impact of Texting and Abbreviations**

While a school of thought argues that texting and abbreviation hurt students' communication skills, especially writing skills; the other argues that text messages do not interfere with student literacy, but rather improve it. Crystal (2008), in his book, *Texting: The Gr8 Db8 (a logogram which means Texting: The Great Debate)*, refutes the popular view that SMS - and its profuse use of abbreviations and slang—may harm the language and literacy of students. His position was based on six main points listed below:

- i. In a typical text message, less than 10% of the words are abbreviated.
- ii. Abbreviation has been in use for decades, and thus it is not a new language.
- iii. Students, both at the lower and higher levels of education alike, make use of abbreviations; the higher students being more likely to do so.
- iv. Students do not habitually use abbreviations in their homework and examinations; it's just an assumption.
- v. Before students can text, he or she must first know how to spell. Texting in SMS can, therefore, not be a cause of bad spelling or writing essays.
- vi. Since texting provides people with the opportunity to engage with the language through reading and writing, it improves literacy for people.

Crystal (2008) claims that many of the features that are used in text messages were being used in chat room interactions, much before the arrival of mobile phones. Texting involves immediate turn-

taking. So, texters usually choose abbreviated word forms, and also omit punctuation; and ignore capitalisation which requires pressing extra keys; and consumes more time and effort, and the recipient may need to show extra patience in taking his/her turn; hence, it slows down the process of communication.

There is usually a popular belief that texting has evolved as a twenty-first-century phenomenon—as a highly distinctive graphic style, full of abbreviations and deviant uses of language, used by a young generation that doesn't care about standards. There is a widely voiced concern that the practice is fostering a decline in literacy. And some even think it is harming language as a whole. However, the popular beliefs about texting are wrong; or, at least, debatable. Its graphic distinctiveness is not a new phenomenon used by the young generation. There is increasing evidence that it helps, rather than hinders literacy. The average texters are aware when they are breaking the rules. They are also aware of how text language violates the Standard English rules (Crystal, 2008). He further states that even in text messages, no more than hardly 10% of the words are shortened. However, the common fear is that the abbreviated language, alternative words, and lack of punctuation used on the net bleeds into our more formal uses of language; and might eventually replace it. Author and internet linguist, David Crystal, says that everyone can stop worrying. There's enough research now to show that the internet word is not destroying the written word. It's making it even better.

Baron (2008) argues that the use of SMS language reflects creativity; due to its creative use of letters, punctuation and numbers increases phonetic awareness in children. It is also observed that different people have their unique texting styles. Moreover, different messages use different patterns and styles due to their different communicative functions. There is usually no disaster pending, as there will be no new generation of adults growing up without the ability to write proper English. The language, as a whole, will not decline. In texting, what we are seeing, in a small way, is language in evolution (Crystal, 2006).

Texting has useful characteristics, which include better vocabulary, shorter exchange of messages, and cheap rate; and relationships are usually stronger, because of texting. The reasons for language change are very clear and noticeable. Whenever we create something new, we have to name it, as well; and this is the point where a new word makes its entry into the language. Consider some of the words that are now commonly used in English, such as Google, iblogging, texting, SMS, iPhone, instant message, Facebook, Twitter, tweet, and many more. If we could travel back to the 1990's, and talk to the people of that time, they would not be able to comprehend all our words; and even we also can never understand what they are talking about. When we are trying to standardize language once and for all, then we are trying to stop the tides (Baron, 2008).

Lawson (2000) states, "Language is nothing, if not a social tool; as society changes, so must speech change with it"(p. 1). The main cause of making language was the desire and need for communication in society; so, language is a purely human creation, and we create new words to meet the need for smooth and easy communication. Language change is inevitable, continuous, universal and multidirectional. Languages do not get better or worse when they change; they just change (Crystal, 2006). Language changes in several directions and several ways like vocabulary, pronunciation, and semantics. By change, languages do not get good or bad; it just becomes easier to communicate in the present society by the present generation.

In summary, they argued that SMS texting is, on its own, a language; and so, it is believed that learning a new language does not affect students' ability to use English grammar; it would be wrong to conclude that texting can affect their grammar. They point out slang words that do not affect English grammar; and that even though each generation has its jargon, English grammar has not been changed. All that students need to do, they claim, is to learn the basics in English class; and they will be able to distinguish between "slang, texting lingo, and correct English" (Russell, 2010, p.18).

### **Studies on the Negative Impact of Texting**

The second school of thought argues that texting hurts language learning and use. The effect of text messages can only worsen the nominal performance of students and therefore requires intervention to stem the situation.

The use of short or condensed forms of words and expressions, characteristic of the mobile phone text message, negatively affects the continuous writings of users; especially their spelling system, making it difficult for them to familiarize themselves with the correct spellings of words. O'Connor (2005) expresses concerns that the “bastardization” of the language—which points towards the use of wrong grammar, poor punctuation, and improper abbreviations in formal and academic writings—is a bane to education. Rafi (2010) equally establishes that SMS language ignores orthographic and syntactic regulations of a language, with an enormous stress on written sounds and comprehension. Njemanze (2012) similarly examined the SMS style of language communication among Nigerian university students, with emphasis on its effect on English language usage and noted that the SMS style could generate greater linguistic confusion if it is not constrained.

This position is significant; because, when one fails to consciously avoid the use of SMS language in formal writing, the inevitable effect is poor performance in academic assessments. Theophilus (2007), Jeyifo (2008), Ogunseha, (2006), Scotsman (2003), and Bamisaye (2007) affirm that students no longer follow the normal level of structuring in essay writing. They complain about the high rate of word abbreviation while writing their essays; this factor has brought many essays to a meaningless point.

This school of thought revolves around the idea that text language is a bane of technology and the internet because it has negative impacts on students' communication skills, particularly on their writing skills. Thus, some linguists, language educators, and even parents as well believe that literacy skills are in great danger; and that Standard English can be the next dead language. Rosen, Chang,

Erwin, Carrier, and Cheever (2010) claim that regularly using the service of text messaging can hurt users' everyday language. In their study, they reported that the regular use of texting expressions was interlinked to the poorer scores in the formal writing tasks among teenagers.

Humphrys (2007) supports and strengthens the argument by writing in the *Daily Mail*, where he describes SMS as absurd, grotesque, and a barrier to communication; and even speaks about texters as vandals, who are trying to do to the language Genghis Khan did to his neighbours eight hundred years ago. Furthermore, he notes that these users are destroying it: pillaging our punctuation, savaging our sentences, and raping our vocabulary; and they must be stopped. The texters have many more arrows in their quiver than we who defend the old way (p.17). He clearly and undoubtedly expresses that text messaging destroys the user's ability to use essential mechanics of writing, such as grammar, syntax, punctuation, and capitalization. He says that texters are destroying language with such great speed and frequency that we are not capable of defending.

### **Studies on No-influence of Texting and Abbreviation**

The third school of thought doubts whether texting has any effect, either positive or negative, on literacy skills and language grammar at all. This group assumes that text messages have neither a positive nor negative impact on student writing whatsoever. It considers text messaging as totally another language variety of English. And because learning a new language does not affect students' ability to use English grammar, it would be illogical to conclude that text messaging can affect their grammar skills. Linguists provide strong evidence by comparing texting language to slang. They state that slang words do not affect English rules and grammar. English grammar has not changed over the years; although each generation creates its jargon. If students learn the foundation of the English language in their class, they will be able to distinguish between slang, texting lingo, and correct English (Russell, 2010).

Texting is being held responsible for most of the supposed ills and evils of our societies, together with language shortage and language



change. In this regard, there is nothing so new about the fears related to this new technology; because in the fifteenth century, “the Church considered printing as an invention of Satan, because it was thought that the dissemination of uncensored ideas would lead to a breakdown of social order”(Crystal,2011, p.27). The Church viewed the invention of printing as dangerous because it would lead to the spread and propagation of free and open ideas that would eventually lead to the failure and breakdown of social organization or discipline. Also, the telegraph was viewed to be the medium that would destroy the family and promote crime. Even the telephone and broadcasting were also thought to have negative effects on society, as the first would undermine society; while the second was thought to be the voice of propaganda (Crystal, 2011). But these were nothing else than just the baseless fears of people; now, the same is the case with texting.

#### **Will It Remain or Vanish?**

Crystal (2011) states that "Texting language is no different from other innovative forms of written expression that have emerged in the past" (p. 156). There have been many new technologies that have come along, and that may have emerged as a serious threat to the English language. All of those technologies skip out in favour of new and better ways to communicate. If the past is an indicator of what we can expect in the future, then text messaging may also find its way out of society.

If text speech is here to stay, then it still poses no threat to the English language. It is a segmented part of the English language. Some reasons can be used to explain why so many people are fearful that texting is destroying the English language. One reason is over-exaggeration by the media (Riordan, 2014). Our system of media is famous for taking a subject that has very little research, and attempting to exaggerate it to everyone.

David Crystal (2011) holds the view that most of these innovations will probably die away, but some may live on, and add new acronyms to the spoken language. “Texting has added a new

dimension to language use, but its long-term impact is negligible; it is not a disaster” (p. 18). He holds the view that it is useless to predict the future of any language, especially in this fast-moving and ever-changing world.

### **Texting and Literacy**

New technologies are criticized for their negative impacts on the society. The invention of televisions raised the concern of people that it would destroy a nation whose attention would be diverted just to the TV set, and would move away from any productive work. The same was the case with the advent of radio, though none of these and other criticised technological inventions proved people's concern besides the fact that much of the media attention has been directed at the negative effect that texting is imposing on students' literacy and skills. But still, some studies disagree with this; and negate this opinion by claiming, and even evidently showing that texting may have a positive effect on the literacy skills of students. Writing about the benefits of student texting, Lee, Bell, O'Conner, & Helderma (2008) put forward that texting may be beneficial because it involves children in writing. Through texting, students are now involved in writing more than ever before.

Crystal (2011) states that “The more you text, the better your literacy scores” (p.160). He strongly believes that texting is not humiliating and destroying the language; but actually, people who send text messages—and frequently use emoticons, initialisms and other abbreviations—generally know how to spell perfectly well. Also, Crystal (2011) remarks, "There is increasing evidence that it helps, rather than hinders literacy; and only a small tiny part of it uses a distinctive orthography” (p.17).The history of language is filled with similar examples of nonstandard usage. He further says that texting is nothing else than the process of reading and writing. Although many texters enjoy breaking linguistic rules, they also know that they need to be understood by the reader or receiver of the text. He explains that texting is simply the newest form of communication, and will not damage language. If a person texts with

abbreviations, they must already understand the way it sounds and the way letters combine. To Crystal (2011) texting may develop students' spelling and pronunciation skills; because using abbreviations, such as 'l8r', make them think about language phonetically. So, when students are playing with this creative representation of language, they have to use and practice their understanding of letters and sounds; this is a skill that is formally taught as phonics in classrooms. It allows students to develop their understanding; and develop links between the sounds of letters, and their written spellings.

From the foregoing review of studies, it appears that scholars and researchers are divided on the effects of texting language on the writing skills of language learners and users. Thus, more studies are required to present a common informed and robust research-based front. In addition, although scholars have worked on the effect of texting and abbreviations on language learners at the primary and secondary school levels, it appears there are no studies among pre-service teachers who are the would-be language teachers. Hence, this study focuses on the effects of texting and abbreviation on the essays of pre-service teachers in higher institutions in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework adopted for this study is Fries' Contrastive Analysis (1945). Contrastive analysis (henceforth CA) is an integral component of the methodology of foreign language teaching (Al-khresheh, 2013). It was noted that in learning a language, learners tend to bring with them knowledge of the L1; and CA suggests that this should be taken into consideration in teaching the second and/or foreign language. CA is founded on the assumption that L2 learners will tend to transfer the formal features of (variety of) a language into another (variety of) language. In other words, this notion of 'transfer' means carrying over the habits of the variety A into B (Al-thresher, 2016). This transfer is part of our investigation in this study, as we explore whether there is transfer and if there is whether the transfer has a negative or positive effect on the learning and use of the target language.

### Types of Transfer

Language transfer is generally divided into two main categories: positive and negative. According to Gass and Larry (2001), positive transfer results in correct utterances, and facilitates language learning. The learner's L1 might facilitate L2 learning. "The basic premise of the CA hypothesis is that language can be re-successful when the two languages—the native and the foreign- are similar." Nevertheless, negative transfer results in incorrect outcomes. It results in deviations from the target language. Al-khresheh (2013) points out that four types of divergences are caused by differences between L1 and L2. They are summarized as follows:

- i. Overproduction: learners produce a given L2 structure with much greater occurrence than natives of L2 do. Instead, learners make extreme use of what they are supposed to be correct and acceptable, consequently resulting in the overuse of certain words or structures.
- ii. Underproduction (or avoidance): learners produce hardly any, or no example of L2 structure. They can often be caused by conscious avoidance of complex L2 structures.
- iii. Misinterpretation: this type of error occurs, when L1 structures influence the interpretation of L2 messages.
- iv. Production: this type of error can be classified into six categories: substitutions (that is, *think* is produced as /fink/ in Poland; *people* as /beoble/ in Arab; *love* as /laugh/ in Saudi Arabia; *fish* as /fis/ in Malaysia; and *thirsty* as /dirty/ in India), calques, under-differentiation, over-differentiation, hypercorrection, and alterations of structure.

According to Odlin (2003), calques, substitutions, and alterations of structures compose most forms of production errors. The L2 learners might make use of their knowledge of L1 to help them in learning and using other languages. However, this is only limited to those structures that are quite similar to each other.

Another linguistic theory adopted in this study is the language variation model. Language variation is central to the study of language use. This orientation according to Mustapha (2009) marks the departure from or dissatisfaction with a monolithic idealized

notion of language idealisation or homogeneity (p.241). It is impossible to study the language forms used in natural texts without being confronted with the issue of linguistic variability. Variability is inherent in human language: a single speaker will use different linguistic forms on different occasions, and different speakers of a language will express the same meanings using different forms (Cornips, 2014). Most of this variation is highly systematic: speakers of a language make choices in pronunciation, morphology, word, and grammar; depending on several non-linguistic factors. These factors include the speaker's purpose in communication, the relationship between speaker and hearer, the production circumstances, and various demographic affiliations that a speaker can have (Randi, (2014). Text language is considered as a variety or register that is appropriate for its medium.

I am adopting both theories, contrastive analysis and language variation for several reasons. *One*, contrastive analysis has to do with language transfer; and language transfer could either be positive or negative. In this case, I am not referring to L1 and L2 of the same language, but one language variety to another; that is the language of texting and the language of academic writing. If there are transfer of features, they are positive, enhancing the learning of writing skills; or negative, obstructing language learning. *Two*, every language has its variety, which is the thrust of language variation theory. In this study, text language and academic writing are considered as different varieties of the target language, English.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study explores the impacts of texting language on Standard English writing. The research is descriptive. Research participants' essays were collected and analysed.

### **Population of the Study**

The study population comprises the selected pre-service teachers in a tertiary institution in Lagos State. The sample for the study is described in Table 1.

### **Sample and Sampling Techniques**

The random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. Samples for the study were 165 pre-service teachers' essays from the 100 level to the 300 level. The researcher selected the pre-service teachers from the Primary Education Department of a College of Education in Lagos State, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Breakdown of the Study Samples**

Levels	Users	Non Users	Total
100	15	30	45
200	25	39	64
300	25	31	56
Total	65	100	165

### **Instrument for Data Collection**

The essay writing was used as the instrument for data collection which focused on the usage of texting and abbreviations in academic writing. The researcher designed an essay topic for all pre-service teachers involved in the study based on their levels.

### **Reliability of the Study**

The researcher used the Cronbach Alpha method to determine the reliability of the instrument, and the study returns a reliability coefficient of 0.78.

### **Validity of the Study**

The researcher gave the essay questions to the experts in the higher institution for content and face validity. This was done to confirm if the items can measure what it is meant to measure. The researcher made the corrections in the area where corrections were made on the essays by the experts, before administering them.

### **Methods of Data Collection**

The researcher, with the help of an assistant researcher, gave students essay topics to write not less than 250 words, and that was done within 45 minutes. A total of 165 essays were gathered. Samples of the essays are in the appendix.

### **Methods of Data Analysis**

Descriptive statistics (quantitative) was used to present the results from the analysis of their essays. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics (frequency count & percentage), which were illustrated in Tables 2 (a & b) and 3 (a & b).

### **Results and Summary of Findings**

This part presents the results of the study based on its objectives, whether there are transfers of text language into academic essays; and if there are, do they have positive or negative effects?

Table 2 summarizes the number of items that make up each element of texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays in a higher institution.

**Table 2a: Frequency of Text Language in the 100 Level Pre-service Teachers' Essays**

Elements	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Different abbreviations</i>	3	15
<i>Clippings</i>	8	40
<i>Contraction</i>	5	25
<i>Typographic symbols</i>	2	10
<i>Accent stylization</i>	1	5
<i>Shortening Abbreviation</i>	1	5
TOTAL	20	100

Table 2a shows that eight different items (representing 40%) make up *Clippings* as the highest elements of texting and abbreviations in 100-level pre-service teachers' essays, while one item each (representing

5%) make up *Accent Stylization*; and *Shortening Abbreviation* as the least elements of texting and abbreviation in 100 level pre-service teachers' essays. Other elements have five (representing 25%), three (representing 15%), and two (representing 10%) make up *Contraction*, *Different Abbreviations*, and *Typographic Symbols* respectively.

**Table 2b: Descriptive Statistics Showing 100 Level Pre-service Teachers**

Pre-service Teachers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non-users	30	66.7
Users	15	33.3
Total	45	100

Table 2b shows that 30 participants (representing 66.7%) of 100-level pre-service teachers are non-users of texting and abbreviations, while 15 participants (representing 33.3%) of 100-level pre-service teachers are users of texting and abbreviations.

The results of Tables 2a and b are presented in Figure 1, which shows the levels of texting and abbreviations in 11100-level-service teachers' essays.



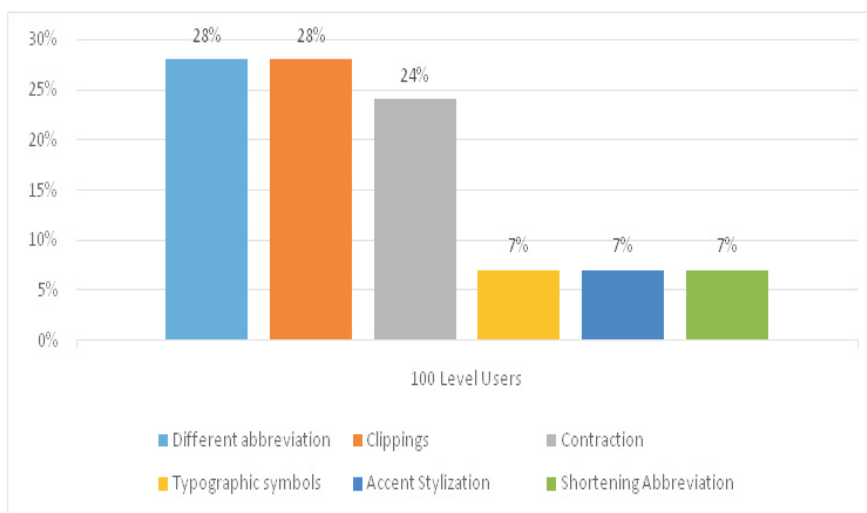
**Figure 1: Categories of the Texting and Abbreviation of 100 Level Users**

Figure 1 shows that *Different Abbreviations* and *Clippings*, as elements of texting and abbreviations, are mostly used by 100-level users, with 28% each characterising the developed texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays. The *Contraction*, as an element of texting and abbreviations, is subsequently used with 24%; while *Typographic Symbols*, *Accent Stylization*, and *Shortening Abbreviation*—as an element of texting and abbreviation—are occasionally used with 7% each, as revealed by the developed texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays. It is further noted that Figure 1 reveals the categories of texting and abbreviations of 100-level users, in terms of frequency count across the developed essays.

Table 3 summarizes the number of items that make up each element of texting and abbreviations in 200-level pre-service teachers' essays, in a Lagos Higher Institution.

**Table 3a: Summary of Number of Items Used In Pre-service Teachers' Essays**

Elements	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Different Abbreviations</i>	2	7.7
<i>Clippings</i>	3	11.5
<i>Contraction</i>	17	65.4
<i>Repetition</i>	1	3.8
<i>Shortening Abbreviation</i>	3	11.5
TOTAL	26	100

Table 3a shows that seventeen different items (representing 65.4%) make up *Contraction* as the highest element of texting and abbreviations in 200-level pre-service teachers' essays; while one item (representing 3.8%) makes up *Repetition* as the least element of texting and abbreviations in 200-level pre-service teachers' essays. Other elements have three (representing 11.5%), three (representing 11.5%), and two (representing 7.7%) makeup *Clippings*, *Shortening Abbreviation*, and *Different Abbreviations* respectively.

**Table 3b: Descriptive Statistics of 300 Level Students**

Pre-service Teachers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non-users	39	60.9
Users	25	39.1
Total	64	100

Table 3b shows that 39 participants (representing 60.9%) of 200-level pre-service teachers are non-users of texting and abbreviations, while 25 participants (representing 39.1%) of 200-level pre-service teachers are users of texting and abbreviations.

Figure 2 shows the levels of texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays, in a Lagos Higher Institution; they are

categorised into *Different Abbreviations*, *Clippings*, *Contractions*, *Repetition*, and *Shortening Abbreviation*.

**Figure 2: Categories of the Texting and Abbreviation of 200 Level Users**

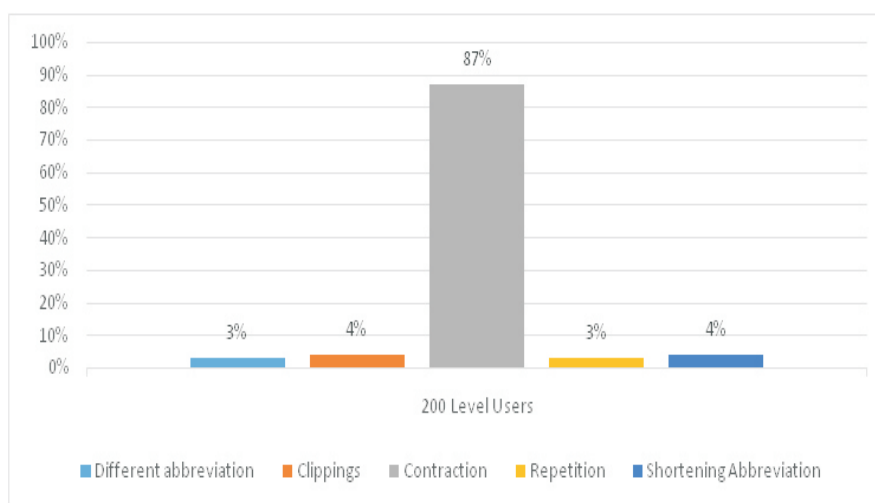


Figure 2 shows that *Contraction*, as an element of texting and abbreviations, is predominantly used by 200-level users, with 87% characterized by the developed texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays. The *Shortening Abbreviation* and *Clippings*, as an element of texting and abbreviations, are subsequently used with 4% each; while *Repetition* and *Different Abbreviations*, as an element of texting and abbreviations, are sporadically used with 3% each, as revealed by the developed texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays. It is further noted that Figure 2 reveals the categories of texting and abbreviations of 200-level users, in terms of frequency count across the developed essays.

Table 3 summarizes the number of items that make up each element of texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays, in a Lagos Higher Institution.

**Table 3a: Summary of Number of Items Used In 300 Level Pre-Service Teachers' Essays**

Elements	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Different abbreviations</i>	1	4.8
<i>Clippings</i>	5	23.8
<i>Contraction</i>	13	61.9
<i>Repetition</i>	1	4.8
<i>Accent Stylization</i>	1	4.8
TOTAL	21	100

Table 3a shows that thirteen different items (representing 61.9%) make up *Contraction*, as the highest element of texting and abbreviations in 300-level pre-service teachers' essays; while one item each (representing 4.8%) makes up *Different Abbreviations*, *Repetition*, and *Accent Stylization*—as the least elements of texting and abbreviation in 300 level pre-service teachers' essays. Another element has five (representing 23.8%) make up *Clippings*.

**Table 3b: Descriptive Statistics Showing 300 Level Students**

Pre-service Teachers	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Non-users	31	55.4
Users	25	44.6
Total	56	100

Table 3b shows that 31 participants (representing 55.4%) of 300-level pre-service teachers are non-users of texting and abbreviations, while 25 participants (representing 44.6%) of 300-level pre-service teachers are users of texting and abbreviations. Figure 3 shows the levels of texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays, in a Lagos Higher Institution; which are categorised into *Different Abbreviations*, *Clippings*, *Contractions*, *Repetition*, and *Accent Stylization*.

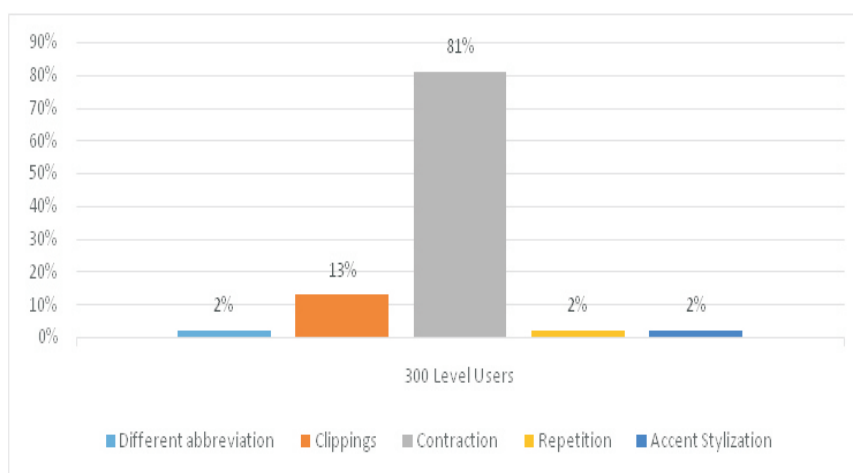
**Figure 3: Categories of the Texting and Abbreviation of 300 Level Users**

Figure 3 shows that *Contraction*, as an element of texting and abbreviations, is predominantly used by 300-level users; with 81% characterized by the developed texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays. The *Clippings*, as an element of texting and abbreviations, is subsequently used with 13%; while *Accent Stylization*, *Repetition*, and *Different Abbreviations*—as an element of texting and abbreviations—are seldom used with 2% each, as revealed by the developed texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' essays. It is further noted that Figure 3 reveals the categories of texting and abbreviations of 300-level users, in terms of frequency count across the developed essays.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The findings show that texting and abbreviations in pre-service teachers' academic essays are minimal. This result suggests that pre-service teachers distinguish between the language of texting and academic writing and tend to show the appropriate use of language in their writing skills. In addition, it suggests that the concern about the transfer of inappropriate use of text language in the writing skills of students might be uncalled for. The progressive reduction in the

transfer of text language in their academic writing shows their awareness of where text language belongs and the need for language teachers to instruct their language learners on the appropriate language style for academic writing.

The result of this study corroborates the school of thought that opines that SMS language does not pose any threat to effective language learning and use, especially in formal or standard English. Language learners and users do distinguish between the varieties (SMS language and academic writing) and minimise the transfer of text language into their academic writing. In other words, essay writers rarely transfer text language to their academic writing. This position aligns with Lawson's (2006), Baron's (2008), and Russell's (2010) stance that counters the negative effect of SMS language and faults the reports of O'Connor (2005), Njemanze (2012), and Bamisaye (2007) that posit that SMS language is affecting the learning, teaching and use of English among students that we reported in the literature review section.

It is observed that this study did not discredit the fact that SMS language influences the writing skills of learners and users. Perhaps, further research might be interested in investigating the role SMS language plays in the development of the language (writing) skills of language learners and users as the study by Rosen, Chang, Ervin, Carrier&Cleever (2010) has suggested. In addition, further research in our understanding shall be collecting data from teacher trainers to sample their views on the transfer of SMS language in the academic writing of pre-service teachers.

Finally, there is an improvement in my first research report that shows that texting and abbreviations affect the users and learners of English writing skills; and that there are more negative effects than positive effects. The pre-service teachers' essays do not show copious use of SMS language. This suggests the usefulness of the triangulation method of data collection and analysis. Sometimes, what research participants report may differ from what they practise. Perhaps, texting language is serving a positive role in the writing skills of language learners and users; a subject matter that could be explored in further research.

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