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The aim and scope of the journal is to provide an academic medium and an important reference for the advancement and dissemination of information that supports high level learning, teaching and research in the fields of Education.

This edition, Volume 5, Number 2 (Special Edition), June, 2025 is poised to present research reports in the following fields of education: Educational Foundations, Science Education, Educational Psychology, Curriculum & Instructional Technology, Guidance & Counselling, Philosophy & History of Education, Sociology of Education, Entrepreneurship education, Special and inclusive Education, Physical & Health Education Religious Education, Gender Studies, Peace & Security Education among Others. The articles in this volume are academic and professional discourse written by reputable scholars in their areas of specialization.

The Board remains indebted to the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFUND) for its financial intervention and supports in championing the publication of this edition. We wish to also acknowledge the efforts of the editorial members, for their ceaseless support towards successful publication of the journal. In the same vein, we acknowledge quite sincerely the assistance and support of our esteemed consulting editors for ensuring the credibility of this edition. Also, worthy of appreciation are the Authors and their immense contributions to this publication.

Associate Professor Umar Sodangi
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The Zamfara International Journal of Education (ZIJE) calls for scholarly articles for review and possible publication in its next edition (Volume 5, Number 3.), ZIJE publishes articles that emphasizes on research development and application within the fields of Education. All manuscripts are reviewed by editorial review committee. Contributions must be original, not previously or simultaneously published elsewhere, and are critically reviewed before they are published. Papers, which must be written in English language, should have good grammar and proper terminologies. Hence, prospective articles are subjected to plagiarism assessment test to estimate the percentage of originality of the papers. Hence, Plagiarism threshold of $\leq 20\%$ is recommended.

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4. Abstract should be single line and not more than 250 words.
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6. For empirical papers, it should be presented in the following order; Introduction, Objectives of the study, Research questions and/or Hypothesis, Methodology, Results, Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations.
7. Acknowledgement (if any)
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Professor Abubakar Sadiq Haruna
Publication Editor

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Leveraging Technology Education at Secondary School Level of Education for Sustainable Development in Nigeria: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

This systematic review examines the impact of technology education on sustainable development in Nigeria focusing on secondary school education. A search of peer-reviewed journals published between 2001 to 2023. The review reveals that technology education has the potential to promote sustainable development in Nigeria by developing students' problem-solving skills, creativity and critical thinking. This paper also reviewed the current state of technology education at secondary level of education in Nigeria and its implications for technological development. It also identifies hindrances to technology education in Nigeria, including inadequate infrastructure, outdated curricula, and insufficient funding in secondary schools. The review proposes strategies for policy makers, educators and other stakeholders to improving technology education and promotes sustainable development in Nigeria.

Keywords: Technology education, Sustainable Development, Nigeria, Secondary School Education, Systematic review

Introduction

Technology education in Nigeria is very apt considering the zeal with which Nigeria has accepted democratic governance. Democracy allows for robust debates choice, collective bargaining and respect for individual differences. If technology of today can incorporate features of democracy, Nigeria will achieve a lot of positive changes in providing various needs of her citizens. May 29, 1999 marked a new dawn in the country's civil rule and democracy. It came on the eve of a new millennium, which was a thing of happiness. This democracy is an age-worn concept, an ideal life regarded as modern and having something to do with the changing times. It is government of the people, by the people and for the people (Longman's Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1997). Democracy can be viewed as a universal culture developed many years ago to have elected people to govern. This country needs to practice real democracy and spread dividends of democracy to the citizenry. However, an attempt at developing the Nigerian society must of necessity be based on the stated national objectives. The objectives stated in the National Development Plan are

1. Building a united, strong and self-reliant nation
2. Have a great dynamic economy
3. Build a just and egalitarian society
4. A land of bright and full opportunities for citizen
5. A free and democratic society

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The above objectives provide a great guide towards the reconstructions and transformation of Nigeria from technological backwardness to a society that is technological self-reliant possessing enough technical know-how skills and materials required for the production of capital and consumer goods, as well as for defending the integrity and security of the nation.

A country's classification with regard to economic status usually takes the country's scientific and technological development into consideration. This therefore explains why a country whose economy depends on the industrialized world, due to the country's inability to adequately exploit science and technology to improve her conditions, is classified as a developing (industrializing) or less developed or under developed country. That Nigeria is still a technologically underdeveloped country is not debatable. The National policy on education science and technology (2013) recognizes this and commented thus: while many countries are in second phase of the industrial revolution in which computers, robots, microelectronics, biotechnology, nuclear technology e. t. c are yet to grasp the fundamentals of the first phase of the industrial revolution, which began in Europe in the eighteen century. Even the country is yet to create the necessary science culture in which the general public is made aware of the need to use scientific methods in their daily operations.

The policies that have been formulated by government in education as well as in science and technology, have aimed at correcting this situation. One of the policy statements for science and technology, for example, stresses that the educational system should lay much emphasis on science and technology at all levels. The objective of this according to the policy is to orientate the entire society towards scientific thinking in order to develop new technology and adopt the existing ones to improve societal well-being and security. The different methods stated in the National policy on science and technology, for meeting these objectives include making it possible for the average child to have early contact with the concepts and materials related to science and technology even before attaining primary school age, ensuring a sound science foundation during the first six years of the 6-3-3-4 structure.

Orienting science and technology curricular in polytechnics and college of technology to be less theoretical and more practical based ensuring that adult education includes, in addition to learning how to read and write, learning how things around us work, and encouraging and promoting the writing of mathematics and science books at all levels. Another policy statement in the National Policy on science and technology states that there should be a mass movement for science and technology development in the country. The objective of this, according to the policy, is to orientate the entire society towards science and technology within the framework of its customs and traditions. As stated in the policy, the strategies for meeting this objective include relating science and technology to formal and informal education processes and emphasizing their role in the socioeconomic development of the society in general and in individual personal development in particular providing adequately equipped science laboratories and workshops in the secondary and tertiary educational system.

Ensuring appropriate and adequate industrial attachment programmes for all science-based technical and professional course at the tertiary level. This National Policy on science and technology statements and objectives, apart from being in line with some of the provisions of the National Policy on Education, attest to government's efforts at ensuring the proper development of technology (science based rather than empirical based) in the country. The government has also taken a number of steps aimed at implementing the policies on science and technology as well as education properly.

In achieving the above, an attempt has been made to control science based programmed in polytechnics, colleges of technology, colleges of education (Technical) and universities through National Board for Business and Technical education. Attempts were also made at popularizing science and technology through support for clubs and associations such as the Junior Engineers, Technicians and Scientists (JETS), Nigeria Association of Teachers of Technology (NATT) among others. Despite these government's efforts, the process of developing the country technologically seems to offer more room for improvement than what obtain now. This paper will however discuss it further by stating the meaning of technology education Technology has been defined by various scholars but for the purpose of this write-up, Technology education is a critical component of modern education, enabling individuals to acquire skills and knowledge necessary for technological innovation and economic development. In democratic Nigeria, technology education plays a vital role in promoting technological advancements, entrepreneurship, and national development. However, the current state of technology education in Nigeria is plagued by numerous challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, outdated curricula, and insufficient funding. The technological

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development of the nation requires that the way the policies regarding vocational and technical education are being implemented be critically re-examined. Though the policies for vocational and technical education are wonderful in the policy of 2013 but there are some aforementioned plagued that are militating against these laudable policies implementation.

Challenges of Effective Technology Education Policy Implementation at Secondary School Level of Education in Nigeria

Students: They exhibit a wide range of abilities on admission to junior secondary schools, in English language, all of which according to story (1988) are relevant to acquiring skills in introductory technology which is one of the core subjects in the junior secondary school curriculum. This situation could be due to either the environmental background of most Nigerian youths or the deficiency in primary education. It is also possible that a combination of the two factors is creating such situation. Some Nigerian youths grew up in environments devoid of challenges that could promote academic and intellectual development in them. Not only are they brought up not to be motivated to want to learn, they do not have opportunities to play with toys and manipulated objects. The primary schools that most of them attend neither provide opportunity for the study of science and technology. As Olofinnoba (1979) has rightly pointed out, the teachers of science in primary schools in Nigeria is usually not formally trained as science teachers. Most of them, are therefore, not well trained to stimulate the interest of the young pupils in science. In fact, most of the teachers in the primary schools are not only uncertificated, they attended teachers training colleges where they were exposed to lectures on various courses including those on nature study and arithmetic for the teaching of introductory technology to be effective in the teaching of science at the primary school level has to be improved also. If the teaching of introductory technology is effective to the extent that students grasp essential concepts and develop interest in the subjects such as woodwork, metalwork, technical drawing, applied electricity, basic electronics, building construction and automobile mechanic at the senior school level. Odia & Odia,(2023) stated that one way of improving the teaching of science at the primary school level might be to organize in-service training programmes regular for primary school teachers in science and technology teaching, manual dexterity and spatial awareness could also be developed in primary school pupils if only the schools would provide opportunities for the pupils to play with toys of various types manipulating objects and even construct some simple objects using clay, paper, wood and flat sheet of metal which have been formed into various shapes.

Outdated Curricula: Technology education curricula in Nigeria are often outdated, failing to reflect current technological trends and industry needs. This is another factor, which must be seriously considered for the improvement of technology education in Nigeria. The curricular for trades disciplines or subjects in the senior secondary school curriculum and technical/vocational college curriculum, as well as for basic technology are defective since they place little or no emphasis on the traditional technologies of the student's environment. These technologies include construction, smiting, boat making etc. The effort to transform the Nigerian society to a technologically developed society must, however, be based partly on the acquisition of skills and knowledge in the traditional technologies through constant investigation of appropriate methods of perfecting them by teachers and students (Magaji, 2022). It is on this basis that a review of the curricula in both the secondary schools and the technical colleges is advised.

Insufficient Funding: Technology education institutions in Nigeria most times receive inadequate funding, limiting their ability to provide quality education and training. The study of technology, without doubt, requires well-equipped laboratories and workshops, tools and equipment if relevant skills are to be acquired by students. It is however disheartening that in most Nigeria schools, especially secondary schools, most of the equipment, tools etc needed for effective teaching of technology are not there and even where they are available, most of them are defective and in-operational due to insufficient funding. The much-desired technology culture as well as a pool of skilled industrial workers cannot be developed under this type of situation obtaining now in the nation's secondary schools, technical colleges, polytechnics and universities offering technology education. This therefore explains why an urgent step should be taken during this nurtured democratic period to include policies that will create an enabling condition and funding for technological development during the democratic setting in Nigeria.

Strategies for Improving Technology Education in Nigeria

So far, we have seen that science and technology are in pathetic state and much remains to be done. In this section, attention will be focused on strategies to further mobilize Nigerians so that science and technology can become part of our culture. This

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is particularly necessary if we want to improve the quality of the science and technology, then we must inculcate it into our youths and culture. In his own contribution, Late Chief E. F. Giwa, former chairman and Managing Director of Unilever Nigeria Plc, a blue-chip company, asserted that no nation can develop without a cadre of well trained technicians, technologies, engineers and the awareness of scientific and technical knowledge. He further stated that this should start from primary schools (Quoted in Agbeyoku 2001).

In seeking to achieve these objectives, review and updating technology education curricula to reflect current technological trends cannot be over emphasized. Science and Technology must be demystified by having the tools and equipment used in the primary and secondary schools sourced locally. This definitely make youths to stop seeing science and technology as a magic understood only by the brilliant children and the white man (Undie, 2021; Kimberly,2020). This will bring a condition conducive to innovation and creativity in the Nigeria child through a number of science and technology clubs, which includes JETS club that have been established and is already in operation in many secondary schools throughout the country. The clubs have brought increased awareness of science to the youths and have encouraged keen quiz competition both on radio and the television. The gradual spread of the JETS club to the primary schools is worthy of note and must be accelerated. It is however pertinent that these clubs are being hindered by finance. Both the Federal, state and private organization must give generously in support of these clubs if our science and technology will be improved during this democratic setting. For science and technology education to be improved and bring about the much-desired technological development, it must be mentioned here that the annual trade fair event is carried by the science and technology for industrial set up be extended and made to secondary and technical colleges. Hansen (2021) is of the opinion that this definitely will encourage the youths to visit stands with their man-made product or could even create awareness in their bid to want to invest new to be able to improve their quality of science and technology education, emphasis have also to be laid on teachers who teach the subjects. Education, a well-known fact is the key to industrial and economy development of any nation, and teachers really have the keys in their hands. There should be periodic in-service training of teachers as well as schools are encouraged to invite external resource people (Segun, 2023). The country can bring science and technology development to the frontier by ensuring adequate development, training and better remuneration of manpower. For technology education to develop to an enviable position that we all want, it is compulsory for government to carry out some tasks.

Suggestions in improving standard of technology education at secondary school level of education in Nigeria

1. The government should provide good incentives to science and technology teachers at all levels of our educational system in form of good salaries, allowances, hazard and housing allowances and other benefits considered for them.
2. Government and private sector should invest in the building of standard laboratories & workshops and these workshops and laboratory should be fully equipped. Consumable and materials should always be made available. Workshops tools and equipment should be properly put in place. If this is done, the students will be able to relate theory and practical experience together thereby have the basic knowledge and the principle on the workings of science and technology.
3. Government must also build a good library in each of the institution. This will help students to make reference to important principle.
4. Government should recruit well-qualified science and technology teachers into our schools. As long as we continue to have shortages of qualified teachers at all level of our education so also technological development will be eluding us.
5. The existing curricula should be reformed and updated by government to reflect current technological trends and innovations around the globe.
6. Government should increase the funding of technology education. Technology education is capital intensive and government must do all within her power to fully support this form of education at all time because the fruit of such will lead to ranking our country among the world power.

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Conclusion

The systematic review highlights the importance of technology education in promoting sustainable development in Nigeria. The review also reveals that technology education has a positive impact on sustainable development but several challenges hinder its effective implementation in secondary schools. This paper therefore, has attempted to draw attention to the need to re-examine the way in which the policies on education as well as science and technology are being implemented with a view to improve it as a basis for the technological transformation of the Nigerian society. This paper further recommended the need to review and update the existing curricula, increasing fund, support and provide well equipped workshops in secondary schools in Nigeria.

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Impact of Insecurity on Management of Secondary Schools in Birnin Gwari Educational Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper examined the impact of insecurity on management of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Educational Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria. Secondary data were used to support the issues raised in the article. The data were source from print materials and online publications by recognized authors and institutions. This paper identified among others impact of insecurity on management of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Educational Zone, Kaduna State, Nigeria as: closure/relocation of schools, decline in students' enrolment, school girls and women targeted for sexual violence, military use of schools disrupts students' education. The paper also identified that, insecurity in the zone has political and economic based especially when elections are approaching, that the frequency of violence attacks and kidnapping were always being reduced and also when it is period of farm harvest, the frequency of violent attacks and kidnappings for ransom is almost high. In order to address the challenges of insecurity on management of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Educational Zone, Kaduna State ,Nigeria, the paper recommended that; government should have political will to fight all forms of insecurity in the zone through the security agencies, and provision of security awareness in the schools through relevant stakeholders including political, religious and community leaders, youths, to serve as a support system for existing security, and private organizations to support children education in Birnin Gwari Education Zone through funding and donations.

Keywords: Impacts, Insecurity, Secondary Schools, Management

Introduction

Birnin Gwari Education Zone consist of Birnin Gwari Local Government Area and some parts of Chikun Local Government Area in Kaduna State, the education zone is one of the areas facing insecurity problem in Kaduna State (the nation online.net) as a result of banditry that seeped into the zone. Kidnapping become order of the day. Recently, placing.org (2024) noted that the widespread kidnapping in the country invaded pupils and teachers. As a developing nation, placing.org, observed that Nigeria grapples with several security challenges that directly impact its economy and education ranging from insurgency to conflicts between farmers and herdsmen to organized crimes looting and abduction for ransom. These security threats not only undermine national stability and the rule of law but also have advert effects on economy and education. Birnin Gwari Education Zone in Kaduna State is one of the areas experiencing security threats in the country as result of banditry. Birnin Gwari Education Zone also share boundaries with some trouble areas in Katsina, Zamfara and Niger States respectively. The insecurity in the area has migrated to educational institutions. As a result, secondary schools in the zone are not exempted from those problems. The secondary schools in the Birnin Gwari Education Zone are attacks by bandits in different occasions. These attacks led to closure or relocation of some secondary schools in the area.

Secondary School Administration and Management in Kaduna State

The administration and management of secondary schools in Kaduna State rests on the state government through the ministry of education. Hence, the effectiveness of school administration depends on the qualities and quantities of both human and material resources available for the implementation of the school policies and programme. The various human resources required for effective school administration include the teaching and non- teaching staff while the material resources include infrastructural facilities like administrative block, classrooms, libraries, laboratory, toilets, water, electricity, Internet services, among others. Consequently, secondary school education in Birnin Gwari Education Zone, Kaduna State is under threats because of the level of the insecurity in the area. This is also affecting the social, political and economic aspect of the zone.

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Perhaps, secondary education as one of the sectors affected by the insecurity has assumed to be the subject of discussion. Therefore, this paper will examine the impacts of insecurity on management of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Educational Zone, Kaduna State,

Insecurity and Secondary School Management in Kaduna State

The concept of insecurity has been defined by different people or scholars. Oluyomi & Grace (2016) sees insecurity as concerned with feelings of uncertainty, dangers or threats to life. Insecurity is a state of being subject to danger or injury, anxiety, fear, worry, uncertainty, unsureness (Paul, 2015). Hassan (2014), viewed insecurity as negative feelings involving fear, anxiety, uncertainty and injustice among others. Insecurity is an obstacle to learning and prevailing peace or conflict within communities around the school has impacts on the teaching and learning activities of such schools. Insecurity refers to lack of adequate freedom from danger. Insecurity is conceived as a situation where human and national security of a state is compromised by internal and external forces or interests exacerbated by the former's weak or poor economic, military and or human resources development conditions (Onifade, Imhonopi & Urim, M 2013). Best (2006) defined insecurity as a generated stage of conflict, threats to human security, intense violence characterized by fighting, death, injury. Beland (2005), insecurity is "the state of fear or anxiety stemming from a concrete or alleged lack of protection.

The definitions above shows that insecurity can be generally means the state of been afraid of attack from any part of the environment. The form of insecurity in Birnin Gwari Education Zone of Kaduna State is the clashes between farmers and herdsmen. The Fulani herdsmen and farmers clashes is a form of insecurity prominent in Birnin Gwari Education Zone and the factors responsible for the insecurity are political and economic factors, because whenever is harvesting period or election is approaching the menace of insecurity is high and or reduce on the other hand to the lowest level. The insecurity in Birnin Gwari Education Zone led to the closure or relocation of schools with secondary schools inclusive as those communities have deserted their villages as a result of constant attacks by the bandits. For example, kidnapping of 135 students from the LEA Primary and Junior Secondary Schools Kuriga, Chikun LGA part of Birnin Gwari Education Zone is one of the incidences of insecurity in the area. As it is observed, Kaduna State is one of the states in Nigeria that has been waging sustained battle against banditry, kidnapping and other forms of criminality, governor Uba Sani said of the crisis the state educational sector is facing. In several local government areas particularly Birnin Gwari, Chikun, Kajuru, Giwa and Igabi insecurity has forced school consolidation, further pushing up the number of out- of- school children. However, the state government has adopted security measures to protect educational institutions, students and teachers from attacks orchestrated by bandits and terrorists (the nation online.net). That the Kaduna State government would not fold its arms and just lament. And what solutions are the school administrators pursuing. According to governor Sani, part of the measures the state government adopted to ensure safety of school children included perimeter fencing around schools, establishing Security and Safety Response Committees, provision of emergency lines to schools and security management training for school managers among others. Another proactive measure that the government has put in place is movement of schools from high-risk areas to safer areas. This way, more schools are concentrated in safer areas, out of the easy reach of terrorists (thenationonline.net).

Impacts of insecurity in Birnin Gwari Education Zone

1. Closure/Relocation of schools the closure/relocation of schools has impacted greatly on the administration of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Education Zone, Kaduna State. The kidnapping of 135 students from L.E.A Primary and Junior Secondary School, Kuriga, Birnin Gwari Education Zone, Kaduna State, tragically illustrates the devastating impact of insecurity on education access and safety (thenationonline.net). Primary and Secondary Schools around Birnin Gwari Local Government Area were also shutdown following attack on UBE Primary School Rema where three teachers abducted (Dailytrust.com.) Daily trust gathered that in Rema, Zaman Daji, Bugai as well as Government Girls Junior and Senior Secondary School, Bagoma in Birnin Gwari were closed as students and teachers have stayed back at home for fear of being attacked. There are also schools moved from high-risk areas to safer areas as a result more schools are concentrated in safer areas.
2. Low enrollment: Low students' enrollment is another impact of insecurity on the administration of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Education Zone, Kaduna State. A lot of villages in Birnin Gwari Education Zone, are virtually empty as parents have remove their children from schools due to insecurity. The Kaduna State Governor, Uba Sani, said the state's educational system is facing a crisis of declining enrolment, with over 200 000 fewer Primary School pupils recorded in

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2022/2023 academic session compared to previous year. The dramatic drop (from 2,111,969 in 2021/2022 to 1,734,704 in 2022/2023), he said is largely attributed to insecurity. The governor added that several local government areas particularly, in Chikun, Birnin Gwari, Kajuru, Giwa and Igabi, insecurity has forced pushing up the number of out-of-school children (thesun.ng).

3. School girls and women targeted for sexual violence: The administration of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Education Zone is faced with a serious challenge where schools girls and women are disproportionately affected by conflict, while their right to education is opposed; they are targeted for sexual violence at or while enroute to schools; as a result, their families withdraw them for security reasons.
4. Impacts of military use of schools: The administration of secondary schools in Birnin Gwari Education Zone is affected by the military use of secondary schools. The military forces or other armed groups damages facilities, disrupts students' education, and or students are entirely displaced.

Solutions to Insecurity among Secondary Schools in Birnin Gwari Educational Zone

There is need for authorities at all levels to take proactive steps to address the insecurity in our secondary schools and the country. Government must show strength and rise up to her responsibilities to protect our schools, lives, and properties. Secondary education must not be silenced by terrorists or kidnappers. School children and educational institutions deserve to be protected from becoming soft targets for kidnappers, bandits or terrorists. Secondary Schools must not be allowed to be turned into battle grounds where people go to display their grievances, collect bails for ransom or show their kidnapping strengths. Failure to protect the schools is a failure to the present and future generations. Thus, government at all levels; communities and educational institutions have to do more to protect the schools from all forms of attacks, particularly from the menace of kidnappings.

School security should be taking seriously by secondary schools in line with the modern-day security realities. Secondary Schools should not wait until they are targeted before they put preventative measures in place to protect their students, teachers and infrastructures. The Safe Schools Initiative should build community security groups to promote safe zones for education, consisting of teachers, parents, community leaders, Nigeria Police Force and young people. Bank-olemoh in Abdulkarim ,I.(2022) drew attention to the aspect of the National Emergency Response Plan, which is a standardized emergency and crisis response plan; which provides a step - step guide in line with the process to be taken in the event of an emergency.

The content of the emergency response plan must highlight the following:

1. **Emergency Action Plan:** There is a need for standardized emergency action Plan within schools in the same manner a First Aid response mechanism addresses a medical emergency. This frame work must provide adequate knowledge as regards prevention, reaction and recovery from security threats in the schools. A mapped - out manual explaining safety precautions, environmental awareness, threats assessment and other basic security tips should be provided to schools for incorporation into their teaching and learning experience.
2. **Lockdown procedures:** The need for lockdown procedures during emergencies cannot be overemphasized. The fright that comes with security threats such as kidnapping incident, terrorists attack, school shouting, or a fire incident generally insurgent victim. The role of a step - by- step guide during an emergency has been reported as generally contributing to increasing the chances of a victim 's survival, in significant terms, particularly when the procedures are remembered during the emergency. Security procedures and routines protocols will be simplified to aid in the spontaneous reaction of both students and teachers to certain security alarms in their communities.
3. **Self - Defense and Personal Safety Drills:** Safety drills must become common place within the Nigerian secondary school's environment and must be taught broadly from a tender age. The need for students, teachers and other active participants in Nigeria to develop self- defense skills remains a requisite toolkit for survival in modern times.
4. **Centralized Channel of Information Dissemination (Alert systems, Emergency Response Numbers,):** The importance of prompt information sharing and dissemination, using a unified communication channel cannot be overemphasized. This channel must involve the collaboration of all relevant agencies and groups, particularly local and state law enforcement agencies. This will provide schools with requisite framework required to send out distress calls or to relay vital intelligence to law enforcement agencies and other complementary security services outfits.

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5. **There should be also awareness and community engagement:** This is a security awareness exercise involving relevant stakeholders including political, religious and community leaders, youths, School Based Management Committee among others. This is expected to serve as a support system for the existing security set up in, and around the schools.

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Assessment of Human-Capacity-Building on Early Childhood Care Development among Teachers and Caregivers in Ijebu-Ode Local Government Area, Ogun State

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Abstract

The study examined the role of manpower development on early childhood care development in Nigeria. Three research questions guided the study. A descriptive research design was used. The population comprised all the early childhood education teachers and caregivers in Ijebu-ode local government area. A total of 33 early childhood education teachers and care givers were selected as sample size using purposive sampling technique. A researcher developed instrument tagged: Role of Manpower Development on Early Childhood Care Development Questionnaire (RMDECCDQ) with 0.96 reliability coefficient was used for data collection. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analyzing the research questions. The findings revealed that induction, on-the-job training, off-the-job training, workshops/courses, educational seminars/conferences, qualification programmes, teachers were among the needed human-capacity-building factors for improving early childhood care development. Increase the quality and quantity of teacher output per unit instruction in school; helps to updates teachers with the new development in the pedagogy in the area of new knowledge and skills; averts future death of human-capacity-building need in early childhood education; helps equips an individual teacher with new skills were among the role of human-capacity-building towards improving early childhood care development. There is a significant relationship between human-capacity-building and early childhood care development. Early childhood education teachers or caregivers should be given on-the-job training on a regular basis to keep them abreast of the current educational programme and employ trained teachers and Caregivers in early child care and development in the education system.

Keywords: Care Development, Early Childhood, Human-Capacity-building

Introduction

Early childhood is a pivotal period of child development that begins before birth through age eight. This is a period of rapid brain and body development. In the first few years of life, more than 1 million new neural connections are formed every second. The quality of a child's early experiences makes a critical difference as their brains develop, providing either strong or weak foundations for learning, health and behaviour throughout life. Early childhood offers a critical window of opportunity to shape the trajectory of a child's holistic development and build a foundation for their future. For children to achieve their full potential, as is their human right, they need health care and nutrition, protection from harm and a sense of security, opportunities for early learning, and responsive caregiving – like talking, singing and playing – with parents and caregivers who love them (UNICEF, 2024). Early childhood is a stage of growing up which extends beyond physical development to involve significant changes in a child 's behaviour, thought processes, emotions and attitude (Nwanekezi & Onyekuru, 2014). This largely determines the kind of adult that a child will become.

Early child care and development education is defined by the National Policy on Education (FRN, 2014) as education given in educational settings to children from ages 0 through 4 years in preparing their entry into pre-primary or Basic School. It also includes creche, nursery and kindergarten popularly called *otaakara* in some parts of Nigeria. Grunewald and Rolnick (2003)

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cited Igbinomwanhia, Ibadin and Osagie (2021) traced early child care and development education to the efforts of prominent European education experts like: John Amos Comenius (1590-1690), J. J. Rousseau (1782 – 1788), Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1748-1827) and Friedrich Froebel (1782-1751). These experts championed the right of children to early education. Many educationists and scholars, including Fafunwa (2004) and Oniyama (2011), supported and advocated the views held by the earlier educators that there was the need for good early child care and development education to help pupils develop their full potential.

Igbinomwanhia et al (2021); Samu (2020); Abasili, Chioke and Udeoba (2023) agreed that early childhood educational system depends heavily on manpower development (human-capacity-building) for the execution of its programme. Manpower (human-capacity-building) is the labour force or work force of a country. In its broad concept, it includes all who are potentially employable, ranging from unskilled to the most highly skilled workers. Development involves change for better. Manpower development (human-capacity-building) involves quantitative and qualitative training of person to carry out job in the society. It is an important factor in the economy of every nation and no serious nation can afford to ignore it. Nigeria, it has been a major concern of the government since independence.

Nwachukwu (2024) stated that manpower development (human-capacity-building) can also be seen as human capital development which refers to the knowledge, abilities, health, and skills that people invest in and accumulate throughout their lives, enabling them to realize their potential as productive members of a country. In contrast, manpower development (human-capacity-building) refers to the process of acquiring and increasing the number of persons who have the skills, education, and experience that are critical for the economic growth and development of a country's economy (Okojie, 2005). Also, Ejere (2011) posited that manpower development refers to the human factor in the production process; and consists of the combined knowledge, skills or competencies and abilities of the workforce. Of all the factors of production and educational development, most especially, only human beings are capable of learning, adapting or changing, innovative and creative. The sum of an individual's knowledge, abilities, and assets is referred to as their manpower development (Nwachukwu, 2024).

Investing in manpower development (human-capacity-building) has been recognized as a fundamental driver of educational progress, economic growth, and social progress. Without substantial investment in manpower development, no country can achieve sustainable economic and educational development (Ebisine, 2015). Moreover, manpower development (human-capacity-building) goes beyond mere economic considerations because it enriches people's understanding of themselves and the world around them, improving their quality of life and providing broad social benefits for individuals and society (Febriyanti & Ihsani, 2019). Manpower development is essential for driving innovation, increasing productivity, and ultimately contributing to economic growth. It is a key factor in determining an individual's earning potential and career advancement opportunities. Investing in manpower development through education and training programs can lead to higher levels of productivity and competitiveness in the workforce (Febriyanti & Ihsani, 2019).

To actualize the educational objectives in early childhood care depends heavily on the manpower development or teacher or caregiver. Manpower development (human-capacity-building) are the human beings (teacher or caregiver) needed to accomplish the goals of the system. They are the key to rapid socioeconomic development and efficient instruction delivery (Onah, 2008). Without adequate, skilled and well-motivated personnel operating within a system, a sound educational system will not be possible. Omah and Pepple (2019) stated that teachers were the critical resource for effectively implementing and realising educational policies and objectives at the practical level of the classroom. Teachers are therefore, one the most indispensable entities in the school. The shortage (in terms of quantity and quality) of teachers reduces the extent to which the curriculum can be effectively delivered (Igbinomwanhia, et al 2021). Furthermore, since Nigeria has pledged her commitment to provide quality and comprehensive early child care and development education and care for all preschoolers, there is the need for adequate manpower development in the sector.

Education delivery at the early stage required experience and qualified teachers or caregivers to handle to achieve educational objectives. However, the current situations of instruction delivery in public early childhood centres in Ogun state are a source of worry and concern to the stakeholders in the sector. A situation where teachers seem not to have been subjected to training and re-training exercises for many years is not a good development for early childhood education care development. The more

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the teachers are being trained, the more they develop knowledge and skills for the achievement of childhood education development objectives. This study was an attempt to examine the role of manpower development on early childhood care development in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to examine the role of manpower development on early childhood care development in Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. identified the needed human-capacity-building for improving early childhood care development.
2. ascertained the role of human-capacity-building towards improving early childhood care development.
3. examine the relationship between human-capacity-building and early childhood care development.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised and answered in this study:

1. What are the needed human-capacity-building for improving early childhood care development?
2. What are the role of human-capacity-building towards improving early childhood care development?
3. Is there any relationship between human-capacity-building and early childhood care development?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was Pestalozzi theory of education and the theory was propounded by Trohler Daniel in 2013. The theory postulated that ability of every individual human being to learn and in the right of every individual to education. He explained that education should develop the power of the head, heart and hands to create individuals who were capable of knowing what was right or wrong and would act according to that knowledge. His contributions to education involved his educational philosophy and instructional method which encouraged harmonious intellectual, moral and physical development, methodology of empirical sensory learning, especially through object lessons and use of activities, excursions and nature.

The implications of this theory to the present study were that the manpower development in the early childhood care development plays a major role in developing the power of the head, heart and hands by implementing the policy guiding the education system. The Pestalozzi theory of education further buttressed the policies and outcomes of their implementation. Early childhood education teachers need to be subjected to routine training exercises to update their knowledge, skills, and new methods of imparting knowledge to children to achieve the early childhood education aim and objectives.

Methodology

A descriptive research design was used for this study. The population of this study comprised all the public early childhood education teachers. caregivers in Ijebu-ode local government area of Ogun State, Nigeria. A total of 33 public early childhood education teachers and caregivers in Ijebu-Ode local government area of Ogun State were selected as the sample size. Purposive sampling technique was used for selecting the teachers and caregivers. A researcher self-developed instrument tagged: Role of Manpower Development on Early Childhood Care Development Questionnaire (RMDECCDQ). RMDECCDQ was a self-structured instrument geared towards eliciting information from early childhood education teachers and caregivers regarding the role of manpower development on early childhood care development. The instrument (RMDECCDQ) was divided into two sections namely section A and B. Section A focused on demographic characteristics of the respondents, while B identified the needed manpower development and its role for improving early childhood care development. The instrument requested responses on a four (4) – point scale format which was a modification of 5-point Likert scale. The responses rating scales are as follows: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD) rated as 4, 3, 2 and 1 points respectively. To ensure the content validity of the instrument (RMDECCDQ), a copy of the instrument was made available to the expert in the field of early childhood education and development. All the corrections raised, were amended before the final draft was used to gather relevant data for study. In this case, copies of the instrument (RMDECCDQ) were administered on 6 early childhood education teachers twice in Ijebu-North local government area of the state that are parallel to the sampled population. The collected data were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and 0.96 was reported as reliability coefficient. The researcher with the helped of three trained research assistants participated in the questionnaire administration of the instrument which took two weeks before the completion. After completion of the exercise, a total of 31 copies of the questionnaires were

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retrieved. Retrieval rate was 93.94%. Descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and bar-chart were used for providing answers to the research questions 1 and 2. Research question 3 was answered using inferential statistics of PPMC.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What are the needed human-capacity-building for improving early childhood care development?

Table 1: Descriptive statistics on the needed human-capacity-building for improving early childhood care development

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
Induction	2.96	0.999	Agreed
On-the-Job Training	3.01	0.714	Agreed
Off-the-Job Training	3.16	0.699	Agreed
Workshops/courses (e.g. on subject matter or methods and/or other education-related topics	2.87	0.899	Agreed
Educational Seminars/conferences (at which teachers and/or researchers present their research results and discuss education problems)	2.81	0.910	Agreed
Qualification programmes (e.g. degree, PGDE programmes etc.)	2.99	0.938	Agreed
Teachers observation visits to other schools	3.02	0.806	Agreed
Participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for the purpose of professional development	3.18	0.803	Agreed
Individual or cooperative research on a topic of professional interest	3.15	0.799	Agreed
Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching, as part of a formal school arrangement	3.08	0.783	Agreed
Cluster Mean	3.02		

Source: Field Survey, 2024



Figure 1: Bar-chart showing the needed human-capacity-building for improving early childhood care development

Table 1 indicated that cluster mean was 3.02 which greater than the bench mark mean value 2.50 i.e (3.02 > 2.50). The implications of this was that induction, on-the-job training, off-the-job training, workshops/courses (e.g. on subject matter or methods and/or other education-related topics, educational seminars/conferences (at which teachers and/or researchers present their research results and discuss education problems), qualification programmes (e.g. degree, PGDE programmes etc.), teachers observation visits to other schools, participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for the purpose of professional development, individual or cooperative research on a topic of professional interest and mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching, as part of a formal school arrangement were among the needed manpower development for improving early childhood care development.

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Research Question 2: What are the role of human-capacity-building towards improving early childhood care development?
Table 2: Descriptive statistics on the role of human-capacity-building towards improving early childhood care development

Items	Mean	SD	Remarks
Increase the quality and quantity of teacher output per unit instruction in school.	3.18	0.691	Agreed
Helps to updates teachers with the new development in the pedagogy in the area of new knowledge and skills.	3.24	0.687	Agreed
Averts future death of manpower need in early childhood education.	3.00	0.666	Agreed
Helps equips an individual teacher with new skills and technical know-how in handling new teaching strategies and methodologies.	2.93	0.817	Agreed
Help of staff development programme handle situation more technically so as to enhance continuous existence of the school	2.96	0.843	Agreed
Helps weaker teachers become more effective.	2.98	0.896	Agreed
Helps exchange information and expertise among teachers and others, e.g. academics and industrialists.	3.16	0.684	Agreed
Enable schools to develop and apply new strategies concerning the curriculum and other aspects of teaching.	3.03	0.626	Agreed
Enhances teachers' competence in carrying out their job effectively through knowledge and skills acquisition.	3.26	0.611	Agreed
Reform teachers' behaviour through learning experiences.	3.34	0.671	Agreed
Cluster Mean	3.11		

Source: Field Survey, 2024

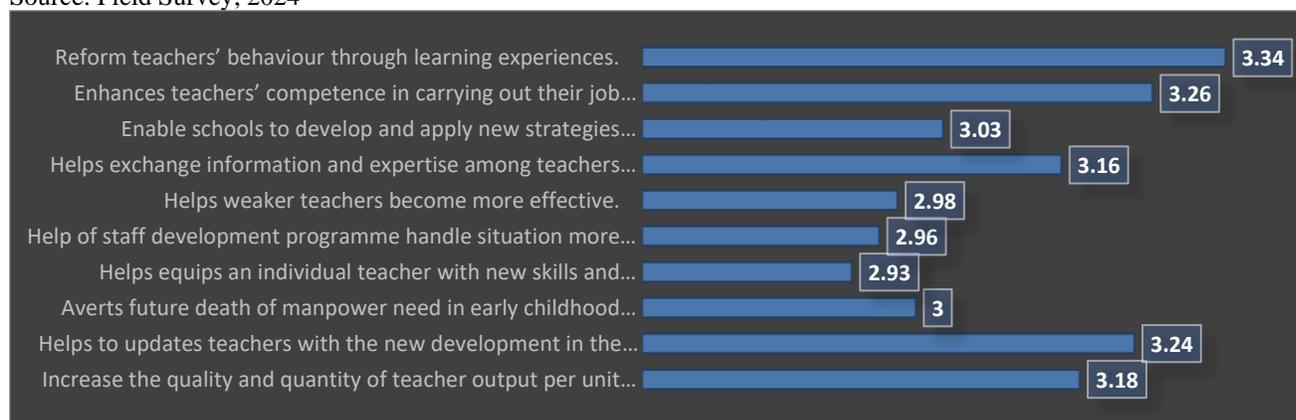


Figure 2: Bar-chart showing the role of human-capacity-building towards improving early childhood care development

Table 2 revealed that cluster mean was 3.11 which greater than the bench mark mean value 2.50 ($3.11 > 2.50$). This implied that increase the quality and quantity of teacher output per unit instruction in school; helps to updates teachers with the new development in the pedagogy in the area of new knowledge and skills; averts future death of manpower need in early childhood education; helps equips an individual teacher with new skills and technical know-how in handling new teaching strategies and methodologies; help of staff development programme handle situation more technically so as to enhance continuous existence

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of the school; helps weaker teachers become more effective; helps exchange information and expertise among teachers and others, e.g. academics and industrialists; enable schools to develop and apply new strategies concerning the curriculum and other aspects of teaching; enhances teachers' competence in carrying out their job effectively through knowledge and skills acquisition and reform teachers' behaviour through learning experiences were among the role of manpower development towards improving early childhood care development.

Research Question 3: Is there any relationship between human-capacity-building and early childhood care development?

Table 3: Relationship between human-capacity-building and early childhood care development

Variables	Mean	Std. Dev	df	r _{value}	P _{value}
early childhood care development	21.2840	3.10074			
human-capacity-building	58.2440	6.60816	3	.007	.001

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Table 3 revealed Mean, Standard Deviation and zero order correlation between the variables. It was observed that there was relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable in the order of ($r = 0.007$, $p < .05$). On this premise, the researcher concluded that there was relationship between human-capacity-building and early childhood care development.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study indicated that induction, on-the-job training, off-the-job training, workshops/courses, educational seminars/conferences, qualification programmes, teachers were among the needed human-capacity-building agents for improving early childhood care development. These findings corroborate with Igbinomwanhia et al (2021) who examined human resource adequacy in early childhood educational development in Nigeria and their findings showed that attending seminar, workshop, human development programmes needed by the teachers of early childhood education.

The findings further revealed that increase the quality and quantity of teacher output per unit instruction in school; helps to updates teachers with the new development in the pedagogy in the area of new knowledge and skills; averts future death of manpower need in early childhood education; helps equips an individual teacher with new skills and technical know-how in handling new teaching strategies and methodologies; help of staff development programme handle situation more technically so as to enhance continuous existence of the school; helps weaker teachers become more effective; helps exchange information and expertise among teachers and others, e.g. academics and industrialists; enable schools to develop and apply new strategies concerning the curriculum and other aspects of teaching; enhances teachers' competence in carrying out their job effectively through knowledge and skills acquisition and reform teachers' behaviour through learning experiences were among the role of manpower development towards improving early childhood care development. These findings were in consonant with the study of Ogunode, Adah, Audu and Mama (2020) who examined staff development programme for primary education teachers in Nigeria and they found that manpower development was a good development in right direction for early childhood education teacher or caregiver towards up bring their intellectual knowledge in order to handle situation for education development and they also revealed that it will helps teachers and care givers to avert death of needed manpower in early childhood education. Finally, the study showed that there was a relationship between manpower development and early childhood care development. These findings support Samu (2020) who examined education and manpower in Nigeria and He found that the manpower development programme for teachers of early childhood education directly associated with the development of childhood education.

Conclusion

This study focused on the limelight of manpower development in developing early childhood care and education in Nigeria. Induction, off-the-job training, on-the-job training, workshops, educational seminars, and upgrading knowledge of early childhood educators were focused in the limelight of this study. Moreover, it provides evidence that manpower development enhances the level of knowledge, competency, and quality of teaching skills of teachers and thus improves the quality of teaching as well as the social development of young children. Also, childhood development and child care go in tandem with manpower, and constant professional development is therefore necessary. Occasionally, there should be training and employed

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trainee teachers and quality early childhood education. The instructors are concerned with the long-term success and sustainability of early childhood education among the learners as well as among the instructors.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it was then recommended that:

1. Government should embark on a need training assessment of early childhood education teachers and caregivers, develop an action plan, develop a financial plan for implementation, set up an effective monitoring and evaluation system, ensure policies continuity and fight all institutional corruption in the ministries.
2. Workshops should be organized that will comprise all stakeholders in early childhood, including the head teachers, assistants, and caregivers, on necessary knowledge and new trends in the field of early childhood education.
3. Early childhood educators or caregivers should be given on-the-job training on a regular basis to keep them abreast of the current educational programme.
4. Employment of trained manpower in the early child care and development education system, and also motivate them.

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Evaluation of the Role of Adult Education in Promoting Food Security in Nigeria

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Abstract

To overcome the myriads of challenges militating against food security in Nigeria requires proactive efforts to empower individuals with the necessary knowledge, information and skills needed for improved productivity and food security. Since adults are the initiators of most agricultural activities, functionally relevant knowledge, information and skills must be provided to them. To this end, it is imperative to maximise the potentials of adult education in engendering continuous learning opportunities for promotion of food security in Nigeria. As a result, this paper x-rayed an overview of food security in Nigeria, examined the concept and relevance of adult education to achieving food security. It further highlighted strategies for integrating adult education into food security programmes and challenges associated with adult education in addressing food security in Nigeria before it ends with recommendations on how to maximise the potentials of adult education to achieve food security in Nigeria. Among the recommendations put forward are the needs for government to prioritise funding for adult education programmes and integrate them into national food security and agricultural strategies to ensure alignment and sustainability. Also, the government should also establish community-based learning centers tailored to regional agricultural and nutritional needs, fostering local ownership and enhancing participation.

Keywords: *Adult education, agriculture, food security, knowledge and skills*

Introduction

The key to socio-economic development is transfer of learning. This is a situation in which people apply knowledge, information and skills acquired in a new situation or context. The need to continuously empower individuals with the necessary knowledge, information and skills to effect changes within their communities can be achieved by maximising the potentials of adult education. This is because adult education is geared towards improved performance, which will in turn bring about achievement of higher productivity and output levels. It also contributes to improvement in health and education, protection of the environment, development of livelihood activities or generation of employment. It can be used to improve child care, care for elderly, inter-personal relationships and to overcome isolation and temptation as it is commonly said that an idle hand is the devil's workshop (Wordu & Egumah, 2019).

Adult education is an instrument for mobilization to enable people to participate in development programmes. Adult education can assist people through learning to change their habits, attitude, towards a desirable direction, such as adoption of new methods of farming or continuous engagement in learning so as not to relapse to illiteracy (Wordu & Hanachor 2019). Adult education plays a vital role in addressing food security challenges in Nigeria. It empowers individuals with knowledge, skills, and resources to improve agricultural productivity, enhance nutritional awareness, and foster sustainable practices. With a

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significant portion of the population reliant on agriculture for livelihood, integrating adult education into food security initiatives can equip communities with innovative solutions to combat hunger and malnutrition.

Overview of Food Security in Nigeria: Challenges and Opportunities

Food security in Nigeria is a pressing concern, shaped by interaction of demographic, environmental, and infrastructural factors. The country's population, which exceeds 200 million, continues to grow rapidly, creating an increasing demand for food that surpasses production rates (FAO, 2022). This population growth intensifies competition for agricultural resources, exacerbating food scarcity in many regions. Additionally, the effects of climate change, such as erratic rainfall patterns, droughts, and flooding, disrupt agricultural activities and significantly reduce crop yields (IPCC, 2021). These challenges are further compounded by limited access to agricultural technology and poor government support for smallholder farmers (World Bank, 2021). Nigeria's agricultural sector also suffers from underdeveloped infrastructure, which impedes the efficient storage, processing, and transportation of food. It is estimated that over 40% of food produced in Nigeria is wasted due to inadequate storage facilities and poor road networks (IFPRI, 2020). Furthermore, the reliance on rain-fed agriculture increases vulnerability to climate variability, leaving millions of households' food-insecure during periods of drought or excessive rainfall (WFP, 2020). The lack of institutional frameworks to promote efficient land use and equitable access to farming inputs further aggravates the situation.

Despite these challenges, Nigeria possesses enormous potential to address food insecurity. The country has vast arable land, with only about 40% currently under cultivation (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2021). This provides an opportunity for expansion, especially if complemented by sustainable farming practices. Additionally, Nigeria's youthful population represents a dynamic workforce that, if adequately trained and supported, could drive agricultural innovation and productivity (FAO, 2022). The government's on-going efforts to diversify the economy through the agricultural sector, coupled with private-sector investments, could significantly enhance food security outcomes. Innovative approaches, such as adopting climate-smart agriculture, integrating technology into farming, and promoting agribusiness, hold promise for achieving sustainable food security (UNDP, 2021). Collaboration between local communities, non-governmental organizations, and international agencies could also strengthen resilience against food insecurity. Policies targeting smallholder farmers, particularly in rural areas, would ensure equitable access to resources and enhance the agricultural value chain.

Concept of Adult Education and Its Relevance to Food Security in Nigeria

Adult education is recognized as a transformative tool for equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills necessary to address critical societal challenges, including food security. Defined as the continuous process of acquiring knowledge and competencies, adult education extends beyond basic literacy to encompass vocational training, health education, and community empowerment initiatives (UNESCO, 2021). Its role in food security lies in empowering individuals to adopt sustainable practices in food production and consumption, thereby fostering self-reliance and resilience within communities (FAO, 2022). The introduction of tailored agricultural programmes through adult education equips farmers with modern farming techniques, including precision agriculture and effective pest management strategies (Brookfield, 2020). These programmes also emphasize soil health, irrigation methods, and crop diversification, which are critical for improving agricultural productivity. For instance, training programmes in sustainable practices such as agroforestry and organic farming have proven effective in increasing crop yields and conserving natural resources (IPCC, 2021). Such initiatives enable farmers to mitigate risks associated with climate change and environmental degradation.

Furthermore, adult education fosters a culture of innovation and adaptability by encouraging critical thinking and collaborative problem-solving (UNESCO, 2021). In the face of challenges such as market access and fluctuating commodity prices, education empowers individuals to explore alternative income-generating activities, such as value-added processing and cooperative farming (IFPRI, 2020). Educational programmes that specifically target women and marginalized groups enhance inclusivity and ensure that the benefits of food security interventions are widely distributed.

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Promoting adult education also aligns with global goals, such as the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 2, which aims to end hunger and achieve food security by 2030 (UNDP, 2021). This makes adult education a cornerstone for achieving long-term developmental objectives in Nigeria, particularly in regions with high levels of poverty and food insecurity.

Strategies for Integrating Adult Education into Food Security Programmes

Integrating adult education into food security programmes requires a multi-pronged approach that incorporates local knowledge and aligns with national development priorities. Establishing community-based learning centres in rural areas offers a practical solution for delivering agricultural education and skill development. These centres can provide training on modern farming techniques, resource management, and entrepreneurial skills, empowering participants to optimize their agricultural activities (FAO, 2022). Partnerships with local governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can ensure the sustainability of these centres and make education more accessible.

The use of technology in adult education has emerged as a game-changer in bridging the knowledge gap. Mobile applications, online courses, and digital platforms allow farmers to access real-time information on weather forecasts, market prices, and pest control strategies (IFPRI, 2020). For instance, apps tailored to local languages and contexts have been shown to improve adoption rates and agricultural productivity. Leveraging technology not only enhances the reach of educational programmes but also promotes efficiency in resource utilization and decision-making. Encouraging cooperative learning through farmer groups is another effective strategy for integrating adult education into food security initiatives. These groups serve as platforms for sharing experiences, exchanging ideas, and solving common challenges collectively. Additionally, farmer cooperatives can provide access to financial resources, agricultural inputs, and market linkages, which are essential for scaling production and achieving food security (World Bank, 2021). Adult education plays a pivotal role in nurturing leadership and management skills within these cooperatives, ensuring their long-term success.

Government support and policy alignment are crucial for the effective integration of adult education into food security programmes. Policies that promote vocational training and subsidize educational initiatives can encourage participation among underserved populations. Moreover, aligning these programmes with broader agricultural strategies ensures a cohesive approach to addressing food security challenges in Nigeria (UNESCO, 2021).

Role of Adult Education in Enhancing Agricultural Skills

Adult education is instrumental in equipping individuals with advanced agricultural skills that contribute to increased food production. Training programmes focused on modern techniques such as crop rotation, irrigation systems, and integrated pest management enable farmers to maximize yields and minimize losses (Brookfield, 2020). These skills are particularly valuable in Nigeria, where traditional farming methods often fail to meet the demands of a growing population. Adult education addresses inefficiencies in the agricultural sector and promotes sustainable development by introducing innovative practices. The adoption of modern agricultural equipment is another area where adult education has a significant impact. Farmers trained in the use of tractors, mechanized harvesters, and other tools transition from subsistence to commercial farming, enhancing productivity and profitability (FAO, 2022). Educational programmes that include business management components further empower farmers to navigate market dynamics, negotiate prices, and plan for future investments. This comprehensive approach not only improves food security but also fosters economic growth in rural communities.

Adult education also promotes climate-smart agriculture, a necessity in the face of climate change. Training programmes teach farmers techniques such as conservation tillage, agroforestry, and water harvesting, which mitigate the effects of climate variability and enhance resilience (IPCC, 2021). These practices ensure the sustainability of food systems and protect ecosystems, aligning with global environmental goals. Additionally, integrating indigenous knowledge with modern methods through adult education enriches agricultural practices, making them more adaptable to local contexts. Collaboration between educational institutions, agricultural agencies, and local communities is essential for enhancing the reach and impact of adult education in agriculture. Such partnerships can design programmes tailored to the specific needs of different regions, ensuring relevance and effectiveness (UNDP, 2021). Through these initiatives, adult education continues to play a transformative role in addressing food security challenges in Nigeria.

Improving Nutrition and Health Awareness through Adult Education

Adult education is a vital tool for improving nutrition and health awareness, crucial components of food security. Educational programmes targeted at adults often focus on imparting knowledge about balanced diets, proper food handling, and hygiene practices, reducing the prevalence of malnutrition and foodborne illnesses (FAO, 2022). These programmes are particularly impactful in rural areas, where limited access to healthcare and nutrition information exacerbates health disparities. Workshops and community outreach initiatives equip individuals with practical skills for identifying nutrient-rich local foods and preparing meals that preserve their nutritional value.

Nutrition-focused adult education also addresses the unique needs of vulnerable groups, such as pregnant women and young children. These programmes contribute to better maternal and child health outcomes, by educating mothers about breastfeeding, complementary feeding, and essential nutrients required at various life stages (UNICEF, 2020). Research shows that communities with higher levels of nutritional literacy exhibit lower rates of stunting and wasting among children, emphasizing the importance of sustained education efforts (IFPRI, 2020).

Moreover, adult education fosters a deeper understanding of the link between diet and chronic diseases. Participants learn to make informed dietary choices that prevent conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and hypertension, which are increasingly prevalent in Nigeria (World Bank, 2021). Such initiatives not only improve individual well-being but also reduce the economic burden of healthcare, allowing households to allocate more resources to food and other necessities. Collaborations between government agencies, NGOs, and local educators enhance the effectiveness of nutrition education programmes. Tailoring content to cultural contexts and using community leaders as facilitators ensure greater participation and impact. Digital tools, such as mobile apps and online resources, can further expand access to nutritional education, enabling even remote communities to benefit from these life-changing programmes (UNESCO, 2021).

Empowering Rural Communities through Literacy and Skill Development

Literacy and skill development through adult education are critical for empowering rural communities and enhancing food security. Basic literacy programmes enable individuals to read and interpret agricultural information, such as weather forecasts, crop care guides, and government policies (FAO, 2022). Access to this information improves decision-making and resource management, fostering resilience in the face of agricultural challenges. Numeracy skills, often integrated into literacy programmes, help farmers budget effectively and track their expenses, ensuring better financial stability. Skill development initiatives tailored to rural contexts equip individuals with practical knowledge in areas such as crop diversification, agroforestry, and animal husbandry (IPCC, 2021). These programmes emphasize sustainable practices like water conservation and soil management, which are essential for combating environmental degradation. Farmers improve productivity while preserving natural resources, creating a balance between food security and ecological sustainability by adopting these techniques.

Empowering women through literacy and skill development is particularly impactful in rural settings. Women, who are often the primary caregivers and food providers, gain the confidence and capacity to contribute more effectively to household food security (UNICEF, 2020). Programmes that target women address gender inequalities and ensure that they have equal access to resources, training, and decision-making opportunities, fostering inclusive community development. Partnerships with local organizations and international donors strengthen the delivery of literacy and skill development programmes. Leveraging community-based approaches ensures that the initiatives are culturally relevant and widely accepted. Additionally, incorporating technology into these programmes, such as e-learning platforms and agricultural apps, enhances their reach and accessibility, benefiting even the most remote communities (UNESCO, 2021).

Challenges Facing Adult Education in Addressing Food Security

Despite its transformative potential, adult education faces significant obstacles in addressing food security in Nigeria. Inadequate funding and resources hinder the establishment and maintenance of effective adult education programmes, particularly in rural areas (World Bank, 2021). Many initiatives rely on short-term donor funding, limiting their sustainability

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and long-term impact. Additionally, the scarcity of qualified educators trained in agricultural and nutritional topics further reduces the effectiveness of these programmes (UNESCO, 2021). Cultural and societal barriers also pose challenges to adult education, particularly for women. Traditional gender roles and societal norms often restrict women's participation in educational programmes, despite their critical role in household food security (UNICEF, 2020). Furthermore, illiteracy among adult populations in rural areas remains high, making it difficult to implement educational initiatives that require basic reading and writing skills (FAO, 2022).

The lack of integration between adult education policies and broader agricultural strategies exacerbates these challenges. Without cohesive planning, efforts to improve food security through education remain fragmented and fail to address systemic issues. For example, programmes may focus on agricultural skills without incorporating nutrition education, resulting in missed opportunities to improve overall well-being (IFPRI, 2020). Coordination among stakeholders, including government agencies, NGOs, and local communities, is essential to overcome this fragmentation. Infrastructure deficits, such as poor access to educational facilities and technology, further limit the reach of adult education programmes. Many rural areas lack the basic infrastructure needed to support learning activities, including classrooms, teaching materials, and internet connectivity (Brookfield, 2020). Investments in infrastructure and innovative delivery methods, such as mobile learning units and digital platforms, are necessary to bridge these gaps and enhance the impact of adult education initiatives.

Strengthening the Link between Adult Education and Food Security

Strengthening the connection between adult education and food security requires a holistic approach that addresses the diverse needs of communities. Government policies should prioritize adult education as a key component of food security strategies, ensuring adequate funding and infrastructure support (FAO, 2022). These policies must align with national agricultural goals, fostering synergy between education and food production systems. For example, subsidies for vocational training and farmer education programmes can encourage participation and enhance agricultural outcomes.

Collaboration among stakeholders is critical to creating impactful adult education programmes. Partnerships between educational institutions, agricultural organizations, and local community groups ensure that programmes are tailored to specific regional needs (UNESCO, 2021). Community-driven initiatives, supported by government and NGO funding, promote ownership and sustainability, encouraging active participation from beneficiaries. Additionally, incorporating local knowledge into program design enhances relevance and cultural acceptance. The integration of technology into adult education can significantly strengthen its role in food security. Mobile apps, online courses, and interactive platforms provide farmers with access to real-time agricultural information, enabling them to make informed decisions (IFPRI, 2020). Digital tools also bridge the gap between urban and rural areas, ensuring equitable access to education and resources. Training programmes that incorporate both traditional and digital learning methods enhance inclusivity and reach.

Conclusion

Adult education plays a transformative role in addressing food security challenges in Nigeria. It equips individuals with critical knowledge and skills in agriculture, nutrition, and resource management, adult education empowers communities to overcome barriers to food production, improve nutritional outcomes, and enhance resilience to climate change. Despite its potential, adult education faces challenges such as inadequate funding, cultural barriers, and infrastructure deficits. Strengthening the link between adult education and food security requires cohesive strategies that align with national development priorities and leverage technology for broader impact.

Recommendations

To promote food security in Nigeria, it was recommended that:

1. The government should prioritize funding for adult education programmes and integrate them into national food security and agricultural strategies to ensure alignment and sustainability.
2. The government should also establish community-based learning centres tailored to regional agricultural and nutritional needs, fostering local ownership and enhancing participation.

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3. Government in collaboration with agricultural extension workers should develop and promote digital tools and mobile applications for agricultural education, ensuring accessibility for rural communities to bridge the knowledge gap.
4. The government should further design inclusive programmes that target marginalized groups, particularly women, to ensure equitable access to education and resources, while addressing cultural norms that hinder participation

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Qualitative Study on Formative and Summative Assessment Strategies for Effective Learning Outcome among Pharmacy Students: A Systematic Review

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Abstract

Evaluating pharmacy students effectively ensures they acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies for professional practice. This study explores the formative and summative assessments as key strategies in pharmacy student evaluation. Formative assessments provide ongoing feedback and support skill development, employing methods such as quizzes, in-class activities, and peer assessments to enhance student engagement and learning outcomes. Summative assessments, including standardized tests and final exams, offer a comprehensive measure of student competence and readiness for professional practice. Both assessment types have distinct benefits and challenges: formative assessments are time-

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consuming yet foster continuous improvement, while summative assessments offer standardization but can induce stress. Integrating both strategies provides a balanced evaluation system, supporting academic excellence and professional readiness. This review highlights the importance of ongoing research to develop more sensitive and accurate analytical techniques, optimize assessment integration, and address existing challenges to enhance the effectiveness of pharmacy education. Recommendations were also made.

Keywords: Formative Assessment, Summative Assessment, Pharmacy, Assessment, Academic Performance

Introduction

The evaluation of pharmacy students is critical for ensuring they acquire the knowledge, skills, and competencies required for professional practice. Formative and summative assessments are two primary strategies for evaluating pharmacy students' academic performance and progress (Gezer et al., 2021). Moreover, formative assessment is an ongoing process that provides feedback to students and instructors about pharmacy student learning progress. It aims to identify areas where pharmacy students need improvement and to inform instructional strategies. (Sottiyotin et al., 2023). Summative assessment, on the other hand, is used to evaluate pharmacy student learning at the end of an instructional period. It typically involves standardized tests, final exams, and other high-stakes assessments that determine student grades and academic achievement (Al-Worafi, 2023). Thus, this study aims to explore the theoretical foundations, methodologies, and effectiveness of formative and summative assessments in the context of pharmacy education. The review also examined the benefits and challenges associated with these assessment strategies and their impact on pharmacy student learning and development.

Methodology

The methodology of the study is described in Figure 1 below:

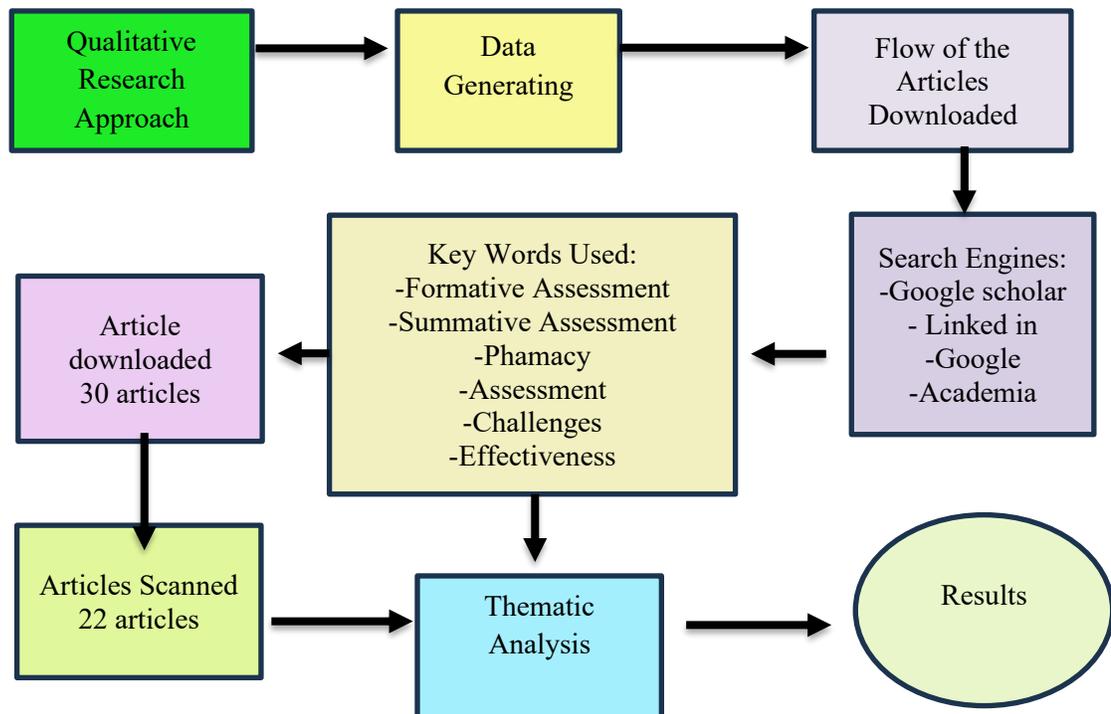


Figure 1. Flow of the Methodology of the Study Presentation of Results

The two forms of assessments (formative and summative) are applicable to pharmacy lessons for better learning outcomes as indicated in Tables 1 and 2.

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Formative assessments can take various forms, including quizzes, in-class activities, peer assessments, self-assessments, and reflective journals. These assessments are designed to provide immediate feedback and promote active learning. (Croft et al., 2019). Studies have shown that formative assessments enhance pharmacy student engagement, motivation, and self-regulated learning. (Sottiyotin et al., 2023). This kind of evaluation can be used to assess pharmacy students in some ways, for instance, in topics such as detoxification, Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Screening, and Sterilization as described in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Examples of Formative Assessment in Pharmacy

S/N	Topic	Formative Assessment Questions
1.	Detoxification	1. The students should define detoxification's concept: What is detoxification? 2. How is the detoxification of alcohol poisoning carried out in general? If the students' responses are positive then the lecturer could proceed with the lecture
2.	Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA) Screening	1. Pause and reflect on what has just been covered in the lecture e.g. assuming you have been appointed by Uganda national laboratories, what precautions must be taken to avoid contamination of evidence containing DNA while collecting it from the crime scene? 2. what are the steps followed while DNA testing? Based on the pharmacy students' responses, identify their areas of strength and weaknesses, provide feedback, and improve.
3.	Sterilization.	1. How can you sterilize the equipment that is heat labile? 2. What are the recommended conditions for sterilizing the infusions, injectables, and syringes? To proceed with the lecture, the instructor must ensure the students have given positive answers.

Summative assessments include traditional exams, objective structured clinical examinations (OSCEs), practical assessments, and standardized tests. These assessments aim to measure pharmacy student competence and readiness for professional practice. (Gezer et al., 2021). Research indicates that summative assessments provide a comprehensive evaluation of pharmacy student performance and are essential for ensuring academic standards. (Karaman, 2021). This type of evaluation (Summative) can be used to assess pharmacy students in some ways, for instance, in all topics such as Detoxification, Deoxyribonucleic Acid Screening, and Sterilization at the end of a course e.g. end of semester exams. This will cover all the topics taught in the course units. The examples of summative assessment in relation to pharmacy can be seen table 2 below.

Table 2. Example of Summative Assessment in Pharmacy

S/N	Course unit	Summative assessment questions
1	Pharmacy law and ethics	1. What are the legal requirements for dispensing controlled substances in a pharmacy, how do they differ from non-controlled substances? 2. Discuss the ethical considerations a pharmacist must take into account when dealing with patients' confidential information. 3. Explain the pharmacist's role in ensuring the medication safety and preventing medication errors. What legal responsibilities do they have in this regard?
2	Pharmacognosy II	1. Describe the biological source, chemical constituents, and therapeutic uses of digitalis 2. Explain the significance of the acetate pathway in the biosynthesis of secondary metabolites
3	Pharmaceutics II	1. Describe the different methods of tablet manufacturing. How does each method impact the final product's quality and efficacy? 2. Discuss the role of excipients in pharmaceutical formulations. Provide examples of common excipients and their specific functions.

Furthermore, the connection between formative and summative assessments and pharmacy lessons for desired learning outcomes is described in Figure 1 below:

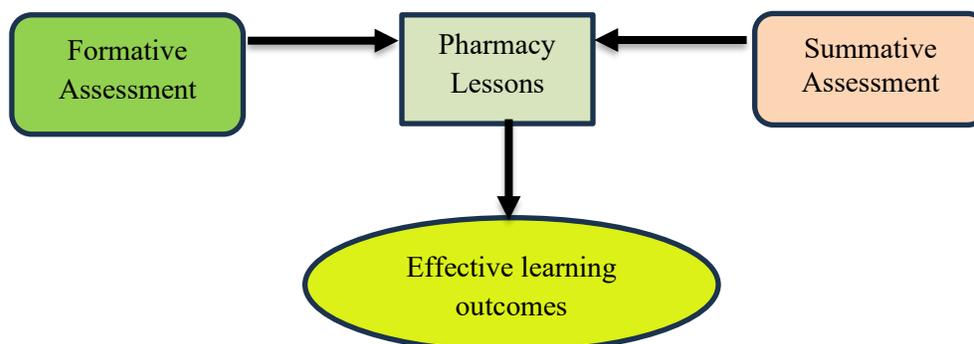


Figure 1. Connection Between Formative Summative Assessments and Pharmacy Lessons for Desired Learning Outcomes

Effectiveness of Formative Assessments

Formative assessments are highly effective in improving pharmacy student learning outcomes. They provide opportunities for pharmacy students to practice and refine their skills, receive constructive feedback, and adjust their learning strategies (Karaman, 2021). Evidence suggests that formative assessments contribute to deeper understanding and retention of knowledge (Skills, 2018).

Effectiveness of Summative Assessments

Summative assessments are crucial for certifying student competence and providing a final measure of their academic achievement. They offer a structured and standardized approach to evaluation, ensuring consistency and fairness. Summative assessments are also valuable for identifying high-performing pharmacy students and areas where the curriculum may need improvement (Brown, 2022).

Benefits of Formative Assessments (Dayal, 2021)

1. Continuous Feedback: Formative assessments offer real-time feedback, allowing pharmacy students to address their weaknesses promptly.
2. Engagement and Motivation: These assessments encourage active participation and motivate pharmacy students to take ownership of their learning.
3. Skill Development: Formative assessments support the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-assessment skills particularly in pharmacy lessons.

Challenges of Formative Assessments (Karaçöp & İnaltekin, 2023)

1. Time-Consuming: Implementing formative assessments requires significant time and effort from instructors.
2. Subjectivity: There can be variability in the interpretation and use of formative feedback.
3. Resource Intensive: Effective formative assessments may require additional resources and support.

Benefits of Summative Assessments (French et al., 2024)

1. Standardization: Summative assessments provide a uniform measure of pharmacy student performance, ensuring consistency.
2. Comprehensive Evaluation: These assessments offer a holistic view of pharmacy student competence and readiness for professional practice.
3. Accountability: Summative assessments hold students accountable for their learning and performance.

Challenges of Summative Assessments (Bennett, 2011)

1. High Stakes: Summative assessments can induce anxiety and stress among pharmacy students.
2. Limited Feedback: These assessments often provide limited feedback, reducing opportunities for improvement.
3. Potential Bias: There can be biases in the design and administration of summative assessments.

Impact on Student Learning Outcomes and Development

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The combination of formative and summative assessments creates a balanced evaluation system that supports pharmacy student learning and development. While formative assessments foster continuous improvement and pharmaceutical skill development, summative assessments validate pharmacy student competence and academic achievement (Karaçöp & İnaltekin, 2023). Integrating both assessment strategies ensures a comprehensive evaluation framework that promotes academic excellence and pharmacy professional readiness (Brown, 2022).

Conclusion

Formative and summative assessments are integral to evaluating pharmacy students' academic performance and progress (French et al., 2024). Each assessment strategy has its unique strengths and challenges, and their combined use offers a balanced approach to pharmacy student evaluation. Formative assessments provide continuous feedback, foster engagement, and support skill development, while summative assessments ensure standardization, comprehensive evaluation, and accountability (Taras, 2009). Future research should focus on optimizing the integration of formative and summative assessments to enhance their effectiveness and address existing challenges. By leveraging the strengths of both assessment strategies, pharmacy educators can create a robust evaluation system that promotes pharmacy student learning, development, and professional competence.

Recommendations

In order to enhance student learning outcomes and offer suggestions for further research, it has been suggested that:

1. Educators including those in pharmacy be encouraged to use a variety of evaluation techniques.
2. Instructors should explore the use of formative and summative assessments for enhanced and achieve effective learning outcomes in pharmacy lessons.

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Quality Education amidst Insecurity: Interplay of Metacognition and Self-Regulation on Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura-Namoda, Zamfara State

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Abstract

This study investigated the Relationships of Metacognition, Self-regulation and Academic Achievement amidst Insecurity among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State. The study employed correlational survey research design. A sample of three hundred and twenty-two (322) students (Research Advisors, 2006) was used in the study which was identified through multi stage sampling technique. Three objectives guided the study. Instruments used for data collection were Metacognitive Awareness Inventory and Self-Regulation Questionnaire. A pilot test was conducted and the instruments were found to have an internal consistency of $\alpha = .802$ and $\alpha = .789$ respectively. Pearson Product Moment Coefficient (Pearson's r) was used to test all the hypotheses at .05 level of significance. The result revealed a significant positive relationship between; Metacognition and Academic Achievement ($r = .788$); Self-regulation and Academic Achievement ($r = .763$); Self-evaluation and Academic Achievement ($r = .750$). Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that both metacognition and self-regulation influence academic achievement of students. It was recommended that; Educators should be taught trained on how to inculcate metacognitive skills among their students, learners should be encouraged and supported to engage in independent learning by utilizing self-regulation skills, and finally students should be taught and encouraged to practice self-evaluation so as to monitor their progress while on independent learning and identify areas in need of improvement.

Keywords: Metacognition, Self-regulation, Insecurity, Equity, Access

Introduction

Insecurity refers to a state of being subjected to fear, threat, danger, molestation, intimidation, harassment etc. in all aspect. Insecurity can be conceived as threats to the state, which often accounted for the race for arms and nuclear weapons to defend the state (Ajodo-Adebanjoko & Ugwuoke, 2014). Zubairu (2020) identified some factors enhancing insecurity in Nigeria to include among other things: poor leadership, ethno-religious crises, socio-economic inequalities, small arms and ammunitions trafficking, rural-urban migration and external influence among others. In recent years, Northwest Nigeria has experienced a concerning surge in violent activities, particularly directed at educational institutions and students. Historically, the region has been hesitant to fully embrace formal education, but recent initiatives by both government and private investors had begun to foster a positive shift toward expanding educational opportunities. Unfortunately, this progress has been severely undermined by the growing threat of banditry and kidnapping (Akpa-Achimugu & Ibeh, 2023).

Banditry, commonly associated with armed violence and criminal activities, has manifested in various forms across the region, including armed robbery and cattle rustling. These criminal operations have increasingly targeted the education sector, exacerbating the already precarious situation. When combined with the pervasive threat of kidnapping, the impact on the region's educational system has been both profound and widespread (Akinyetun, 2022). Moreover, the psychological trauma endured by victims, including survivors and their families, has had lasting effects on the region's educational aspirations. The repercussions extend beyond the immediate disruption of schooling, encompassing broader socio-economic consequences. These include restricted access to education, stunted human capital development, and the erosion of the social cohesion that sustains communities (Timothy, Ubong, & Gadu, 2019). The pervasive insecurity in Nigeria has reached such alarming levels that Nigerians both domestically and abroad are drawing stark comparisons to the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan. A

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significant portion of the vast Northern region is in a state of collapse, with the government struggling to maintain control against the influence of non-state actors across multiple states. The North-West and North-Central zones are now characterized by rampant kidnapping, random acts of terror by armed groups, and attacks on schools, villages, traditional rulers' palaces, and military installations. According to Buhari (2021), bandits and militant herdsmen were responsible for the deaths of over 3,000 people in 2021, while more than 1,000 children were abducted in the North-Western states of Zamfara, Kaduna, Katsina, and Kebbi, as well as in Niger State in the North-Central region.

Despite prolonged school closures across Northern Nigeria due to insecurity, states have once again been compelled to shut down over 60 predominantly boarding schools in high-risk areas. This decision is likely to exacerbate the already staggering number of out-of-school children, which currently stands at 13.5 million, according to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF, 2021). Parents are increasingly reluctant to send their children to school, further deepening the crisis. Notably, the Northern states, which account for over 80% of the country's out-of-school children, are also the least developed region in Nigeria (UNICEF, 2021). The relentless abduction of schoolchildren by bandits and kidnappers has introduced a deeply troubling dimension to the nation's escalating security challenges. Armed criminals, emboldened and undeterred, continue to unleash havoc across the North, abducting students and transforming entire states into zones of violence, while state governments appear overwhelmingly powerless to respond effectively. Official responses have consistently been lackluster, often limited to rejecting ransom payments as a policy stance. These repeated attacks on schoolchildren are not only reprehensible but also highlight the failure of authorities to protect the most vulnerable members of society. The situation underscores a deepening crisis that demands urgent and decisive action to restore security and safeguard the future of Nigeria's children. According to Ibrahim (2020), since the conflict started in Northeastern Nigeria nearly ten years ago, at least 2,295 teachers have been killed and more than 1,400 schools have been destroyed. The data published by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in its 2020 report showed that Zamfara state is among the state with the highest number of out-of-school children with 422,214. Furthermore, the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (2020) also reported that Zamfara state has the lowest school enrollment in the federation for three (3) years consecutive with 40.71%, 39.5% and 45.04% in 2015/2016, 2016/2017 and 2017/2018 respectively.

Several studies have been conducted and recommended ways to curb the menace on insecurity in the state, such as call for the implementation of comprehensive security measures, community engagement initiatives, strategic policy interventions, improving the availability of high-quality education, vocational training, skill development initiatives, dealing with the underlying social and economic factors that contribute to banditry and effectively combating criminal activities, yet access to quality education remains a major problem in the state. This study offers a different perspective on ways to foster access to quality education despite the insecurity threat within the society through utilization of metacognitive skills (knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition) and self-regulation (study method, self-evaluation, time management and planning).

Metacognition plays a vital role in every aspect of school and daily life activities, since it deals with self-reflection on one's current position, future goals, potential action and strategies, and results. One of the attributes of Metacognition is that, it helps students to improve their applicability of knowledge, skills and character qualities in realms beyond the immediate context in which they were learned. This allows for the transference of principles and methods across disciplinary lines. Being aware of how one is engaging with the process of learning influences how the student interprets the task at hand, and what strategies are employed in service of achieving learning goals. This helps optimize the problem-solving experience at a high level and is thus instrumental in attaining a high academic achievement.

Self-regulation is a cyclical process wherein students plan for a task, monitors their performance and then reflect on the outcome. The cycle then repeats as the student make use of the reflection to adjust and prepare for the next task (Zimmerman, 2002). This instills in the learner, the desire to aim for greater outcome which eventually affects their overall academic achievement According to Obioma (2011), one of the factors responsible for student's low achievement in mathematics is that they were not taught self-regulation strategies and therefore cannot apply them properly. Fortunately, previous research indicates that self-regulatory processes are teachable (Paris & Paris, 2001). Hence, learners lacking awareness of self-regulatory and metacognitive skills should be informed of their existence and proper ways in which to implement them.

The aforementioned constructs (metacognition and self-regulation), when utilized properly are strong facilitators of independent learning among students and have been found to be highly linked with a positive academic achievement among learners. Hence, the researcher deems it fit to embark on this study to find out the relationships of Metacognition, Self-regulation and Academic Achievement amidst insecurity and offer recommendations and suggestions on ways to mitigate the menace posed by insecurity on access, equity and quality of education.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are to determine;

1. Relationship between Metacognition and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State
2. Relationship between Self-regulation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State
3. Relationship between Self-evaluation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State

Research Questions

The study aimed to answer the following questions;

1. What is the relationship between Metacognition and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State?
2. What is the relationship between and Self-regulation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State?
3. What is the relationship between Self-evaluation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the study;

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between Metacognition and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between Self-regulation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State

Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between Self-evaluation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State.

Methodology

This research adopted the correlational survey design. This allowed the researcher established statistically corresponding relationships between the stated variables as recommended by research experts such as Khan and Best (2016), and Creswell (2017). The population of this study was made up of all SSII Students in Kaura Namoda Local Government of Zamfara State amounting to one thousand six hundred and eighteen (1618), out of which eight hundred and ninety one were girls (891) and seven hundred and twenty seven were boys (727). The sample size for this study was 322 (Research advisors, 2006). Sample was identified through multi-stage sampling technique. Purposive sampling technique was employed at the first stage due to security threat. Only four schools were accessible to the researcher as all other schools were shut down at the time of conducting the study due to security concerns, hence the researcher focused on the four accessible schools. At the second stage, proportionate sampling technique was employed to identify number of samples to be drawn from each school according to its size. At the third stage, simple random technique was employed to select respondents; this ensured that each respondent had an equal chance of being selected. The instruments used for this study were Metacognitive Awareness Inventory by Schraw and Dennison (1994) with 52 items and Self-regulation Questionnaire by Oz and Sen (2018) with 39 items, both measured on a four-point scale.

Presentation of Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between Metacognition and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State.

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on Relationship between Metacognition and Academic Achievement.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	p
Metacognition	322	125.95	50.54	.788	.000
Academic Achievement	322	44.81	20.74		

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

Table 1 reveals that there is significant positive relationship between Metacognition and Academic Achievement ($r = .788$, $p = .000$) which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. The correlation coefficient indicates that as Metacognition increases, Academic Achievement also increases and vice versa. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Metacognition and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between Self-regulation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on Relationship between Self-regulation and Academic Achievement.

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	p
Self-regulation	322	82.03	34.80	.763	.000
Academic Achievement	322	44.81	20.74		

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

Table 2 reveals that there is significant positive relationship between Self-regulation and Academic Achievement ($r = .763$, $p = .000$) which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. The correlation coefficient indicates that as Self-regulation increases, Academic Achievement also increases and vice versa. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Self-regulation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara state is hereby rejected.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant relationship between Self-evaluation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on Relationship between Self- evaluation and Academic Achievement

Variables	N	Mean	SD	R	p
Self-evaluation	322	36.56	14.78	.750	.000
Academic Achievement	322	44.81	20.74		

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

Table 3 reveals that there is significant positive relationship between Self-evaluation and Academic Achievement ($r = .750$, $p = .000$) which is lower than 0.05 level of significance. The correlation coefficient indicates that the more students are self-evaluative, the better their Academic Achievement. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Self-evaluation and Academic Achievement among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State is hereby rejected.

Discussion of findings

This study was carried out to find out the relationships of Metacognition, Self- regulation and Academic Achievement amidst insecurity among Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State. Findings of the study are hereby discussed below;

The result revealed a statistically significant positive relationship metacognition and academic achievement of senior secondary school students of Kaura Namoda, Zamfara state. This is in concurrence with the finding of the study of Iqbal et al (2016) which was carried out to find the correlation between academic achievement and metacognition among second year students of two private medical colleges in Lahore, Pakistan. This finding is also in conformity with the finding of Likko (2015). The study was carried to find out the relationship between achievement goals, metacognitive awareness and academic success among colleges of education in the north western part of Nigeria. The probable cause for this might be the students' ability to

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figure out their cognitive strengths and weaknesses, identify ways in which they can overcome those weaknesses and employ appropriate strategies during learning and problem solving. The aforementioned findings are all in agreement with Browns model of Metacognition, which defines metacognition as an awareness of one's own cognitive activities, strategies employed to regulate one's own cognitive activities and the order in which one directs, plans and monitor cognitive activities. The model divides metacognition into two categories which are knowledge of cognition and regulation of cognition. Knowledge of cognition has to do with individuals' awareness about cognitive processes which facilitates the reflective aspect of metacognition and is sub-categorized into declarative, procedural and conditional knowledge. Regulation of cognition on the other hand has to do with ones' ability to monitor and control cognitive processes in the state of learning and problem solving. Regulation of cognition is sub-divided into planning, monitoring and evaluative strategies. According to this model, the accumulation of these mental abilities improves or facilitates the success rate of students in an academic setting as proven in the findings of this study.

Self-regulation has also been reported to have a significant positive relationship with academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara state. This indicates that students' Academic Achievement is positively influenced by their level of Self-regulation. Hence, a high score on students' Self-regulation will be translated into a high Academic Achievement and vice versa. This finding corroborates the finding of the study of Alotaibi, Tohmaz and Jabak (2017) which was carried out in King Saud University, Riyadh. The finding of Garrido- Vargas (2012) was also in line with this finding, the study was carried to find out the relationship of self-regulation and academic achievement among English Language learners in southern Arizona. The probable cause for this might be the fact that students who possess Self-regulation skills are able to monitor and control their learning environment, emotions, motivation and strategies which in turn is reflected on their Academic Achievement. This study also revealed a significant positive relationship between self-evaluation and academic achievement of senior secondary school students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara state. This means that students' self-evaluation score is a strong predictor of their academic achievement. This is line with the finding of Mungai's study (2020) carried to find out the effects of student self- evaluation on academic performance on writing in Kenyan secondary schools: A case study of Mugoiri girls' school in Murang'a County. This might be attributed to students' ability to assess the effectiveness of strategies and efforts allocated to a particular learning situation and making use of the evaluations generated to enhance their performance and outcome in future situations.

The above findings are in line with Zimmerman's model of self-regulation. According to this model, self-regulation occurs through three distinct phases which are, forethought phase, performance phase and self-reflection phase. Forethought phase is the first phase of self- regulation where the student is faced with a particular task, the student analyzes the task at this stage before engaging in the activity and evaluate their ability to perform the task successfully and establish goals and select an appropriate study method to complete the task. Performance phase is where the actual activity takes place; the two major activities at this phase are self- observation and self-control. At this stage it is important that learners maintain a certain level of concentration and use strategies appropriately for two reasons; first, so their motivation does not decrease and second to monitor their progress toward their goal achievement. It is also at this stage that time management, help seeking and self-instruction takes place. The final phase is the self-reflection phase, this is where learners pass judgment for their work and formulate reasons as to why the outcome of their activity turns out the way it is. This is where self-assessment or self-evaluation occurs, and it is based on this outcome that students' determines their ability to carry out futures tasks successfully. Based on this model, learners who are able to ignite the appropriate corresponding strategies through the three phases of self-regulation will have a better academic success rate than learners who cannot. This is evident in the current study as the results showed a significant positive relationship between self-regulation and academic achievement.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that, despite insecurity situation of the community:

Metacognition has a strong positive relationship with Academic Achievement of Students in Senior Secondary Schools in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State. Self-regulation has a strong positive relationship with Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State. Self-evaluation has a strong positive relationship with Academic Achievement of Senior Secondary School Students in Kaura Namoda, Zamfara State was positively correlated.

Recommendations

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In respect to the findings of this study, it is recommended that:

1. Teachers should be trained on ways to inculcate metacognitive skills in their students, this will enable learners have a better understanding of the mental processes involved while learning is taking place.
2. Teachers should encourage independent learning among students through the use of self-regulation; insecurity often disrupts school attendance due to security concerns, school closure or displacement. Students can use self-regulation strategies to create appropriate study schedules, set learning goals at home and identify resources (e.g. textbooks and online materials) to continue learning outside the classroom.
3. Self-evaluation should be encouraged by teachers and parents at home. This is to ensure that as learners continue to engage in independent learning, there is the need for constant self-evaluation so that they can be able to understand the effectiveness of their learning strategies and identify areas of concern that needs improvement.

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Comparative Assessment of Psychological Outcomes between Students in Conflict-Affected and Secure Regions in Delta State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study carried out an Assessment of psychological outcomes between students in conflict-affected and secure regions in Delta State, Nigeria. The investigation was guided by two objectives with corresponding research questions and hypotheses. Correlational research design was adopted for the study, population of the study consists of 28,065 Secondary School Students in Delta State using a sample size of 394 students from conflict-affected and secure regions of Delta State, respectively. However, the sample size was arrived at using Taro Yamane formula for sample size calculation. The cluster sampling technique was used to select the students. A researcher-designed questionnaire “Psychological Outcome Questionnaire (POQ)” was used to elicit data for the study. The instrument was validated by experts in Measurement and Evaluation reviewed the questionnaire to ensure its validity. The questionnaires showed good internal consistency with a reliability coefficient of 0.835, determined by Cronbach’s Alpha test. The regression analysis was used to answer and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed a significant relationship between the prevalence of anxiety and depression among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State, and there is a significant relationship between the severity of PTSD and emotional distress among students in conflict-affected and secured regions in Delta State. The two recommendations based on the above two findings are that the Delta State government should prioritize mental health support services in conflict-affected regions and implement targeted interventions to address the psychological issues faced by students in these areas. Also, to manage the severity of the psychological issues, the government should engage with local community leaders and organizations to provide holistic support to students in conflict-affected regions, including counselling, trauma-informed care, and psychosocial support.

Keywords: Psychological Outcome, Conflict-Affected Reion, Secure Region

Introduction

Conflict has long been recognized as a significant disruptor of human development (Adegbonmire, 2015), particularly in regions where communities grapple with prolonged violence, instability, and insecurity. Delta State, Nigeria, represents a microcosm of such realities, as it comprises both conflict-affected areas, primarily due to resource-driven disputes, and more secure regions where such tensions are relatively absent. These contrasting conditions provide a unique context to examine the psychological outcomes of students, a vulnerable population whose mental health and well-being are intricately tied to their immediate environment (Akar, 2019). The experiences of these students, whether shaped by exposure to violence or the relative calm of secure regions, demand focused attention to understand how conflict impacts their psychological resilience, academic performance, and overall mental health. To contextualize this study, it is essential to define key concepts. Psychological outcomes refer to the mental and emotional states that arise in response to an individual's experiences and environment, including indicators such as anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, and emotional resilience (Charlson et al., 2019). Conflict-affected regions, in this context, are areas characterized by intermittent or ongoing violence, often linked to political, economic, or resource-based disputes, such as the Niger Delta's resource control conflicts. Conversely, secure regions are those that enjoy relative peace and stability, with minimal exposure to conflict or violence (El-Khodary & Samara, 2020).

The prevalence of psychological issues among students in conflict-affected areas is alarmingly high. Studies have consistently demonstrated that exposure to violence, whether direct or indirect, correlates strongly with adverse mental health outcomes (Onyishi, 2022). In Delta State, students in conflict-affected regions often witness violence, experience displacement, or endure the loss of loved ones, all of which contribute to heightened levels of anxiety, depression, and trauma. By contrast, students in secure regions, while not entirely immune to stressors, are less likely to face these extreme challenges, enabling them to develop within a relatively stable psychosocial environment (Alotabi, 2021). The disparity in psychological outcomes between these two groups highlights the critical need for targeted interventions and underscores the urgency of addressing the mental health crisis among students in conflict-affected areas. The severity of psychological challenges faced by students in conflict zones often manifests in various ways, including impaired cognitive function, difficulty concentrating, and diminished academic performance. Beyond the academic sphere, such challenges can lead to long-term implications, including difficulty forming healthy relationships, reduced employability, and perpetuation of cycles of poverty and instability (Khamis, 2015). On the other hand, students in secure regions tend to exhibit better-coping mechanisms, higher academic achievement, and stronger social bonds, primarily due to their relatively stable environment (Iff & Jones, 2015). However, it is important to note that even in secure regions, students may face psychological issues stemming from other stressors, such as poverty, familial discord, or systemic educational challenges.

The theoretical framework anchoring this study is Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which posits that human development is influenced by a series of nested environmental systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These systems range from the immediate microsystem, which includes family, school, and peer relationships, to the broader macrosystem, encompassing societal norms, cultural values, and economic conditions. In the context of this study, the microsystem of students in conflict-affected regions is disrupted by violence, instability, and trauma, leading to adverse psychological outcomes (Langford et al., 2014). The mesosystem, which involves interactions between the student's immediate environments, is similarly strained in conflict zones, as schools, families, and communities struggle to provide the necessary support structures. By contrast, students in secure regions benefit from more stable microsystems and mesosystems, which foster positive psychological development. The macrosystem, particularly the sociopolitical and economic conditions of Delta State, further compounds the challenges faced by students in conflict-affected areas, as systemic inequalities and resource-driven disputes create a fertile ground for instability. Bronfenbrenner's theory provides a valuable lens through which to examine the interplay of these environmental factors and their impact on the psychological outcomes of students (Rosa, & Tudge, 2013). It underscores the importance of addressing not only individual-level interventions but also broader systemic changes to mitigate the adverse effects of conflict. This study seeks to bridge a critical gap in the literature by exploring the nuanced differences in psychological outcomes among students in conflict-affected and secure regions of Delta State, Nigeria. By applying the principles of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, the research aims to unravel the complex interplay of environmental factors shaping students' mental health. Ultimately, the findings are expected to inform evidence-based interventions and policy recommendations that address the unique needs of students in both contexts, fostering resilience and promoting equitable development across the region.

Psychological issues among students have become a growing concern globally, as they can significantly hinder academic performance, social interactions, and overall development. In regions affected by conflict, these issues are often exacerbated by exposure to violence, displacement, and the disruption of social and familial structures. Students in such environments are at an increased risk of developing anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and other mental health challenges (Forsberg & Schultz, 2023). These conditions not only impair their immediate academic progress but also have long-term implications for their psychological well-being and societal integration. In the Nigerian context, the situation is particularly dire in areas like Delta State, where conflict is fueled by resource control disputes and political instability. Students in these regions often face compounded challenges, including disrupted educational opportunities, inadequate mental health support, and exposure to traumatic events. For instance, many schools in conflict-affected areas lack the necessary infrastructure and resources to provide a safe and supportive learning environment. Additionally, the stigma surrounding mental health in Nigeria further prevents students from seeking help, leaving their psychological needs largely unaddressed. This creates a vicious cycle where unresolved mental health issues hinder academic success and perpetuate systemic inequalities.

Even in secure regions of Delta State, students are not entirely insulated from psychological challenges. Poverty, familial discord, and systemic educational deficiencies contribute to a range of mental health issues, albeit to a lesser degree than in conflict-affected areas. The lack of comprehensive mental health policies and interventions in Nigeria further exacerbates the problem, as students across both contexts struggle to access the support they need. This study, therefore, aims to address these gaps by examining the psychological outcomes of students in conflict-affected and secure regions.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

This study conducted a comparative analysis of the psychological outcomes between students in conflict-affected and secured regions in Delta State, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to:

1. Compare the prevalence of anxiety and depression between students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State.
2. Compare the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional distress between students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State.

Research Question

1. To what extent is anxiety and depression prevalent among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State?
2. To what extent is the post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional distress severe among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State?

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between the prevalence of anxiety and depression among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State.

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional distress among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State.

Methodology

The study adopted a Correlational design. A population of 28,065 students was used for the study, which comprised 2,645 students from 8 secondary schools in conflict-affected LGAs in Warri South-West, and 25,423 students from 15 secondary schools in secured LGAs in Sapele. The sample size of 394 students was determined using the Taro Yamane formula for sample size calculation. The cluster sampling technique was employed to ensure representation from various schools in both conflict-affected and secured regions. The cluster sampling technique was considered appropriate due to logistical constraints and safety concerns in conflict-affected areas, allowing for a more feasible data collection process. A researcher-developed questionnaire titled Psychological Outcome Questionnaire (POQ) was used to collect data on psychological issues, such as anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder. The foregoing psychological issues were chosen because they can significantly impact overall well-being both during and after exposure to conflict situations. The survey used a four-point scale to measure responses, with options ranging from Strongly Agree (4 points) to Strongly Disagree (1 point). An expert in Measurement and Evaluation evaluated the questionnaire to ensure its content validity. The questionnaire showed good internal consistency with a reliability coefficient of 0.831, determined through Cronbach's alpha analysis. The regression analysis was used to answer and test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: To what extent is anxiety and depression prevalent among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State?

Table 1: Summary of regression coefficient of the extent to which anxiety and depression prevalent among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State

Elements of Psychological Outcomes	Coefficients ^a			
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
*CAR (n=92)				
(Constant)	3.050	.061		49.604
Anxiety	.036	.003	.429	11.357
Depression	.039	.003	.444	11.752

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**SR	(Constant)	2.018	.243		8.288
(n=302)	Anxiety	-.003	.011	-.018	-.306
	Depression	-.008	.012	-.041	-.711

*CAR – Conflict-Affected Region

**Secured Region

Table 1 shows the extent to which anxiety and depression are prevalent among students in CAR and secured regions SR in Delta State, Nigeria. The result indicated that for students in CAR, the constant value (3.050) indicates a high baseline level of psychological distress in this group. Anxiety has a positive relationship with psychological outcomes ($B = 0.036$, $\beta = 0.429$, $t = 11.357$). Depression also has a positive relationship with psychological outcomes ($B = 0.039$, $\beta = 0.444$, $t = 11.752$), implying that increased depression levels contribute significantly to psychological distress. The strong coefficients indicate that students in conflict-affected regions experience high levels of anxiety and depression, which are key predictors of their psychological outcomes. For students in SR, the constant value (2.018) is lower than in conflict-affected regions, suggesting that baseline psychological distress is lower among students in secured areas. Anxiety shows a negative relationship with psychological outcomes ($B = -0.003$, $\beta = -0.018$, $t = -0.306$). Depression also has a negative relationship ($B = -0.008$, $\beta = -0.041$, $t = -0.711$), meaning that depression does not impact psychological distress among students in secured regions.

Research Question 2: To what extent is the post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional distress severe among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State?

Table 2: Summary of regression coefficient of the extent to which the post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional distress severe among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State

Elements of Psychological Outcomes		Coefficients ^a			
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
*CAR	(Constant)	3.060	.061		50.188
(n=92)	PTSD	-.040	.003	-.480	-13.430
	Emotional Distress	-.035	.003	-.434	-12.132
**SR	(Constant)	1.398	1.267		1.104
(n=302)	PTSD	.017	.039	.048	.447
	Emotional Distress	-.009	.046	-.021	-.193

*CAR – Conflict-Affected Region

**Secured Region

Table 2 show the extent to which PTSD and emotional distress are severe among students in CAR and those in SR in Delta State. The result indicated that; for students in CAR, the constant value of 3.060 suggests that, on average, psychological distress levels are high among students in conflict-affected regions. PTSD has a negative effect ($B = -0.040$, $\beta = -0.480$, $t = -13.430$), indicating that as PTSD symptoms increase, students experience a severe decline in psychological well-being. Emotional distress also has a negative impact ($B = -0.035$, $\beta = -0.434$, $t = -12.132$), suggesting that heightened emotional distress is associated with severe psychological struggles among students in conflict-affected regions. Findings for students in SR, the constant value (1.398) of the baseline psychological distress levels among students in secured regions are relatively low and not significantly different from zero. PTSD shows a weak relationship with psychological distress ($B = 0.017$, $\beta = 0.048$, $t = 0.447$), suggesting that PTSD symptoms do not affect students in secured regions. Emotional distress also has a low effect ($B = -0.009$, $\beta = -0.021$, $t = -0.193$), indicating that students in secured regions do not experience severe emotional distress.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between the prevalence of anxiety and depression among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State.

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Table 3: Model summary of regression analysis on the relationship between the prevalence of anxiety and depression among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.737 ^a	.543	.540	.287

a. Predictors: (Constant), Depression, Anxiety

Table 4: ANOVA summary of regression analysis

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	38.259	2	19.129	231.857	.000 ^b
	Residual	32.259	391	.083		
	Total	70.518	393			

a. Dependent Variable: Region

b. Predictors: (Constant), Depression, Anxiety

The model summary of Table 3 shows that the R value of 0.737 indicates a strong positive correlation between anxiety, depression, and the region where students reside. The R Square (0.543) suggests that 54.3% of the variance in students' region (conflict-affected or secured) is explained by the prevalence of anxiety and depression. The Adjusted R Square (0.540) confirms that after accounting for potential model overfitting, 54.0% of the variance is still explained by the predictors, making the model reliable. Also, the ANOVA summary of Table 3b shows that the F-value of 231.857 is significantly high, indicating that the model as a whole is a good fit. The p-value < 0.05, meaning the relationship between anxiety, depression, and students' regional classification is statistically significant. Thus, null hypothesis one is rejected.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional distress among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State.

Table 5: Model summary of regression analysis on the relationship between the severity of post-traumatic stress disorder and emotional distress among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.742 ^a	.550	.548	.285

a. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Distress, PTSD

Table 6: ANOVA summary of regression analysis

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	38.802	2	19.401	239.177	.000 ^b
	Residual	31.716	391	.081		
	Total	70.518	393			

a. Dependent Variable: Region

b. Predictors: (Constant), Emotional Distress, PTSD

The model summary of Table 4a shows that the R value of 0.742 indicates a strong positive correlation between PTSD severity, emotional distress, and the region where students reside. The R Square (0.550) suggests that 55.0% of the variance in students' region (conflict-affected or secured) is explained by the prevalence of PTSD severity and emotional distress. The Adjusted R

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Comparative Assessment of Psychological Outcomes between ... Ekedama, K. & Obiunu, J. (2025) Square (0.548) confirms that after accounting for potential model overfitting, 54.8% of the variance is still explained by the predictors, making the model reliable.

Also, the ANOVA summary of Table 4b shows that the F-value of 239.177 is significantly high, indicating that the model as a whole is a good fit. The p-value < 0.05, meaning the relationship between PTSD severity, emotional distress, and students' regional classification is statistically significant. Thus, null hypothesis two is rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The first research question found that students in conflict-affected regions experience high levels of anxiety and depression, which are key predictors of their psychological outcomes. On the other hand, anxiety and depression also has a negative relationship, meaning that anxiety and depression does not impact psychological distress among students in secured regions. Furthermore, hypothesis one showed that the relationship between anxiety, depression, and students' regional classification is statistically significant. This aligns with research conducted by Alotaibi (2021), which showed that there are statistically significant differences between those who lived at the time of war and those who did not live (in favor of those who lived at the time of war) in the level of future anxiety.

The result of research question two revealed that PTSD and emotional distress also has a negative impact, suggesting that heightened PTSD and emotional distress is associated with severe psychological struggles among students in conflict-affected regions. On the other hand, PTSD symptoms and emotional distress has a low effect among students in secured regions, indicating that students in secured regions do not experience severe emotional distress. Furthermore, hypothesis two showed that the relationship between PTSD severity, emotional distress, and students' regional classification is statistically significant. This aligns with research conducted by Alotaibi (2021), which showed that there are also statistically significant differences between those exposed to harm or their family because of the war and those who were not exposed (in favour of those who were exposed) in the level of future anxiety as a whole.

Conclusion

This study conducted a comparative analysis of psychological outcomes between students in conflict-affected and secure regions in Delta State. The findings revealed a significant relationship between the prevalence of anxiety and depression among students in conflict-affected regions and those in secured regions in Delta State. The findings suggest that students in conflict-affected areas experience significantly different levels of anxiety and depression compared to those in secured regions. Furthermore, there is a significant relationship between the severity of PTSD and emotional distress among students in conflict-affected and secured regions in Delta State. The findings suggest that students in conflict-affected regions are likely to experience higher levels of emotional distress due to increased PTSD severity. These disparities underscore the profound impact of environmental factors, such as exposure to violence, displacement, and instability, on the mental health of students in conflict-affected areas. The findings highlight the urgent need for targeted mental health interventions, psychosocial support programs, and policies aimed at mitigating the adverse effects of conflict on students' psychological well-being. Based on the findings, this study concludes that addressing the issues is critical not only for improving the mental health of students in conflict-affected regions but also for fostering their academic performance, social integration, and long-term personal development.

Recommendations

The study recommended as follows:

- i. Delta State government should prioritize mental health support services in conflict-affected regions and implement targeted interventions to address the psychological issues faced by students in these areas.
- ii. To manage the severity of the psychological issues, the government should engage with local community leaders and organizations to provide holistic support to students in conflict-affected regions, including counselling, trauma-informed care, and psychosocial support.

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Prevalence and Underlying Factors of Test Anxiety in English and Communication Skills among Nigerian University Freshmen: Counselling Implications

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Abstract

This study investigates the prevalence and underlying factors of test anxiety among freshmen at Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria (MAAUN) during English and Communication Skills examinations. Employing a cross-sectional design, the research involved 157 students selected through stratified random sampling from a population of 1,010 freshmen. The Language and Communication Test Anxiety Scale (LACTAS), a validated 20-item instrument, was used to measure anxiety levels. Results revealed that 15.9% of participants experienced test anxiety, with a moderate mean anxiety level of 2.00 (SD = 0.535). Key contributing factors included fear of failing the course, concerns about academic performance, and uncertainty regarding exam formats. Regression analysis highlighted significant relationships between test anxiety and both academic and personal factors, accounting for 99.3% of the variance. The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions, such as counseling services and language support programs, to mitigate test anxiety and enhance academic outcomes. This study contributes to the limited literature on test anxiety in Nigerian higher education and offers practical recommendations for fostering a supportive learning environment.

Keywords: Psychological Well-being, Examination Stress, Language Proficiency Anxiety, Counseling Interventions, Cross-Sectional Study

Introduction

Test anxiety is a pervasive psychological phenomenon that significantly impacts academic performance, particularly in high-stakes examinations (Maier et al., 2021). It manifests as excessive worry, fear, or apprehension experienced by students before, during, or after tests, often impairing their ability to perform at their best (Ur Rehman et al., 2021). This issue is especially pronounced among university freshmen, who must navigate the transition to a more rigorous academic environment while adapting to unfamiliar examination formats (Haruna et al., 2023). In Nigeria, where English and Communication Skills are fundamental to academic success, test anxiety in these subjects can have profound implications for students' educational and professional futures (Moses et al., 2018). The Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria, Kano, like many Nigerian institutions, has seen a notable increase in student enrollment, intensifying academic competition and pressure (Obiakor & Malu, 2020). Freshmen, particularly those in their first year, encounter numerous stressors, including demanding coursework, heightened expectations, and the necessity to demonstrate proficiency in English—the primary medium of instruction (Nzube, 2023). For students from diverse linguistic backgrounds, language-related anxiety compounds the challenges of test-taking, creating additional barriers to success (Pachaiappan et al., 2023a). These cumulative pressures contribute to heightened test anxiety, which, if unaddressed, can undermine academic achievement and long-term career prospects. Despite its prevalence, research on test anxiety among Nigerian university students, particularly freshmen, remains limited, with few studies focusing on the specific pressures associated with English and Communication Skills examinations (Oladipo & Ogungbamila, 2013). Existing literature highlights the influence of sociocultural factors, such as parental expectations and societal attitudes toward academic achievement, in exacerbating test anxiety (Bedu-Addo & Ficus, 2023). Institutional challenges, including inadequate learning facilities and overcrowded lecture halls, further create an environment that fosters stress and anxiety (Haruna et al., 2023). Cognitive and emotional dimensions, such as fear of failure and low self-efficacy, also play a critical role, necessitating targeted interventions to support affected students (Bashir et al., 2019).

Theoretical frameworks provide essential insights into the mechanisms underlying test anxiety. Cognitive interference theory suggests that anxiety disrupts the cognitive processes necessary for effective language comprehension and expression during examinations (Sarason, 1984). Arousal theory, on the other hand, posits that excessive physiological arousal can impair performance, while multidimensional anxiety theory distinguishes between cognitive worry (excessive negative thoughts) and somatic symptoms (physical manifestations of anxiety) (Spielberger, 2010; Martens et al., 1990). Processing efficiency theory emphasizes how anxiety affects the allocation of cognitive resources, and social-evaluative anxiety theory underscores the fear of negative judgment from peers and instructors (Eysenck & Calvo, 1992; Leary, 1983). Together, these theories illustrate the complex, multifaceted nature of test anxiety, particularly in language-based assessments where

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Prevalence and Underlying Factors of Test Anxiety in ... Abubakar, S. H. & Yakubu, A. A. (2025) cognitive and emotional demands are heightened. Recent empirical studies have documented the widespread prevalence of test anxiety among university students. Research indicates that a substantial proportion of students experience moderate to high levels of anxiety during examinations (Tsegay et al., 2019). For example, a study by Pachiappan et al. (2023b) found that 46% of students reported low anxiety, while 20% experienced high anxiety, with gender and ethnicity emerging as significant predictors. Similarly, Kavakci et al. (2014a) observed that 48% of students preparing for university entrance examinations exhibited test anxiety, with higher rates among female students. These findings highlight the urgent need for comprehensive interventions that address both the academic and psychological dimensions of test anxiety.

Moreover, the consequences of unmanaged test anxiety extend beyond immediate academic performance. Chronic test anxiety can lead to diminished self-confidence, avoidance behaviors, and even long-term disengagement from academic pursuits (Zeidner, 1998). In the Nigerian context, where academic success is often closely tied to socioeconomic mobility, the stakes are particularly high. Students who struggle with test anxiety may find themselves at a disadvantage, perpetuating cycles of underperformance and missed opportunities (Akinade, 2015). Therefore, understanding and mitigating test anxiety is not merely an academic concern but a critical step toward fostering equitable educational outcomes. In nutshell, test anxiety among university freshmen, particularly in English and Communication Skills examinations, is a pressing issue that warrants greater attention from educators, policymakers, and mental health professionals. The interplay of cognitive, emotional, sociocultural, and institutional factors creates a complex web of challenges that students must navigate. By integrating theoretical insights with empirical findings, stakeholders can develop more effective strategies to support students in overcoming test anxiety.

Objectives of the Study

The study is poised to achieve the following objectives:

1. To examine the prevalence of test anxiety in English and Communication Skills among freshmen at Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria, Kano.
2. To examine the relationship between personal and academic factors, and prevalence of test anxiety during English and Communication Skills examinations among freshmen.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: The mean score of test anxiety prevalence among freshmen during English and Communication Skills exams is not significantly different from the hypothesized population mean (cut-off mean).

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between academic and personal factors, collectively, and the levels of test anxiety experienced by freshmen during the examination.

Methodology

This study focuses on level 100 students at MAAUN, aiming to explore the prevalence, causes, and counselling implications of test anxiety during English and Communication Skills examinations. By examining academic, personal, and sociocultural factors, the research seeks to inform tailored interventions that alleviate anxiety and enhance academic performance. The findings will contribute to the broader discourse on test anxiety in Nigerian higher education, offering practical recommendations for educators, counsellors, and policymakers. Ultimately, the study aspires to foster a supportive learning environment that empowers freshmen to overcome test anxiety and achieve their academic potential. The study employed a cross-sectional design to investigate the prevalence of test anxiety among level 100 students at Maryam Abacha American University of Nigeria (MAAUN). This approach was chosen for its efficiency in capturing a snapshot of students' experiences at a single point in time, aligning with the need for timely interventions (Polit & Beck, 2017). The target population comprised 1,010 freshmen across four schools, with a sample of 157 students selected using stratified random sampling to ensure representation across academic programs and age groups (Bryman, 2016). Ethical considerations were prioritized, with informed consent obtained to ensure voluntary participation and transparency about the study's objectives and procedures (Yip et al., 2016). To measure test anxiety, the Language and Communication Test Anxiety Scale (LACTAS) was developed, consisting of 20 items rated on a 4-point Likert scale. The scale's validity was confirmed through Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), demonstrating strong psychometric properties (Nye, 2023). Content validity was further ensured by expert reviews from English Language and psychology specialists, yielding a high Cohen's kappa coefficient of 0.86 (Gunnarsson, 2024). Internal consistency was robust, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.91, indicating high reliability (Barbera et al., 2021). Statistical analyses included a one-sample t-test to compare anxiety scores against a hypothesized mean, multiple linear regression to explore the combined influence of academic and personal factors, and ANOVA/ANCOVA to examine variations across academic programs and age groups (Hair et al., 2014). The significance level was set at 0.05, with ethical adherence to confidentiality and participant welfare throughout. This methodology provided a comprehensive framework for understanding test anxiety among MAAUN freshmen, offering actionable insights for targeted interventions.

Presentation of Results

The analysis of data offers insights into the prevalence levels of test anxiety among freshmen during English and Communication Skills examinations, accompanied by pertinent statistical measures. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of the psychological well-being of university students during academic assessments.

Research Question 1

What is the prevalence of test anxiety among freshmen during English and Communication Skills examination?

Table 1: Summary of ratings of freshmen on Test Anxiety during English and Communication Skills Exams (N=157)

Test Anxiety	With Test Anxiety	Without Test Anxiety	Sample Mean	SD
Prevalence Level	25 (15.9)	132 (84.1)	2.00	0.535

The analysis of data offers insights into the prevalence levels of test anxiety among freshmen during English and Communication Skills examinations, accompanied by pertinent statistical measures. These findings contribute to a broader understanding of the psychological well-being of university students during academic assessments. Among the sampled freshmen, 15.9%, equivalent to 25 students, report experiencing test anxiety, aligning with existing literature highlighting the prevalence of test anxiety among college students (Haruna et al., 2023; Hembree, 1988; Cassady & Johnson, 2002). Conversely, the majority of freshmen, accounting for 84.1%, report not experiencing test anxiety during their examinations. The calculated sample mean of 2.00 suggests a moderate average level of test anxiety within the entire sample, falling within the mid-range of the scale. This indicates that, on average, freshmen experience a moderate level of anxiety during English and Communication Skills examinations, consistent with the general understanding that academic assessments can evoke a certain degree of anxiety among students (Maier et al., 2021; Chapell et al., 2005). The reported standard deviation of 0.535 implies relatively low variability in test anxiety scores within the sample, suggesting a degree of consistency in reported anxiety levels among freshmen and highlighting the reliability of the overall mean as a representative measure of central tendency (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The specified cut-off mean of 2.5 serves as a reference point for categorizing test anxiety levels. In short, this data sheds light on the prevalence and characteristics of test anxiety among freshmen during English and Communication Skills examinations. The findings provide valuable insights for educators and support services to tailor interventions addressing varying levels of anxiety, ultimately contributing to the enhancement of the overall academic experience for freshmen.

Hypothesis 1

The mean score of test anxiety prevalence among freshmen during English and Communication Skills exams is not significantly different from the hypothesized population mean (cut-off mean).

To further comprehend the nuanced significance of the prevalence of test anxiety in this context, a corresponding null hypothesis which states that: the mean score of the anxiety level of freshmen during English and Communication Skills exams is not significantly different from the hypothesized population mean (cut-off mean) was analyzed using one-sample t-test, and the result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: One-sample t-test analysis on significance of the prevalence level of test anxiety during English and Communication Skills exams (Hypothesized mean=2.5)

Test Anxiety	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	t-value	df	Sig.
Prevalence Level	157	2.00	0.535	-11.624	156	0.000

In Table 2, the mean anxiety score among the 157 freshmen was found to be 2.00, with a standard deviation of 0.535. The one-sample t-test revealed a t-value of -11.624, with 156 degrees of freedom. The resulting p-value was 0.000, indicating statistical significance. The negative t-value implies that the observed mean anxiety score of 2.00 is lower than the hypothesized population mean of 2.5. The low p-value reinforces the conclusion that this difference is not likely due to random chance, indicating a statistically significant lower level of anxiety among freshmen during English and Communication Skills exams compared to the hypothesized population mean. This finding aligns with the literature on test anxiety, emphasizing the prevalence of anxiety among college students (Manko Umar & Haruna, 2021; Pachaiappan et al., 2023b). The results underscore the importance of considering these findings in the context of interventions and support services aimed at addressing test anxiety among freshmen, contributing to a more nuanced understanding of the psychological well-being of students during academic assessments.

Research Question 2

What are the factors influencing the prevalence of test anxiety levels of freshmen during English and Communication Skills examination?

Understanding the factors that contribute to test anxiety among freshmen during English and Communication Skills examinations is crucial for developing effective support systems and interventions (Bedu-Addo & Ficus, 2023). This study sought to answer the question as thus: What are the factors influencing the prevalence of test anxiety levels of freshmen during English and Communication Skills examination? In order to adequately answer the question, descriptive statistics were used to explore various aspects of participants responses to the items of the scale based on mean scores and standard deviations presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Mean score per test anxiety Item (Cut-off mean= 2.5)

Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision
Not fully prepared for the exam	157	1.70	.820	Low
Afraid of failing the course	157	2.46	1.124	Moderate
Afraid of parents'/guardian's anger	157	2.46	1.077	Low
Afraid of friends' mockery	157	1.85	.946	Low
Afraid of carrying over the course	157	2.54	1.146	High

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Lack of reading materials	157	1.59	.742	Low
Have difficulty in understanding the courses	157	2.04	.894	Moderate
Having problem with remembering	157	2.08	.874	Moderate
Not having enough time for reading the notes	157	1.99	.873	Low
Lack of electricity to engage in reading	157	1.78	.803	Low
Not aware of the format of the exam	157	2.45	1.034	Moderate
No samples of past questions to practice on	157	2.24	1.051	Moderate
Not aware of area of concentration	157	2.24	.950	Moderate
No study group to revise with	157	1.94	.845	Low
Can't find the right book in the library to read	157	1.83	.856	Low
Late admission	157	1.75	.875	Low
Lecturers are tough	157	1.83	.750	Low
Sickness	157	1.65	.783	Low
Hatred for the exam	157	1.53	.675	Low
Always afraid of the exams	157	2.10	1.045	Moderate
Valid N (listwise)	157	2.00	0.535	Moderate

The analysis in Table 3 shows that low anxiety levels are associated with factors such as feeling unprepared for the exam (Mean = 1.70) and lacking reading materials (Mean = 1.59) (Tsegay et al., 2019). Moderate anxiety levels are observed for concerns related to academic performance, including the fear of failing the course (Mean = 2.46) and difficulty understanding the courses (Mean = 2.04) (Pachaiappan et al., 2023b). Emotional factors contribute to anxiety, with fear of parents' or guardian's anger (Mean = 2.46) and the fear of friends' mockery (Mean = 1.85) influencing anxiety levels (Maier et al., 2021). Moderate anxiety levels are associated with uncertainty, such as not being aware of the exam format (Mean = 2.45) and having no samples of past questions to practice on (Mean = 2.24) (Bashir et al., 2019). Logistical challenges, like late admission (Mean = 1.75) and difficulty finding the right book in the library to read (Mean = 1.83), are linked to low anxiety levels (Roy et al., 2022). Personal factors, including sickness (Mean = 1.65) and a general feeling of hatred for exams (Mean = 1.53), are also associated with low anxiety levels (Kavakci et al., 2014b). This examination of factors influencing test anxiety levels provides valuable insights for educators and support services. Addressing these factors through targeted interventions can contribute to a more positive testing environment for freshmen, ultimately enhancing their overall academic experience (Memon et al., 2023). As shown in the table above, a substantial number of anxiety-inducing factors, such as not being fully prepared for exams, fear of parents' or guardian's anger, and lack of reading materials, are categorized as "Low," implying that these concerns are generally not pronounced among the sampled freshmen. Furthermore, the prevalence of moderate test anxiety is observed in specific areas, including fears of failing a course, difficulties in understanding courses, and concerns about time constraints for reading notes. These moderate-level anxiety factors suggest that, while overall anxiety is low, there are specific aspects of academic life that evoke a more moderate degree of concern among the freshmen. However, the analysis highlights one area of higher anxiety categorized as "High," particularly related to the fear of carrying over the courses.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between academic and personal factors, collectively, and the levels of test anxiety experienced by freshmen during the examination.

In order to test the null hypothesis on whether there is a significant relationship between academic and personal factors, collectively, and the levels of test anxiety experienced by freshmen during the examination, Multiple Linear Regression analysis was employed. The statistical results strongly affirm the research hypothesis that posits a significant relationship between the collective influence of academic and personal factors and the levels of test anxiety experienced by freshmen. This conclusion is supported by a comprehensive analysis of the model's key metrics as presented in Tables 4, 5 and 6.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.997 ^a	.993	.993	.044

a. Predictors: (Constant), Personal Factors, Academic Factors

The model's exceptionally high R Square value of 0.993 indicates that an overwhelming 99.3% of the variability in test anxiety levels among freshmen is accounted for by the combination of academic and personal factors. This aligns with existing literature emphasizing the multifaceted nature of test anxiety and its intricate relationship with various psychological and environmental factors (Tahmasbipour & Ahmady, 2011). The Adjusted R Square remains at 0.993, reinforcing the model's robust explanatory power while considering the number of predictors. This signifies that the inclusion of academic and personal factors significantly contributes to the model's effectiveness in explaining test anxiety variations (Tan et al., 2023). The low standard error of the estimate (0.044) further bolsters the reliability of the model. This small standard error indicates a precise fit, affirming the accuracy of the predicted values in relation to the actual test anxiety scores (Thiriveedhi et al., 2023).

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	44.387	2	22.194	11448.207	.000 ^b
	Residual	.299	154	.002		
	Total	44.686	156			

a. Dependent Variable: Test Anxiety b. Predictors: (Constant), Personal Factors, Academic Factors

The ANOVA results provide additional support for the research hypothesis. The highly significant F-statistic (11448.207) and associated p-value of 0.000 underscore the model's overall significance, confirming that the regression model is effective in explaining the variance in test anxiety levels (Haruna et al., 2023).

Table 6: Regression Analysis Table

Variable	B	SE	t	p	%CI
(Constant)	-.013	.014		-.915	.362
Academic Factors	.585	.011	.599	54.366	.000
Personal Factors	.436	.011	.450	40.889	.000

Examining the coefficients, the academic and personal factors play substantial roles in influencing test anxiety levels. The standardized coefficients (Beta) of 0.599 for academic factors and 0.450 for personal factors indicate the strength and direction of these relationships. These findings align with prior research highlighting the intricate connections between academic stressors, personal factors, and test anxiety (Pachaiappan et al., 2023a). The practical significance of these results is evident, as both academic and personal factors emerge as crucial contributors to understanding and predicting test anxiety. This supports the practical implications discussed in existing literature, emphasizing the need for comprehensive interventions that address both academic and personal aspects to effectively alleviate test anxiety (Setyowati et al., 2020).

Counselling Implications

The findings of this study highlight several critical counselling implications for addressing test anxiety among Nigerian university freshmen during English and Communication Skills examinations. Given that 15.9% of students reported experiencing test anxiety, with fear of failing, uncertainty about exam formats, and academic pressures as key contributors, targeted interventions are essential (Haruna et al., 2023). Cognitive-behavioural strategies can be particularly effective, as they align with cognitive interference theory, which posits that anxiety disrupts language processing during exams (Sarason, 1984). Counsellors should focus on helping students reframe negative thought patterns, such as fear of failure or carrying over courses, which were identified as high-anxiety triggers (Pachaiappan et al., 2023b). Additionally, psychoeducational workshops could demystify exam formats and provide practical study techniques, addressing the moderate anxiety linked to unpreparedness and lack of past questions (Bashir et al., 2019).

Social-evaluative anxiety theory underscores the role of peer and parental judgment in exacerbating anxiety (Leary, 1983), suggesting that group counselling or peer-support programs may mitigate feelings of isolation and mockery. Furthermore, institutional support, such as accessible language labs and tutoring, can alleviate language-related anxiety, particularly for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds (Nzube, 2023). The strong predictive relationship between academic/personal factors and anxiety (accounting for 99.3% of variance) reinforces the need for holistic counselling approaches that address both academic stressors and emotional well-being (Tsegay et al., 2019). Finally, collaboration between counsellors and educators to clarify exam expectations and reduce logistical barriers (e.g., access to materials) can create a more supportive learning environment (Obiakor & Malu, 2020). By integrating these strategies, universities can foster resilience and improve academic outcomes for anxious freshmen.

Conclusion

The study on test anxiety among Nigerian university freshmen during English and Communication Skills examinations reveals a moderate prevalence of anxiety, with 15.9% of students reporting significant distress. Key factors contributing to this anxiety include fear of failing, uncertainty about exam formats, and concerns about academic performance. The research highlights the interconnected influence of academic and personal factors, with logistical challenges and emotional stressors further exacerbating the issue. Despite the moderate overall anxiety levels, specific areas, such as the fear of carrying over courses, evoke higher distress. The findings underscore the need for targeted interventions, including counseling services, language support programs, and improved assessment practices, to alleviate anxiety and foster a supportive learning environment. By addressing these factors, educators and policymakers can enhance students' academic experiences and performance. This study contributes valuable insights to the limited literature on test anxiety in the Nigerian context, offering practical recommendations for mitigating its impact and promoting student well-being.

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Recommendations

1. Universities should offer counseling services to help students manage test anxiety, focusing on stress-reduction techniques and emotional support.
2. Educators can reduce anxiety by clarifying exam formats, sharing past questions, and offering study guides to help students feel more prepared.
3. Promoting collaborative learning through study groups can help students build confidence and reduce feelings of isolation before exams.
4. Since English proficiency is a concern, additional language workshops and tutoring should be provided to help students improve their communication skills.
5. Addressing logistical challenges (e.g., access to study materials, electricity for reading) can minimize stress and improve focus.

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Qualitative Study on Generation 'Z' Digital Age and its impacts on Students at tertiary level of Education in Nigeria: A Review

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Abstract

Generation Z is born and raised between 1995 and today with the social web. They are digital centric and technology is their identity. This generation will be entering into the society/world of work in the years to come but little is known in Nigeria of this generation about their characteristics, needs, attributes and the role of institutions of learning to properly position them for the world of work. They seem to have different attitudes towards work than the previous generations. Without proper understanding of this generation, organizations will find it difficult to hire and retain them for the sustainable growth of the organizations. By understanding them, the companies can determine what can impact their recruitment and retention success through paying attention to what makes this generation tick in the workplace. This paper therefore, examines the characteristics and preferences for engaging Generation Z learners for impactful learning experiences and smooth transition from school to the world of work. Conclusively, the study concludes among others that mentorship; stable internet connectivity and multi-media devices should form integral teaching and learning procedures for educating generation Z to capture their attention.

Keywords: Generation Z, Education, Strategic, Teaching, Workplace.

Introduction

In every economy, the role of education cannot be overemphasized. The development of any nation is as a result of the strong educational structure of the nation. The products of the educational processes serve as the input human resources that employers will feed on. Therefore, the educational processes provide the needed manpower to drive the economy. However, while employers are finding it hard to identify and realize the needs of the Generation X and Y in the 21st century, there is a now completely new generation i.e., Generation Z to work with. Generation Z are children born between 1995 to date. The challenges of the organizations are not only to serve the Generations X and Y, but also to foresee the workplace needs of the rising Generation Z so that groups comprising of different generations can work effectively (Knoll, 2014). Researchers have demonstrated that each generation has different attitudes towards work and workplace (CIPD, 2008).

In Nigeria, little is known of this Generation Z about their characteristics, needs, attributes and work style. Therefore, employers should anticipate workplace needs and change their strategy for recruiting, motivating and retaining these emerging young workers who will be arriving very soon from the educational institutions. It is crucial to understand them, to keep talent from the newest generation and realize their benefits to sustain the growth of the organizations. By understanding the characteristics and the preferences of the Generation Z, recruiters will be able to attract and connect them in order to groom them to become the future leaders of the company. Without this proper understanding, organisations will find it difficult in recruiting and retaining the best talented candidates of the Generation Z and will also fail to motivate and inspire them which in turn will impact the organizational performances.

In order to make the most of academic opportunities, educational institutions must consider the dispositions and needs of their students. Effective instructors often invest significant effort to understand, teach, and support their students who seem younger (and perhaps more “foreign”) each year. Most active university faculty is Baby Boomers and Generation-Xers (a.k.a. Busters) who are now teaching primarily Gen-Y and Z undergraduate students. Bridging the possible divide between older and younger

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generations can be stimulating and affords an opportunity to rethink of whom the current students are and what they need and want as learners and how they can be impacted positively.

Generation 'Z' Generation

Gen Zers were born between the years 1995 to date. They follow other generations, who also impacted society in various ways, such as the Veterans (1925-1944), Baby Boomers (1945-1964), Generation X (1965-1980), and Generation Y (1981-1995). Each of these groups is extremely distinct when considering values, goals, and ideals. Each new generation has been associated with various characteristics and traits that loosely define them as a cohesive group (McCrindle, 2016). These associated characteristics are based on the economic conditions, cultural norms, technological advances, and world events, all helping to shape the thoughts and views of each generation. Education/training being the vehicle that inculcates the values will be very relevant and out to strategize for better productivity.

How is Generation Z different from previous generations?

1. They have never known a world without Internet, cell phones, or iPods.
2. They are tech savvy and in constant contact with people 24/7 using Facebook, Twitter 2go, and other social media platforms.
3. They want technology that is easy to use and will solve their problems, help coordinate their activities, or provide them with relevant people or information.
4. Their brains are affected by Internet use. They find answers to questions in Google and YouTube, but they lack the critical thinking skills to evaluate sources.
5. They have low/no tolerance for being without digital resources.
6. They have never had to use a library card catalogue or going through shelves to find a specific book.
7. They don't use wristwatches or alarm clocks except those with Bluetooth because they use their smartphones for that most times.
8. Instead of reading an article, they want to watch a video (YouTube) that summarizes it.
9. They may never send an email: [that is "so yesterday"]. Why email when you can text, instant message, tweet or FaceBook?
10. They use a texting "slanguage." Examples: Cray Cray (when life is too crazy for one word), Probs (other generations say probably), Totes (used to show agreement—totally), XOXOX (used to end any text. For Baby Boomers it means sincerely yours), V (very) and I (because I am the center of everything).

Generation Z also known as Gen Zers, and Digital natives. The use of fast-paced multimedia technology has had an impact on their learning expectations and values in a number of ways. Fast foods are not left out of their lives since services for them are also interneted. Below are some concepts credited to Gen Z thinkers:

First, there is a noticeable difference in the shortened attention span of these learners.

This generation has been exposed to a constant stream of short segments of information and clips not more than 6 seconds to 5 minutes including Facebook posts and you-tube videos. As described by Darla Rothman, "With online text, learners now spend about eight seconds picking hyperlinked keywords to find answers instead of reading the whole text, which calculates to 4.4 seconds per 200 words of text" (Rothman, n.d.). As a result, they often exhibit what John Raley of Harvard Medical School coined as "acquired attention deficit disorder" (Fudin, 2012). A related noticeable impact is on the ability of these learners to concentrate and focus longer, on more complex problems or get involved solving problems.

Second, the use of multimedia devices has resulted in an increased development of the visual ability portion of these learners' cognitive functions

Visual forms of learning, such as picture, video games, and videos seem to be more interesting to these learners and more effective. Rothman, again, details this observation thus: Some research has shown that the brains of Generation Z (Digital Natives) are structurally different than those of earlier generations. This has nothing to do with genetics and everything to do with how they use their brains to respond to things in the environment. The brains of Generation Zs have become wired to sophisticated, complex visual imagery. As a result, the part of the brain responsible for visual ability is far more developed, making visual forms of learning more effective, while auditory learning (lecture and discussion) is very strongly disliked by this age group. Interactive games, collaborative projects, advance organizers, challenges, and anything that they can try and see are appreciated best (Rothman, n.d.).

Third, Gen Zers' easy access to information creates an expectation of instant results and constant feedback

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They expect answers immediately and may often not want to spend the time to ensure the legitimacy or reliability of the sources they find (Fudin, 2012). Gen Zers' familiarity with technology has also provided them with positive traits. To this group of students, technology is not something to be feared, but an accustomed tool to embrace. Gen Zers are not afraid to try new things, experiment, or explore. They take opportunities to research whatever interests them, often online. They do not fear connecting globally with others, and are more tolerant of cultural differences (Fudin, 2012).

Gen Zers have grown up amid the economic decline in world markets that mark the Great Recession. They have experienced a post 9/11 world with reports of on-going terrorist attacks. They have grown up in an environment where school violence of a horrific scale is now not an uncommon phenomenon. These events have made Gen Zers more cautious and security prone. Thus, hardship and security has given them most of their personality.

Societal Factors: Shaping Behaviors and Thoughts Regarding Threats, Risks, and Hazards

The ways in which people are raised and the environments that surround them have significant influence on how individuals learn, behave, and interact. Parents are the first influencers, beginning when children enter the world. As a child grows and is exposed to various societal and environmental factors, his or her social skills and behavioral traits develop and grow with the child. Although no two individuals are identical, generational groups tend to experience common external influencers (e.g., disasters) that formulate broad general characteristics for entire age groups. They feel special/unique and do not know how to loss well. These influencers and the traits are:

Parental influencers

Parenting styles certainly contribute to the ways in which members of each generation view the world around them. The majority of those in Generation Z are being raised by Generation X parents (born 1965–1980), which differ from Millennials' Baby Boomer parents (born 1946–1964) in several key ways:

- (a) As a much smaller population than the Baby Boomers, Generation X does not have as well-defined generational characteristics;
- (b) Many in Generation X grew up with two working parents, so balancing work and family is instilled early; and
- (c) The independence they had during their youth is reflected in Generation X's parenting style (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

Unlike some generational groups before them, members of Generation Z group view their parents as role models and mentors they can confide in and trust to guide them in the right direction when faced with difficult tasks and decisions (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Therefore teaching/attracting the attention of this generation demands that, Coaches and teachers use mentoring or guiding approaches, rather than enforcing and influencing approaches, in order to play significant roles in the lives Generation Z members, reach their goals and objectives (Short, 2014). Unlike previous generations, political leaders, celebrities, and professional athletes do not have the interpersonal connection that this generation craves and thus fewer of them look to these public figures as role models (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). With a strong mentoring foundation, Generation Z would be more grounded and independent, with a stronger work ethic and desire to solve problems, than its Millennial predecessor (Wiedmer, 2015).

Social skills and behavioral traits

The term "social skills" encompasses five unique parts that employers rank highly: coordination, instruction, persuasion, service orientation, and social perceptiveness (Kick et al., 2015). In the case of Generation Z, an over reliance on technological devices and social media can hinder the development of some social skills. However, not many things are inherently bad, so technology could actually introduce new and innovative ways to develop social and other skills (e.g., by exposing them to the world beyond their communities and opening their minds to new ideas, thus stimulating out-of-the-box thinking).

Generation Z group is growing up in a world where people of different races and genders hold various leadership positions. Millennials (sometimes referred to as the "Me Generation") learned to tolerate such diversity more so than previous generations, whereas Generation Z learned not only to tolerate but to celebrate it (Seemiller & Grace, 2015). This new generation views diversity more as a benefit than a detriment to society as social circles continue to become more diverse. With a more "we-centric" than "me-centric" attitude, a smaller sense of entitlement and a greater desire for social equality than its predecessor, Generation Z tends to support issues and concerns that affect the broader community (Seemiller & Grace, 2016).

Educational Factors: Differentiating Educational Opportunities from previous Generations

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Education is considered the foundation of success for students in Generation Z. However, as the cost of higher education increases, this generation is becoming more concerned about the cost and is formulating alternative, less expensive options for achieving high levels of education. To this generation, education equates to jobs and jobs equate to survival, especially as jobs become harder to find (Seemiller & Grace, 2016; Ozkan & Solmaz, 2015). Options this generation is considering include online programs, community colleges, and technical and vocational colleges—all of which avoid on-campus amenities such as room and board and play a growing role as more Generation Z students graduate from school.

Learning Styles

Generation Z recognizes the value in education and has a strong desire to learn, but not necessarily in a traditional college or university environment. From Millennials to Generation Z, the value placed on higher education has decreased from 71% to 64%, respectively (Marron, 2015). Four themes provide an insight into Generation Z's educational perspective: (a) education leads to success; (b) education is an investment in the country's future; (c) society as a whole is better when it is educated; and (d) access to quality education is limited (Seemiller & Grace, 2016). Despite the concern of increasing tuitions, the majority of Generation Z still views the value of higher education outweighing the cost in order to secure a solid career. However, as students strive to learn in an educational environment, the way in which they learn is changing and offering them more robust learning experiences. Although they require education, often times they do not fashion using the certificate since they venture into many types of jobs.

Attracting Students

Given the general over view of Generation Z as a generation that have never known a world without Internet, cell phones, or iPods; they are tech savvy and in constant contact with people 24/7 using Facebook, Twitter 2go, and other social media platforms; they want technology that is easy to use and will solve their problems, help coordinate their activities, or provide them with relevant people or information; their brains are affected by Internet use. They find answers to questions in Google and YouTube, but they lack the critical thinking skills to evaluate sources; they have low/no tolerance for being without digital resources. Attracting this generation to learning to actualize their dreams and aspirations and be useful to themselves and the society at large will mean understanding them, their traits, and preferences.

Utilize video-based learning

Capitalize on Generation Z's interest in learning through observation by using videos and other visuals to help explain a theory or concept or to demonstrate a challenging process. Videos of effective speakers, such as TED Talks, can also bring content to life and help students ponder difficult questions. In addition, apps like Jing and Camtasia, which allow users to make voice-over instructional videos, can be useful for prerecording videos to help students understand a process, such as filling out student organization paperwork or completing a class project successfully.

Incorporate intrapersonal learning into class and group work

Consider breaking a project into multiple "checkpoints" along the way that provide opportunities for individual learning and reflection before having students complete group "checkpoints" later in the process. In addition, have students engage in what Frank Lyman calls Think-Pair-Share in which students reflect on information before discussing it with a partner and ultimately sharing it with the larger group. Finally, intrapersonal learning fits nicely with a flipped learning approach. Rather than assigning homework, which often is done after the learning occurs, have students pre-reflect on content to prepare them for the upcoming session.

Offer community engagement opportunities for students to address underlying societal needs

For example, offer case competitions in which students compete in developing business plans designed to solve a local issue, set up hack-a-thons and ask students to develop technology to address a social issue, or provide seed money to start businesses with a social mission. They can come up with more ideas that will benefit the community/society.

Connect Generation Z students to internship opportunities

Because Generation Z students want their educational experience to incorporate practical learning opportunities from the beginning; they may not want to wait until their later college years to acquire an internship. Thus, it may be beneficial for institutions to offer on- and off-campus internship opportunities that are developmentally appropriate for younger or less-experienced students. Even with Nigerian unemployment situations, entrepreneurship activities can do great assistance.

Storytelling

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Research indicated that Gen Z students are interested in the stories of their peers and that they prefer to get some of their information through YouTube. To attract students, programs can regularly develop and rotate through student video stories on their web site. These stories can focus on topics such as a student's internship, a competitive event, student organizations, a first year experience, or a graduate's first job or career path. Many universities are doing this at the institution or college level, but finding resources to provide this resource at the program level may be more difficult. Institutions' public relations departments may be able to provide a script, template or editing resources to help programs create their own videos.

Early Program Interaction

Develop a freshmen level general studies course in which students are introduced to the computer science major or gain hands on skills in App development early. Such an introduction may draw students from other areas of the institution to select computer science as a major or minor, as well as develop a relationship with students who had already intended to take a computer science major.

Competitive Events

Holding competitions such as hackathons or App development contests will challenge students as well as address their need for a personalized experience. Participation in collegiate level competitions also allows students to practice their skills and interact with likeminded students and professionals. The authors' institution encourages students to be involved in student organizations that participate in state, regional and national level competitions such as the Midwest Regional Collegiate Cyber Defense Qualification Competition and Phi Beta Lambda/FBLA, adobe.spark.com and so on.

Online or Blended Courses

Gen Z students are self-starters who do not mind learning topics on their own. Online technology courses taught by adjunct professionals or current courses taught in a blended online/face-to-face format may help to attract students while not significantly draining current resources.

Gaming Techniques

Although imaginative learning is not as integrated in the core educational curriculum as in past generations, it is being integrated into modern gaming techniques. The term "gamification" in the information technology world refers to the concept of "adding 'amusement' to the tedium of day-to-day living" (Renen & Rudman, 2015). By injecting fun and rewards into the learning process, educators, mentors, and employers can better motivate younger generations, especially those who cannot be motivated with money and power. With various uses, gamification offers an engaging way to conduct trainings and instill organizational concepts and practices. Although the terms "games," "gamification," and "game-based learning or serious games" are often used interchangeably, they have distinct differences, as defined below:

- i. Games are games developed for entertainment (e.g., Candy Crush, Angry Birds)
- ii. Gamification has game-type elements used in a nongame setting (e.g., advertising, workforce development); and
- iii. Game-based learning and serious games are games with an identified outcome. They are developed with behavior modification, change behavior/persona, or provide acclimation to something new with a very specific outcome (e.g., military games, PrepBiz).

In what is termed "engagement knowledge," is further explained thus: Game-based learning and serious games address cognitive and non-cognitive skills to implement change especially in emergency and life-threatening situations. Game-based learning or serious games are often custom built to fulfill a specific purpose (e.g., recruiting, training, communicating) for targeted participants (Allal-Cherif & Makhoulf, 2016). Sarkis et al., (2014) on the other hand opined that for recruiting purposes, the games can be used for orientation to help participants identify skills appropriate with various roles, to help employers select talent from a group of candidates, and to help employees integrate into a new work environment. In terms of training purposes, the games can be used for acquiring knowledge, refining skills and role responsibilities, developing expected behavior, and advancing professional development is reiterated. While for communication purposes, games can be used as internal or external communication tools to strengthen the internal working culture or to build socially responsible messaging, respectively.

Conclusion

Generation Z is a unique generation whose needs, learning activities, expectations, perspectives, and aspirations are different from those of other generation before it. A generation that never knows a world without Internet, cell phones, or iPods, have low/no tolerance for being without digital resources, want a technology that is easy to use and will solve their problems, help

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coordinate their activities, or provide them with relevant people or information. Available literature/researches on how best to educate this generation emphasized coaching and mentoring or guiding approaches rather enforcing and influencing approach play significant roles in their lives to help Generation Z members reach their goals and objectives of being useful to themselves and the society at large. Generation Z learning styles recognizes that (a) education leads to success; (b) education is an investment in the country's future; (c) society as a whole is better when it is educated; and (d) access to quality education is limited. Therefore, for Nigeria to succeed with this generation, concerted efforts should be put into making our teaching and learning environment information and communication technology (ICT) complaint. Affordable and non-fluctuating internet facilities/network should be at the disposal of the learners – Gen Zers. Electricity supply must be at its best to encourage 24/7 accessibility to online connectivity with friends and colleagues that give them joy and spur them to greater challenges. Finally, parents should also key into the desire of their children to make them access the world from the comfort of their homes.

Suggestions

Successful educating of generation Z requires providing the enabling environment that possesses the characteristic features of generation Z, as such:

- i. Multi-media devices which aid visual forms of learning be made available in our institutions of learning to capture their attention.
- ii. Studies shows that this generation has great respect for their parents as role model and mentors, therefore, for successful teaching and learning experiences of this generation, mentorship training should be applied rather than enforcing approach.
- iii. This generation is wired to ease access to information via the internet 24/7 hence it encouraged them for individualized learning and enforces their confidence. Environment without internet connectivity will be boring and discouraging to them which can impede their learning processes.

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Comparative Analysis Between Parents' Economic-Support and Educational Background On Performance In English Language among Secondary School Students in Maiduguri Metropolis

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Abstract

This study determined extent to which parents' economic support and educational background predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. Correlation research design was used in the study. The population of the study comprised four thousand five hundred SS I students from nine (9) selected public senior secondary schools in the study area. The sample was three hundred and fifty-four based on Krejcie and Morgan sample size determination table. Random sampling technique was used to draw sample of the population from each school. The instrument used to collect data in the study was self-developed questionnaire titled "Economic Status and educational Background as Predictors of Academic Performance in English Language (ESEBPAPPEL)" and proforma. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The findings of the study revealed that, parents' Economic support and educational background predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. It was concluded that, students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis Borno State, Nigeria is predicted by Economic support and educational background of the parents. The researchers recommend that, parents of high economic status should provide necessary English Language learning materials at home and school. Government should support students from poor economic status with free education and free English language learning materials. Educated parents should be involving in their wards English Language learning activities at home. Uneducated parents should look for educated person(s) within the family to help their wards in academic learning activity at home.

Keywords: Parents' Educational Background, Economic Support, Performance & English Language

Introduction

Every society in the contemporary world is much concerned and curious about the academic success of its younger generations. Students' academic competence is a crucial issue that lured experts' attentions in the field of education worldwide. Many educationists especially in the areas of sociology and psychology contributed immensely to a number of theories, concepts and models which are used to enhance children's abilities to perform well in various field of academic disciplines. Students' academic excellence in English Language, may serve as a reflection of intellectual and socio-economic aspects of their respective home environment. Every child learns how to socialize in alignment with the taste and level of academic as well as financial background of his family. The primary environment of a student is the home and it stands to exert tremendous impact on his language acquisition. Students' academic performance in English Language depends mostly on what parents do and

Comparative Analysis between Parents' Economic-Support and ... Abubakar, H., Et. al., (2025) provide with regards to their academic studies. The kind of support they offer and the degree of their education plays significant roles in either hindering or fostering students' academic performance. Parents' education, including their mastery of the English language and economic support are key factors that can predict students' academic performance. A high level of parents' education equips students with the necessary intellectual tools while economic stability ensures access to resources and environments conducive to learning, (Idris, Hussain & Nasir, 2020).

Parents who are more educated are likely to provide an enriched environment that fosters language development, literacy skills and overall academic success in English Language. Parents with higher education tend to engage in conversations that are more complex and richer in vocabulary, thus improving their wards proficiency in the English language. This exposure at home helps students in mastering language nuances and becoming more fluent (Parveen, 2017). The use of English Language learnt from parents and other family members might significantly predicts students' performance in the school. The kind of English Language interaction create by parents may account for English Language learning development skills. A home with high level of Language proficiency and stimulating activity can serve as an effective and conducive English Language learning environment. Students' English Language fluency may strongly rely on the kind of English Language learning activities designed and implemented by parents at home. The proper role of home environment helps students to discover their cognitive ability in the four basic skills of English language. They should be treated and motivated well at home (Parveen, 2017). Idris, Hussain and Nasir (2020) revealed that, the education of parents significantly influence the students' academic ability specifically in language acquisition. This is because; serious attention from parents is needed for students' proficiency in English Language. The four (4) basic skills of English Language (listening, speaking, reading & writing) actually, require absolute practice and constant correction in terms of wrong spelling, poor pronunciation, grammatical error and that can be easily succeed when parents are educated. Research findings had been certified that, students' vocabulary laid foundation for scholarship, since most of the linguistic and social skills have been intensively assimilated by the attitude and behavior of parents at home. High parents' level of education to some extent have serious effect on the students' capability to succeed perfectly in any level of academic studies.

Parents with better qualification tend to ascertain proper guidance in English Language proficiency. Parents utilize their academic experience to beautify their wards education as they had already undergone the same process. They were aware of the up and down involved in educational pursuance and they would be able to share the educational experiences with the students (Darko-Asumadu & Sika-Bright, 2021). These experiences make individuals to manipulate students' character and attitude to make them adjust quickly to suit the current situations so that they would be able to have prosperous educated life. Parents' monitoring, conversation, sharing of academic experience and decision-making are all sorts of social interactions exist between parents and students which have everlasting positive impact on students' academic studies in English Language (Terfassa (2018)). However, this shows that, Idris et. al, 2020, Darko-Asumadu and Sika-Bright, 2021 and Terfassa, 2018 were of the same opinion, as their opinions were in conformity to one another. They all emphasized that, education of parents is indispensable factor for students' effective academic performance particularly in English Language.

Economic support plays a crucial role in providing access to quality education. Parents with sound economic background, financially support their wards English Language learning by providing relevant language learning materials such as books, computers, dictionary, novels and extracurricular activities. Students from economically stable families tend to have better access to educational resources that enhance their English language proficiency. Parents who invest in their wards education through better schooling, tutoring and learning environments provide the foundation for academic success. Studies have shown that, students from low-income families may struggle with academic performance due to limited access to these resources, leading to a disadvantage in mastering the English language. Students of wealthier parents tend to have better infrastructure, access to teaching materials and qualified extra lesson teachers. As such, students who are opportune to have that advantages may perform better in English language assessments compared to those from poor family background. Research findings have indicated that, students from higher socio-economic backgrounds often outperform those from lower socio-economic backgrounds in language subject's education (Owuor & Sika, 2019).

Students who enjoyed strong family economic support were of more advantage to be proficient in reading tasks than students who enjoyed weak family economic support. Parents with better economic background have the opportunity to manipulate

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Comparative Analysis between Parents' Economic-Support and ... Abubakar, H., Et. al., (2025) adequate resources to enhance their wards' mental and physical abilities to perform better academically. On the other hand, parents with poor economic status, experience many financial difficulties and challenges in regard to their wards' education, because, they have very little advantage to explore available resources that will promote mental and physical abilities of students and that may result to poor academic performance. Therefore, the better explanation for poor academic performance of the students from low-income family is that, the parents are so committed to the family responsibilities which attract much of their time, attention and finance; as such fewer amounts of financial support and attention is devoted to their wards' education (Malik, 2021). Owuor and Sika (2019 reported that, influence of parents' economic support does not confine on academic achievement only, every aspect of human life relay largely on the economic condition of the family, but academic, which serves as a superior agent of success in human life through which every aspect of human life be accomplished; lured high percentage of family's economic support. Many researchers in their findings exhibit that parents' economic support impact on students' outcomes in academic learning whether positively or negatively. For instance, parents are responsible for financing and settling their wards' tuitions, hence, the soundness of education obtained by the students is usually in equal proportion to the economic support given by the family. Parents' economic support is marked as effective predictor of students' academic learning output. Learners who came up from family with better economic condition achieve better in terms of academic learning (Owuor & Sika, 2019).

Despite the fact that, government and other professional body like JAMB show much concern on students' performance in English Language, yet students' performance in the subject sounds very poor. The researchers through their supervision on teaching practice exercise in various secondary schools observed that, majority of the senior secondary students find it difficult to write or communicate perfectly in English language. That behaviour, can affect their performance in other subjects and subsequently in their certificate examination (WAEC & NECO). Although there are many factors responsible for such problem, but researchers assumed that the problem may be inability of parents to support their wards economically and educationally. Therefore, this study determined the extent to which parents' economic support and educational background predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study determined the extent to which:

1. parents' education background predicts senior secondary school students' academic performance language in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.
2. parents' economic support predicts senior secondary school students' academic performance language in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

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

H₀₁: parents' educational background does not significantly predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: parents' economic support does not significantly predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

Methodology

The research design used in the study was correlation research design. Correlation design was used in the study to enable the researchers to measure the extent to which parents' economic support and educational background predict senior secondary students' academic performance in English Language. A correlation design provides an opportunity for one to predict scores and explain the relationship among variables. The population of the study comprised all SS I students from nine (9) selected public senior secondary schools using systematic random sampling technique. That means one school was selected after every three schools in the list. The total number of SS II students from the nine schools were four thousand five hundred (4,500). The sample size for the study was three hundred and fifty-four (354). The rationale for using 354 sample size of the population was based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. The researchers also used random sampling technique to draw the proportionate sample size of each school. According to Johnson and Christenson (2008), simple random sampling is a sample drawn by a procedure which every member of the population has an equal chance to be represented in the study. The research instruments used in this study were self-developed questionnaire titled "Economic Status and educational Background as Predictors of Academic Performance in English Language (ESEBPAPPEL)" and proforma. The questionnaire

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Comparative Analysis between Parents' Economic-Support and ... Abubakar, H., Et. al., (2025) was used to obtain data on parents' economic support and educational background while proforma was used to obtain the students' performance in English Language. The instrument consists of sixteen (16) items and was divided into two sections. Section 'A' consists of eight (8) items on demographic information as well as parents' educational background while section 'B' consists of six (6) items on parents' economic support. The responses to the instrument was divided into four scales; VO-very often, O- often, S-seldom and N-never. VO has the index value (4), V has the index value (3), S has the index value (2) and N has the index value (1). The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analyses. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression were used to analyze hypotheses 1 and 2 at 0.05 alpha level of significance to determine the extent to which parents' economic support and educational background predict students' academic performance in English language. According to Lefter (2004), multiple regression studies the simultaneous emotions that some independent variables have over one dependent variable so that can be used for predicting or forecasting.

Presentation of Results

H₀₁: parents' educational background does not significantly predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: parents' economic support does not significantly predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

Table 1a: Results on Mean and Standard Deviation for Parent's Education and Economic Support on Students' Academic Performance

Variable		N	\bar{x}	SD
Parents' Education	BA/BSc and above	92	57.21	15.27
	NCE/DIP.	80	56.74	19.23
	WEAC/NECO/Grade II	96	58.46	15.94
	Primary School	49	56.33	17.76
	No Formal Education	37	54.68	18.00
Parents' Economic Support		354	2.51	.31
Academic Performance		354	57.05	16.98

Table 1a presents mean and standard deviation of students' academic performance in English Language for parent's education and economic support. The mean score of parents' education who had BA/BSc and above was ($\bar{x} = 57.21, SD = 15.27$), those who had NCE/Diploma had mean score ($\bar{x} = 56.74, SD = 19.23$), those with WAEC/NECO/Grade II had mean score $\bar{x} = 58.46, SD = 15.94$), those with primary school certificate had mean ($\bar{x} = 56.33, SD = 17.76$) and those without education had mean ($\bar{x} = 54.68, SD = 18.00$) respectively. Parents' Economic Support average score was ($\bar{x} = 2.52, SD = 0.32$). Academic Performance: Students' academic performance had a mean score of approximately 57.05, accompanied by a standard deviation of 16.99, indicating a wide range of achievement levels within the students' population in English Language of senior secondary students in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

Table 1b Result of Multiple Regression Analysis on the Predictor Variables-Parents' Economic Support and Educational Background on Students' Academic Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8646.153	11	786.014	2.883	.001b
	Residual	93229.83	342	272.602		
	Total	101876	353			
Coefficients		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	p-value
	(Constant)	B	SE	Beta		
		38.622	11.578		3.336	.001
	Parents' Educational Level	4.655	2.998	1.067	4.558	.002
	Parents' Economic Support	2.000	2.746	.360	1.7228	.019

a Dependent Variable: Students Academic Performance

Regression Statistics

R	.620a
R. Square	.384
Adjusted R square	.028
Std. Error	16.76036
Observations	353

Table 1b presents the summary of the multiple regression analysis to determine the predictor between parents' education and economic support on academic performance of students in English Language. The results indicated that, the model as summarized in Table 1b indicates that, $R = .620$ which represents multiple correlation indicates a good level of prediction. The overall regression was statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.384$, $F(11, 342) = 2.883$, $p = .001$) which indicates 38.4% of the proportion of variance in academic performance in English Language that can be explained by the independent variables.

It was found out that, parents' education predicts better than economic support as evidenced by the positive unstandardized coefficient ($\beta = 4.655$, $p = 0.002$), which suggests that, increased levels of parents' education have positive predictive strength on students' academic performance in English Language. Thus, the hypothesis one which states that, parents' education background does not significantly predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis Borno State, Nigeria was rejected. Parents' economic support was a significant predictor with a positive coefficient ($\beta = 2.000$, $p = 0.019$), which suggests that, increased levels of parents' economic support have positive predictive strength on students' academic performance in English Language. Thus, the hypothesis two which states that, parents' economic support does not significantly predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis Borno State, Nigeria was rejected.

Discussion of Findings

The study determined the extent to which parents' educational background and economic support predict senior secondary school students' academic performance in English language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that, parents' education significantly predicts senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language at < 0.05 level of significance. This agrees with the findings of Idris, Hussain and Nasir (2020) who reported that, high education of father and mother positively contributes to their wards academic achievement. Large correlation was found in the study between parents' education and students' academic performance. The findings of this study revealed that, parents' education is one of the major predictors of students' academic performance in English Language. This is in line with the findings of Parveen, 2017 who reported that, students from parents with high educational qualification perform well than those from parents with lower educational qualification. The findings of Anderson (2002) as cited in Idris, Hussain and Nasir (2020) also agreed with the findings of this study. Anderson reported that negative factors of parents such as illiteracy, low involvement in wards' schooling, low socio-economic status and lack of time for their wards which are the main causes of the students' educational failure.

The similarities between previous findings and the findings of this study might be as a result of awareness. Most of the contemporary societies are aware about the value of education. Therefore, parents try to be educated and educate their wards. Thus, parents' education serves as an interface between students and the students' academic performance. Parents' level of education tends to refine students' attitudes towards academic performance. The confidence level of parents is related to their mastery of certain cognitive skills and successful experiences in their previous general and educative lives. Those who have successful educational experiences and high cognitive abilities could build up the confidence level of their wards and such parents were also found to be able to help in the development of cognitive skills of their wards while on the other side of the picture, they were found to be unable to help their wards in developing cognitive abilities and building up confidence level. The finding of the study agreed with the observation made by Owuor and Sika (2019) that parents' financing of school activities significantly predicted students' academic performance. That exhibited clearly that parents' economic support seems to be one of the predictors of students' academic performance. Similarly, the finding of the study indicated that economic support provided by the parents determines students' academic performance in English Language. This is in agreement with Malik (2021) who reported that, strong family financial support for students' education is an essential stimulus that motivates students

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Comparative Analysis between Parents' Economic-Support and ... Abubakar, H., Et. al., (2025) to perform better in English language learning, because; excessive language learning facilities provided by the family will facilitate and enhance English language learning/acquisition.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that, parents' education background is a predictor of senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria. The researchers also concluded that, parents' economic support is a predictor of senior secondary school students' academic performance in English Language in Maiduguri Metropolis, Borno State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

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

1. parents of high economic status should provide necessary English Language learning materials at home/school and Government should support students from poor economic status with free education and free English language learning materials.
2. Educated parents should be involving in their wards English Language learning activities at home. Uneducated parents should look for educated person(s) within the family to help their wards in academic learning activity at home.

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Correlation Between Leadership Style and Retention Rate among Secondary School Students in Kisinga Town Council of Kasese District, Uganda

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Abstract

The retention of students in secondary schools can be greatly influenced by head teachers' management styles. The key role of head teachers in schools is to ensure all students complete their studies as scheduled, thereby maintaining a high student retention rate. However, the retention rate is low, and this has been exacerbated by high dropouts. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to examine the influence of head teachers' management styles and student retention in secondary schools in Kisinga Town Council, Kasese District, Uganda. This was guided by the following objective: to examine the relationship between democratic leadership style and retention of students. students in secondary in Kisinga town council, Kasese District. The study was anchored on Student integration theory and guided by a conceptual framework. Moreover, the study employed a correlational research design and a quantitative research approach. The target population was 3306, and a sample of 294 respondents. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used to select respondents for the study. The data was collected using a self-developed questionnaire, which was subjected to reliability and validity tests. The data was analyzed by use of multiple regression analysis with the help of SPSS version 24. All assumptions of regression analysis were tested, and the study was conducted by considering the ethical issues. Findings from the democratic leadership style revealed an overall mean of 3.485 with an SD of 1.106, and statistically significant in influencing the retention of students. Finally, the recommendations were also made at the end.

Key Words: Democratic Leadership Style, Retention, Students, Secondary Schools, and Uganda

Introduction

Students' retention is a key determinant of the quality of education as it leads to attaining the set goals and objectives. This can be judged on the rate of teachers' effective teaching and management skills (Sifuna & Sawamura, 2010). The Uganda Government initiated the Universal Secondary School program in 2007, aimed at accessibility, good quality education, and

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completion (Sebates et al., 2010). Also in this program, student retention is emphasized (MOES, 2017). This program has been affected in that quality of education is compromised in government-aided secondary schools (Barbara, 2018). The rate of student retention is low whereby the dropout rate is high and is placed at 36% of students who fail to complete senior four (Kasese District Education Officer report, 2019; Baluku & Kasujja, 2020). Further confirmation of low student retention is evidenced in Ministry of Education Annual Evaluation Report (2012), UWEZO Report (2016) and Kasese District Annual Performance Report of 2017. The low student retention is manifested in repetition rates, rate of recycling of grades, student dropout rate and absenteeism. The low student retention has largely been attributed to head teachers' management styles; some are mishandling students (Kasese District education Officer Report, 2022). The issues of concern include effect of democratic, Authoritative and Laissez-Faire management styles on retention of students in secondary schools are unknown. If the situation remains unaddressed, low number of students will be completing their education. This in the long run will make it difficult for Uganda Government to achieve Universal Secondary Education program for national development. Therefore, this creates a need for this study. Thus, the study examined the relationship between democratic leadership style and retention of students in secondary schools in Kisinga town Council, Kasese District, Uganda.

Research Methodology

The study employed a correlational research design. This design enables the researchers to assess the degree of relationship that exists between two or more variables (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). It can assist in analyzing the correlation between two or more variables (Orodho, 2003). The design is suitable for this study because it assists in establishing the relationship between leadership styles and the retention of students in secondary schools. According to Kothari (2004), the research approach includes quantitative and qualitative approaches. Therefore, in this study quantitative approach has been used because it produces quantitative data that can be analyzed statistically. The target population comprised the Education Stakeholders (Head teachers, PTA, teachers, and students), of secondary schools in Kisinga. The study included 4 head teachers, 4 PTA chairpersons, 98 teachers, and 3200 students. Students were considered because the study is looking at their retention in secondary schools. Teachers are also believed to have reliable information on retention due to their direct involvement in teaching (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013; Cohen, Manion & Morris, 2011).

Table 1. Sample Size Distribution

Category	Head Teachers	PTA Chairmen	Teacher	Students	Total
School A	01	01	8	91	101
School B	01	01	7	77	86
School C	01	01	6	53	61
School D	01	01	5	39	46
Total	04	04	26	260	294

Source: Primary Data, 2024

In this study, both purposive and simple random sampling techniques have been used to obtain respondents for this study. In this study, purposive sampling was used to identify head teachers and PTA chairpersons. Therefore, the respondents were given questionnaires and expected to respond accordingly. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling method that seeks to solicit information from head teachers and chairmen due to their positions and involvement in management (Sekarani & Bourgie, 2009). A simple random sampling method was used to collect data from teachers and students. The method is a simple one and has lower risks of bias (Amin, 2005). The study employed a questionnaire survey as a data collection method. This is attributed to the fact that the study adopted a mixed-method approach that could only be achieved through multiple methods of data collection (Creswell & Plano, 2011; Caruth, 2013).

The study used a self-developed closed-ended questionnaire as the data collection method. The questionnaire was preferred in this study because it helped in gathering a large volume of data in a short time. Closed-ended questions were used which also

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use less time, place less pressure on respondents to react immediately, and may force respondents to choose from a limited number of response possibilities. The Principal Investigator with the help of a research assistant administered questionnaires and aimed to reach out to all students and teachers who were selected. This was done to ascertain the reliability and validity of the research tool. The researcher verified the reliability and validity of the research tool by computing the reliability test using Cronbach's alpha test, and content validity was tested. The results were all above the cut-off point of 0.7 (Yan, Liu, Li, et al, 2009). Moreover, the questionnaire was pre-tested on a group of 20 participants who were not part of the targeted population of this study. The collected data was analyzed using the Cronbach alpha method. The Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.70 and above, then the instrument was considered reliable (Cooper & Schindler, 2003). The researcher used Cronbach's alpha index also to measure the internal consistence of the set items as a group using SPSS version 27. Table 3 showed the reliability results for the students' questionnaire. the reliability test returned a Cronbach's alpha index of 0.737 for questionnaires. The value of 0.737 was greater than the threshold of 0.70. Thus, the questionnaires were deemed reliable. In addition, this regard validity of the research instrument, Content Validity Index (CVI), was calculated using a formula advanced by Amin (2005); CVI was computed based on all 40 items on the questionnaire that addressed all the variables. The number of questions that were deemed relevant was 35 out of 40. The number 35 was reached when the items were subjected to expert judgment by experts in the Faculty of Education, Kampala International University. Applying the above formula: $CVI=35/40=0.875$. If the result is equal to or over 0.7, then it will imply that the tool is valid. An index of 0.875 indicated that the questionnaire's content was valid.

The data collected from the field was carefully edited, sorted, and coded to eliminate the inconsistencies and errors that might be present. Multiple regression analysis technique with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, Version 27) was used to analyse the data (Kothari, 2004).

Theoretical Review

Student Integration Theory

The study is anchored on Tinto's (1975) Student Integration Theory was developed by Tinto (Tinto, 1975). Berger and Braxton (1998, P. 104) indicate that Tinto's integration model 'has been used widely in research focusing on college student departure. The theory has its roots in Durkheim's theory of suicide (Durkheim, 1951). The theory regards student retention as the degree to which a student becomes integrated into the social and academic life of the college or university (Tinto, 1993; Rendon, Jalomo & Nora, 2000). Tinto (1993) points out that both types of integration do not need to be equal but some level of academic and social integration must occur in order for students to persist at the college or university. Further the theory shows that if a student is very connected in the academic life by spending a lot time in studying, this may lead to lack of social integration in the university. As a result, this may have a negative consequence with regard to student retention. The theory also showed that student's goal commitment and also institutional commitment.

Administrative Management Theory

Administrative management theory was developed by Henri Fayol in the early 1900s and is considered to be highly relevant even today. Fayol created fourteen principles which he believed outlined the basis for strong and successful companies. Fayol focuses on the organizational structure of an institution as a whole. Some of Fayol's principles included a clear division of labor, ensuring each employee had only one supervisor to report to, and a healthy manager-employee relationship. Fayol believed that everyone in an institution should be aligned to organizational goals and that organizational structure was vital to the success and productivity of an institution.

X&Y Management Theory

Based on his observations in the developed the X&Y Management Theory, by arguing that all managers can be grouped into two categories. The first category known as Theory X which explains that managers have a negative view of their employees and believe that employees need to be forced or coaxed into working. Theory X Managers tend to micromanage with the belief that employees will not motivate themselves to complete their work. Theory Y Managers believe that employees are inherently motivated to work. Theory Y managers value the importance of helping their employees to thrive by providing opportunities for learning and development. Theory Y is focused on the idea of team versus independent work. McGregor argued that a team environment paired with an emphasis on individual professional development produces better results and a healthier work environment. Theory Y continues to prove its relevance and is still present in today's business world. Thus, among all the reviewed theories, the theory that underpinned the study was Student Integration by Tinto's (1975), this is because the integration of motivational practices and supportive school environments is are essential component of head teachers'

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management styles that directly influence student retention. The application of this theory provided a valuable framework for understanding these dynamics, emphasizing the need for head teachers to adopt holistic management strategies that foster both academic and social integration.

Empirical Literature Review

Democratic Leadership Style and Retention of Students in Secondary Schools

The democratic leadership style also referred to as interactive or participatory management is characterized by cooperation and collaboration. This leadership style refers to situations where a leader seeks the opinion of the subordinate before making a decision. In this leadership style, the head teacher as a focal administrator seeks the opinion of the subordinates on a tentative plan of action and then makes decisions or the leader may ask for group input in formulating plans before making a decision, in this case, cases that directly affect students' abilities to keep in schools such as indefinite suspension is dealt with amicably. A study by Okindo, Ngala, and Ochola, (2020) on the relationship between principals' democratic leadership style and students' conformity to rules in public secondary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study involved stakeholders in designing and implementing school rules and policies that affect students' life span in secondary schools. Through democratic engagement, and informed and harmonized decisions retention of students was better.

Lamech Siko (2020) studied the relationship between student safety practices and retention in public secondary schools in Kisii County, Kenya. Showed that the findings showed that the Headteachers through dialoguing can be able to identify intelligent people whose ideas are crucial in the day-to-day operation of the schools. Further results revealed that teachers, students, and prefects can advise effectively on academic matters therefore assisting in the retention of learners in the institution. In another development, a study by Kosgei, Ngala, and Kiplangat (2020) on the relationship between the provision of students' academic advising resources and the effective performance of instructional roles by teachers in secondary schools in Nandi East Sub-County, Kenya. The findings revealed that the main task of the principal is to create a conducive atmosphere for the teachers to be able to achieve desired changes in students. The creation of a favourable environment or atmosphere helped in the retention of students in the institution. Also, the findings of Koech, Tikoko, and Ngala (2020) were similar to Kosgei, et al., (2020). Whereas, the study of Vormawah (2009) found that a democratic leadership style evokes a high degree of staff morale, which also motivates the students and eventually affects retention positively, therefore, the findings were similar to Mba's (Mba, 2004). The study of Ramovha (2009) found that in a school system, a head teacher who adopts a democratic leadership involving teachers in decision-making will make them feel in control of their destiny. Therefore, teachers are motivated to work hard beyond financial reward, and results are reflected in the high level of student retention in their institutions.

Eskander, A., Irish, J., Freeman (2014) in their study found that the democratic leadership style was preferred by the employees because it creates a sense of inclusiveness and togetherness of ideas to be shared as a team. The result of the team is the increased retention of students. Kazi (2023) studied the relationship between Principals' Leadership Styles and Teachers' Behavior. The study revealed that a democratic leadership style addresses the issues of teachers' emotional behavior that partly determines the mode through which they treat the students. This formidable treatment is significant in comforting the students. Schools that maintained this leadership style had better student retention rates. Joyce (2020) in her findings revealed that democratic leadership allows the sharing of decisions, encourages teamwork, creates creativity and innovation, and initiates and motivates staff, which consequently affects students' retention in schools. The findings further indicated that in situations where roles are unclear, democratic leadership can lead to communication failures and uncompleted projects. Rok (2009), in his study, concluded that a participative leadership style has been the dominant style of management for many principals and staff.

Findings of the Study

Questionnaire Response Rate

This describes the level at which feedback to the study was given by the target sampling frame. It is given as a percentage of the number of participants in the study. A higher response rate is key for reliability and the acceptance of a study's results. The researcher planned to collect data from 102 respondents. The response rate is presented as follows;

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Demographic Information

The information on background variables is given in Table 4. And Figure 4 below.

Table 4. Demographic Data of Respondents

Variable	Attributes	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	175	59.5
	Female	119	40.5
	Total	294	100
Age	20-30 years	224	76.2
	31-40 years	57	19.4
	41-50 years	9	3.1
	Above 50 years	4	1.4
	Total	294	100
Marital status	Married	73	24.8
	Single	186	63.3
	Divorced	35	11.9
	Total	294	100
Education level	None	3	1.0
	Primary	15	5.1
	O' level	136	46.3
	A/level	106	31.1
	Certificate	20	6.8
	Diploma	8	2.7
	Degree	6	2.0
Total		294	100

Source: Primary Data, 2024

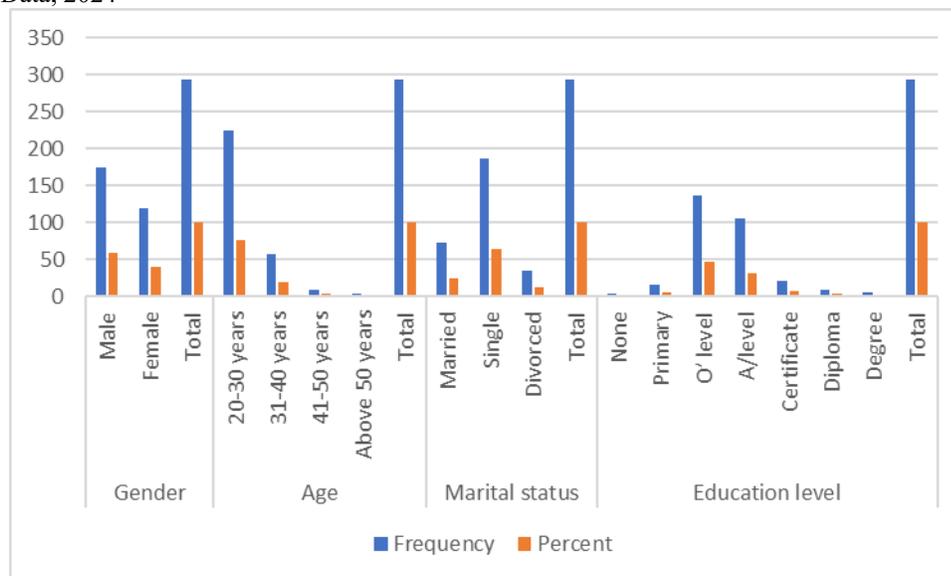


Figure 1. Demographic Data of Respondents

From the findings shown in Table 1 and Figure 1, 4above, more males (59.5%) participated in the research than females (40.5%), which implies that the majority of people living in Kisinga Town council, Kasese District are men. On age, people

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aged 20-30 years were 76.2%, 31-40 years (19.4 %,) 41-50 years represented 3.1 % while above 50 years was 1.4%. This means that the majority of the population living in this area is youthful and can be used in the economic development of the town council.

The result from marital status, single people were the majority with 63.3% followed by married at 24.8% and lastly divorced at 11.9%. This implies that the majority of the people are single. Although divorced people seem to be few 11.9% is quite significant. For education level, findings revealed that primary level had 5.1%, O, level (46.3%), A level (31.1%), Certificate level (6.8%) Diploma level (2.7%) while Degree level was 2.0%) This means the majority of people living in Kisinga Town Council, are O level graduates.

The results presented here are based on the study objectives.

Democratic Leadership Style and Retention of Students in Secondary Schools

The study findings on democratic leadership style are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Democratic Leadership and Retention of Students

Statement		1	2	3	4	5	Mean	SD
Staff are involved in decision-making	N	14	49	7	160	60	3.72	1.123
	(%)	4.8	16.7	2.4	54.4	21.8		
Students participate in decision-making	N	60	56	15	140	23	3.03	1.342
	(%)	20.4	19	5.1	47.6	7.8		
The board of management is involved in decision-making	N	15	15	16	179	69	3.93	.975
	(%)	5.1	5.1	5.4	60.9	23.5		
Always staff from the Ministry of Education and Sports are invited to participate in decision-making	N	0	8	13	171	102	4.25	.663
	(%)	0	2.7	4.4	58.2	34.7		
Staff meetings are held frequently to discuss academic performance	N	40	43	13	180	18	3.32	1.205
	(%)	13.6	14.6	4.4	61.2	6.1		
All decisions are made through consensus after lengthy deliberations	N	59	121	0	121	26	2.66	1.327
	(%)	26.1	41.2	0	41.2	8.8		
Overall Mean							3.485	1.106

Source: Primary Data, 2023

Key: 1-Disagree Strongly (DS), 2-Disagree (D), 3-Neutral (N), 4-Agree (A), 5-Strongly Agree (SA)

From the findings in Table 4.5 above, staff involvement in decision making, those who disagreed strongly were 14(4.8%) 49(16.7%), neutral was 7(2.4%) agreed were 160(54.4%), and strongly agreed were 60(21.8%). The mean for this variable was 3.72 and the Standard deviation (SD) of 1.123. This implies that the majority agreed that staff are involved in decision-making.

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On Student participation in decision-making, those who disagreed strongly were 60(20.4%), disagreed were 569(19%), neutral were 15(5.1%), agreed were 140(47.6%), and strongly agreed were 23(7.8%). The mean was 3.03 with a standard deviation of 1.3.42. This means that the majority were in agreement that students are allowed to participate in decision-making. As for Board of Management involvement in decision-making, those who disagreed strongly were 15(5.1%), disagreed were 15(5.1%) neutral were 16(5.4%), and those who agreed and strongly agreed were 179(60.9%) and 69(23.5%) respectively. The mean was 3.93 and the standard deviation of 0.975. This implies that the majority of respondents were in agreement that the Board of Management is involved in decision-making. Involvement of staff from the Ministry of Education and Sports in decision-making, those who disagreed were 8(2.7%), Neutral, 13(4.4%), agreed were 171(58.2%) and strongly agreed were 102(34.7%). The mean was 4.25 and the standard deviation was 0.663. This means that staff from the Ministry of Education and Sports is often involved in the decision-making of the school. On the frequency of staff meetings to discuss the academic performance of the school, 40(13.6%) disagreed strongly, 43(14.6%) disagreed, 13(4.4%) were neutral, 180(61.2%) agreed and 18(6.1%) strongly agreed. The mean and standard deviation were 3.32 and 1.205 respectively. This implies that the majority of the respondents were in agreement that frequent meetings are held to discuss academic performance. On decisions made through consensus, those who disagreed strongly 59(26.1%), disagreed with 121(41.2%), agreed were 121(41.2%), and strongly agreed were 26(8.8%). The mean for this attribute was 2.66 with a standard deviation of 1.327. This means the majority of the respondents disagreed that decisions are made through consensus. The overall mean and standard deviation were 3.485 and 1.106 respectively.

Discussion of the Results

Democratic Leadership Style and Retention of Students in Secondary Schools

The main findings revealed that the majority of respondents agreed that democratic leadership style influences students' retention in secondary schools. Further, the result of hypothesis testing indicated a statistically significant influence of democratic leadership style on the retention of students in secondary schools. The finding supports the report of Okindo et al. (2020), whose study concluded that principals' democratic leadership encourages students to conform to rules in public secondary schools. Also, the findings are in agreement with the study of Kosgei (2020), Heema and Bennis (2000), and Katolo, (2016), who established similar results.

Conclusion

The study concluded that both the democratic leadership style influence the retention of students in secondary while the Laissez-Faire leadership style had minimal influence in retaining students in secondary schools.

Recommendations

The following recommendations regarding head teachers' leadership style on retention of students in secondary schools have been made to help in increasing the retention rate:

1. Headteachers should implement the three leadership styles in their schools. This is likely to increase the retention rates of students;
2. All head teachers should be trained in leadership so that they can acquire relevant leadership skills and increase student retention.
3. Government, through the Ministry of Education and Sports, should design an appraisal system for head teachers' leadership style.

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Evaluation of Government Policies and Community Interventions on Addressing Educational Barriers Amidst Insecurity in Nigeria

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Abstract

The persistent insecurity in Nigeria, characterized by insurgency, banditry, and kidnappings, has significantly disrupted the education sector, particularly in conflict-affected regions. Educational activities have been severely impacted by the closure of schools, displacement of students and teachers, and declines in enrollment rates. While the Nigerian government has made efforts through initiatives like the Safe Schools Initiative (SSI) and Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy, challenges such as inconsistent implementation, inadequate funding, and poor infrastructure continue to undermine these efforts. On the other hand, community-based interventions, including local security networks, non-governmental organizations, and faith-based groups, have emerged as complementary responses, providing alternative learning centers, psychosocial support, and advocacy for safer educational environments. This research examines the interplay between government policies and community interventions in addressing the educational barriers exacerbated by insecurity in Nigeria. It highlights the need for a collaborative, multi-stakeholder approach involving government agencies, local communities, and international organizations to sustain educational resilience. The study emphasizes that while government interventions offer a structural framework, community-driven solutions provide localized, adaptive responses, ultimately ensuring more inclusive and uninterrupted access to education in conflict-prone areas.

Keywords: *Insecurity, Education, Government, Community Interventions, Nigeria*

Introduction

Education is widely regarded as a fundamental human right and a crucial driver of socio-economic development. However, in Nigeria, persistent insecurity has severely hindered access to quality education, particularly in regions plagued by violence and instability. The rise of insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and other forms of insecurity has disrupted educational activities, leading to the closure of schools, displacement of students and teachers, and a decline in enrollment rates (Abdullahi, 2021). These security challenges have exacerbated existing educational barriers, including inadequate infrastructure, poverty, and limited government funding (Ede & Mba, 2022). Government and community interventions play a pivotal role in mitigating these educational barriers amid insecurity. The Nigerian government has implemented policies such as the Safe Schools Initiative (SSI) launched in 2014 in response to the Boko Haram insurgency, aiming to protect schools from attacks (Olanrewaju et al., 2020). Despite these efforts, the effectiveness of government interventions has been questioned due to inconsistent implementation and inadequate funding (Umar & Ahmed, 2023). Community-based approaches, including local security networks, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and faith-based initiatives, have emerged as complementary efforts to sustain education in conflict-affected areas (Adamu & Okafor, 2021). These community interventions often focus on alternative learning centers, psychosocial support, and advocacy for safer educational environments. However, the sustainable solutions

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to educational barriers in insecure regions require a multi-stakeholder approach, integrating government policies with grassroots efforts. According to Ojo and Adebayo (2022), partnerships between government agencies, local communities, and international organizations are essential for providing long-term resilience in education systems. Additionally, strengthening school security, improving teacher incentives in conflict-prone areas, and leveraging technology for remote learning are recommended strategies (Bello & Yusuf, 2021). The role of government and community interventions in addressing educational barriers amid insecurity remains a critical area of research and policy formulation. While governmental policies provide a structural framework, community-driven solutions offer localized and adaptive responses to the crisis. Thus, understanding the synergy between these interventions is crucial for ensuring inclusive and uninterrupted education in Nigeria's conflict-affected regions.

Theoretical Frame Work

Conflict Theory was adopted. Conflict theory, originally developed by Karl Marx, posits that society is characterized by continuous struggles between groups competing for resources, power, and control. This theory argues that social structures are inherently unequal, leading to conflicts between the dominant and subordinate classes (Marx & Engels, 1848). Later scholars, such as Coser (1956) and Dahrendorf (1959), expanded on this perspective, emphasizing that conflict arises due to power imbalances in political, economic, and social institutions. From the perspective of conflict theory, insecurity is often a product of structural inequalities and power struggles. Economic disparity, political exclusion, and social injustices contribute to conflicts that manifest in various forms, such as terrorism, banditry, and civil unrest (Umar, 2022). In Nigeria, for instance, conflicts between ethnic and religious groups, as well as tensions over resource control, have fueled widespread insecurity, disrupting social stability (Bello & Yusuf, 2021). Conflict theory explains educational barriers by highlighting how unequal access to resources and insecurity disproportionately affect marginalized groups. In conflict-prone regions, education is often disrupted due to school closures, teacher shortages, and forced displacement (Adamu & Okafor, 2021). The ruling elite, according to conflict theorists, may deliberately underfund education in certain regions, reinforcing inequalities and limiting upward social mobility (Ogunyemi & Adedeji, 2020). Furthermore, insecurity, fueled by conflicts, exacerbates educational disparities. Insurgent attacks on schools, such as those carried out by Boko Haram in northern Nigeria, illustrate how education becomes a battleground in socio-political struggles (Eze & Okonkwo, 2023). Many children, especially girls, are denied education due to fear of violence and abductions, deepening existing inequalities.

Concept of Insecurity

Insecurity refers to a state of uncertainty, vulnerability, or exposure to danger, which can manifest in various dimensions, including economic, social, political, and psychological aspects. It encompasses feelings of fear, instability, and the absence of safety, whether at the individual, community, or national level (Adebayo, 2021). In the context of national security, insecurity implies a condition where lives and properties are threatened due to violence, crime, or conflict (Okeke, 2020). Akinwale (2019) defines insecurity as "the state of being exposed to threats, dangers, or risks that undermine individual and societal stability, often resulting from political instability, economic deprivation, and social conflicts" (p. 112). Ogunyemi and Adedeji (2020) describe insecurity as "a condition where individuals or groups experience fear, uncertainty, and vulnerability due to the absence or inefficiency of protective structures, such as law enforcement and social security systems" (p. 78). Bello and Yusuf (2021) view insecurity as "a multi-dimensional challenge characterized by the breakdown of law and order, violent conflicts, insurgency, and other forms of threats that impede socio-economic development" (p. 56). Umar (2022) defines insecurity as "the prevalence of criminal activities, such as terrorism, banditry, kidnapping, and armed robbery, which disrupt societal peace and create fear among the populace" (p. 92). Eze and Okonkwo (2023) argue that insecurity is "not only the presence of violent threats but also the systemic failure to address socio-economic inequalities and governance inefficiencies that breed conditions for insecurity" (p. 134).

Forms of Insecurity

Insecurity manifests in various forms, affecting individuals, communities, and nations differently. Scholars have categorized these forms based on their causes, effects, and implications on society. According to Akinwale (2019), insecurity can be classified into the following major forms:

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1. **Physical Insecurity:** Physical insecurity refers to threats to life and property, including violent crimes such as robbery, kidnapping, terrorism, and communal clashes. It directly affects people's safety, often leading to displacement and loss of lives (Akinwale, 2019).
2. **Economic Insecurity:** Economic insecurity occurs when individuals or societies face financial instability due to unemployment, inflation, poor wages, or lack of access to basic economic resources. It is often linked to poverty and social unrest, as economic hardships can drive people into criminal activities (Ogunyemi & Adedeji, 2020).
3. **Political Insecurity:** Political insecurity arises from unstable governance, electoral violence, human rights violations, and corruption. It often leads to protests, political assassinations, and coups, undermining national stability and development (Bello & Yusuf, 2021).
4. **Social Insecurity:** This form of insecurity is associated with societal inequalities, discrimination, and exclusion based on ethnicity, religion, or social class. Social insecurity fosters conflicts and divisions within communities, weakening social cohesion (Umar, 2022).
5. **Food Insecurity:** Food insecurity refers to the lack of consistent access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food. It is often caused by conflicts, climate change, and economic instability, leading to malnutrition and increased mortality rates (Eze & Okonkwo, 2023).
6. **Health Insecurity:** Health insecurity arises when individuals or communities lack access to quality healthcare, leading to high mortality rates, disease outbreaks, and poor health conditions. This is particularly prevalent in conflict zones where medical services are disrupted (Okeke, 2020).
7. **Environmental Insecurity:** Environmental insecurity results from ecological challenges such as climate change, deforestation, and natural disasters. These issues contribute to resource scarcity, forced migration, and conflicts over land and water (Adamu & Okafor, 2021).

Concept of Educational Barriers

Educational barriers refer to challenges that prevent individuals from accessing, participating in, or successfully completing their education. These obstacles may arise from economic, social, cultural, psychological, institutional, or policy-related factors. They can manifest in various forms, such as lack of financial resources, discrimination, inadequate infrastructure, learning disabilities, language barriers, or political instability. Overcoming these barriers is crucial to ensuring inclusive and equitable education for all. Educational barriers are defined as “factors that hinder individuals from accessing quality education, including poverty, gender discrimination, conflict, disability, and inadequate school resources” (UNESCO, 2021, p. 15). According to Hornby (2015), educational barriers refer to “constraints that negatively impact students' ability to learn, including socio-economic disadvantages, physical or cognitive disabilities, and systemic issues within the education system” (p. 42). Rumberger (2011) defines educational barriers as “a range of social, economic, and institutional factors that contribute to student disengagement, academic failure, and dropout” (p. 89). Okkolin et al. (2018) describe educational barriers as “structural and socio-cultural challenges that restrict equal opportunities for learners, particularly marginalized groups, leading to educational inequities” (p. 23).

Forms of Educational Barriers

Education is a fundamental right, yet various barriers hinder access, participation, and success in learning. Scholars have identified multiple forms of educational barriers, which can be broadly categorized as follows:

1. **Socioeconomic Barriers:** Economic constraints are among the most significant barriers to education. Children from low-income households' face challenges such as school fees, lack of study materials, and the need to work to support their families (UNESCO, 2020). Studies highlight that poverty leads to higher dropout rates and limited access to quality education (Tilak, 2019).
2. **Cultural and Social Barriers:** Cultural norms and societal expectations shape educational access, particularly for girls and marginalized groups. For instance, early marriage and gender-based discrimination hinder female education in many developing countries (Unterhalter, 2021). Language barriers also affect students from minority backgrounds, making it difficult for them to engage effectively in learning (Cummins, 2020).

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3. **Geographic and Environmental Barriers:** Distance to schools, poor infrastructure, and environmental challenges, such as flooding or droughts, restrict educational access, especially in rural areas (World Bank, 2019). In Sub-Saharan Africa, many children travel long distances to school, reducing attendance and learning outcomes (Chaudhury et al., 2021).
4. **Political and Institutional Barriers:** Government policies, corruption, and political instability can affect education systems. In conflict-affected regions, schools are often destroyed, and children are unable to continue their education (Save the Children, 2020). Bureaucratic inefficiencies also contribute to poor education governance and resource allocation (Altbach, 2020).
5. **Disability and Special Needs Barriers:** Students with disabilities face significant challenges due to inadequate inclusive education policies and lack of specialized support. Many schools lack infrastructure such as ramps, assistive devices, and trained teachers, which limits participation for children with disabilities (Florian & Spratt, 2019).
6. **Psychological and Emotional Barriers:** Psychosocial issues such as bullying, trauma, and lack of self-confidence can affect learning outcomes. Research shows that mental health challenges significantly impact students' ability to concentrate and perform well academically (Ecclestone & Hayes, 2019).
7. **Technological Barriers:** The digital divide is a growing concern, as many students lack access to technology needed for modern education. Limited internet access and lack of digital literacy skills prevent students from fully engaging in online and blended learning environments (Selwyn, 2021).

Government and Community Interventions on Addressing Educational Barriers in Nigeria

1. **Universal Basic Education (UBE) Policy:** The Nigerian government launched the Universal Basic Education (UBE) program in 1999 to provide free and compulsory education for children aged 6–15 years (Obanya, 2020). The UBE focuses on reducing dropout rates, improving school infrastructure, and training teachers (World Bank, 2021). However, scholars argue that poor funding and mismanagement have hindered its full implementation (Ajayi & Alonge, 2019).
2. **School Feeding Programs:** The National Home-Grown School Feeding Program (NHGSFP) was introduced to increase school enrollment and attendance among low-income children (Adelakun, 2020). Research shows that school feeding programs reduce absenteeism and improve students' cognitive abilities (Edeh & Obinna, 2021). However, irregular implementation and corruption have limited its impact (Ogunniyi & Ojebola, 2022).
3. **Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs):** To support vulnerable families, the government has implemented Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programs that provide financial assistance to poor households if they send their children to school (National Bureau of Statistics [NBS], 2021). Studies indicate that CCTs increase school enrollment, especially for girls, but delayed payments often reduce their effectiveness (Adepoju & Yusuf, 2021).
4. **Teacher Training and Recruitment:** The government has implemented teacher recruitment and training programs to improve the quality of education (Babalola, 2021). The Nigerian Teachers' Institute (NTI) and the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) provide capacity-building initiatives for teachers (Ogundele & Adebisi, 2020). However, scholars highlight that low teacher salaries and inadequate professional development continue to weaken the education sector (Ojo, 2022).
5. **Digital Education Initiatives:** The government has introduced ICT integration programs in education, such as the National Information Technology Development Agency (NITDA) e-learning projects (NITDA, 2021). These initiatives aim to bridge the digital divide and enhance learning through technology. However, limited internet access and poor electricity supply in rural areas remain challenges (Akinsola & Bello, 2021).
6. **Community-Based Schools and Volunteer Teaching:** In many underserved regions, local communities have established informal learning centers and volunteer teaching initiatives to complement government efforts (Duruji et al., 2021). Community-based organizations (CBOs) and religious groups play a critical role in funding and managing these schools, particularly in Northern Nigeria (Bashir & Abdullahi, 2021).
7. **Gender Advocacy and Girls' Education Support:** Local NGOs and international organizations, such as Malala Fund and UNICEF, have implemented programs to promote girls' education (UNICEF, 2021). These programs provide scholarships, mentorship, and advocacy against child marriage and gender discrimination (Ogunleye, 2021). Research shows that such interventions increase female school attendance and retention (Usman & Lawal, 2020).

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8. **Skill Acquisition and Vocational Training:** Communities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have introduced vocational training programs to equip out-of-school children with employable skills (Afolabi & Oyelade, 2020). These programs help bridge the gap between formal education and economic opportunities, especially in rural areas (Eze, 2021).
9. **Infrastructure Development through Community Participation:** Community-based initiatives support school construction, renovation, and provision of learning materials (Idris & Mohammed, 2021). Parents-Teachers Associations (PTAs) and local businesses contribute to improving school facilities in many Nigerian communities (Adewale, 2020).

Government and Community Interventions Challenges on Addressing Educational Barriers

Addressing educational barriers in Nigeria requires overcoming numerous challenges stemming from both government policies and community dynamics. Some key challenges include:

1. **Inadequate Funding:** Despite various interventions, government spending on education remains insufficient, leading to inadequate infrastructure, lack of teaching materials, and poorly paid teachers. This limits the ability to improve educational quality and access.
2. **Poor Infrastructure:** Many schools, particularly in rural and underserved areas, suffer from dilapidated buildings, lack of sanitation, insufficient classrooms, and inadequate resources. This discourages enrollment and retention of students.
3. **Teacher Shortages and Quality:** There's a shortage of qualified teachers, especially in rural areas. Many teachers lack proper training, and low salaries contribute to high turnover rates, undermining educational quality.
4. **Cultural Barriers:** In some regions, particularly in the north, cultural practices and gender biases hinder girls' education. Early marriage, religious beliefs, and conservative attitudes towards female education remain significant obstacles.
5. **Security Concerns:** Armed conflicts, banditry, and insurgencies in certain areas of the country (e.g., in the northeast and northwestern regions) have disrupted educational services. Schools are often attacked, and students and teachers face significant risks, leading to displaced populations and long-term disruptions in education.
6. **Poverty:** Many families struggle to afford basic education due to the cost of school fees, uniforms, and materials. This leads to high dropout rates and limits access to education for children from poor backgrounds.
7. **Lack of Government Commitment:** Although there are various educational policies in place, their implementation is often inconsistent. Corruption, lack of political will, and mismanagement of resources result in ineffective interventions and unmet educational goals.
8. **Inaccessibility of Education in Remote Areas:** Particularly in northern Nigeria, many children, especially those in rural communities, face difficulties accessing education due to distance, poor transportation, and lack of school availability.
9. **Language Barriers:** Nigeria is a linguistically diverse country, and many students face challenges in understanding instruction if it's conducted in languages they are not familiar with, especially in regions with many indigenous languages.
10. **Community Resistance:** In some areas, local communities may resist certain forms of education, particularly for girls, due to entrenched social norms and beliefs. Educational interventions sometimes fail to adequately address or engage with community concerns, reducing their effectiveness.

Conclusion

In addressing the educational barriers in Nigeria amid the era of insecurity requires a multi-faceted and collaborative approach involving both government and community interventions. While government initiatives such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) policy and the Safe Schools Initiative (SSI) aim to provide structural solutions, their effectiveness is often hampered by insufficient funding, poor infrastructure, and political instability. On the other hand, community-driven solutions, including local security networks, informal schools, and vocational training, have demonstrated resilience in the face of insecurity, offering adaptive, localized responses to the crisis. However, challenges such as cultural barriers, poverty, and limited access to educational resources continue to hinder progress, particularly in conflict-prone regions. To ensure inclusive and uninterrupted education, it is crucial for both government and community efforts to align and complement each other, focusing on sustainable, context-sensitive strategies. The role of partnerships between government agencies, local communities, international organizations, and non-governmental bodies is indispensable for fostering long-term educational resilience in Nigeria's conflict-affected regions.

Recommendations

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1. Education stakeholders should allocate more resources to infrastructure, school materials, teacher salaries, and safety measures will improve educational access and quality. Financial support should be directed toward upgrading facilities, building new schools in underserved regions, and ensuring that teachers are adequately compensated and trained.
2. Government should collaborate with local security agencies and communities to enhance school security. Establishing well-trained security personnel, creating safe school zones, and implementing surveillance systems can help protect students and educators from insurgent attacks, banditry, and other forms of violence.
3. The government and community organizations should invest in digital education platforms that can be accessed remotely. This will allow children in conflict-prone areas to continue their education even when attending physical schools becomes unsafe. Partnerships with tech companies can help provide affordable devices and ensure reliable internet access in rural and underserved areas.
4. Nigerian government must prioritize teacher recruitment and professional development. Specifically, training teachers to handle the challenges posed by insecurity, such as trauma-informed teaching, and increasing teacher salaries in conflict-affected areas will ensure a more stable and skilled workforce.
5. Communities should be empowered to take an active role in addressing educational barriers. This can be done through the establishment of community-based schools, volunteer teaching programs, and local advocacy for safer education. Collaborating with local leaders, parents, and faith-based organizations can help develop educational solutions that are culturally sensitive and more likely to gain community support.
6. Specific efforts should be made to address the gender disparities exacerbated by insecurity. Programs aimed at keeping girls in school, such as providing scholarships, mentorship, and safe learning environments, should be prioritized.
7. With many children displaced or out of school due to insecurity, community-based vocational training and skill acquisition programs can help equip these youth with practical skills that will enhance their employability. These programs should focus on creating economic opportunities in areas like agriculture, tailoring, carpentry, and other trades that are in demand.
8. The government should ensure that policies such as the Universal Basic Education (UBE) and school feeding programs are properly funded and managed. Transparency and accountability must be prioritized to reduce corruption, mismanagement of resources, and inefficiencies that hinder the progress of educational interventions.
9. Providing counseling services, stress-relief activities, and trauma-informed teaching practices to help students cope with the emotional and psychological toll of insecurity.

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Comparative Relationship between Professionalism and Staff Development on Management of Business Education Programs among Public Universities in South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship between professionalism and staff development on the effective management of business education programmes in South-South universities. To accomplish this, three research questions were answered, and three corresponding hypotheses guided the study were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study, and the targeted population was 98 Business educators in five selected universities in the South-south geopolitical zone. All 98 Business educators constitute the sample size since the population is of manageable size. An Instrument titled “Comparative Relationship between Professionalism and Staff Development on Effective Management of Business Education Programmes Questionnaire” (CRPSTDEMBEQ), validated by a business education specialist was employed for data gathering by experts. The correlation coefficient of the instrument was 0.736. The result among others showed a moderate overall level of professionalism but with variations across the assessed areas, which call for ethics training, workload management strategies, and professional development programmes, to enhance the professionalism of business educators in the region. Moreover, the result revealed a moderately positive and statistically significant relationship between staff professionalism and the effective management of the Business Education programme. The study concludes that professionalism and staff development are essential for effectively managing business education programmes in universities located in South-South Nigeria. It identifies a moderate level of professionalism with opportunities for improvement, highlighting the need for targeted interventions. The study recommended that Universities prioritize ongoing professional development by providing funding and facilitating access to workshops, conferences, certifications, and online courses.

Keyword: Professionalism, Staff Development, Effective Management, Business Education Programmes, South-South Universities

Introduction

Business education in universities plays a crucial role in preparing students for the complexities of the modern business environment. It is essential to manage business education programmes effectively to ensure that graduates have the skills and knowledge needed to make meaningful contributions to the economy. Two key factors that significantly influence the quality and effectiveness of these programmes are the professionalism of academic Staff and ongoing staff development initiatives (Education Policy Institute, 2019).

Professionalism involves adherence to ethical standards, expertise in the field, and a commitment to fostering student success. Additionally, Professionalism refers to the competence or skill expected of a professional, particularly business educators, whose professional body is the Association of Business Educators of Nigeria (ABEN). According to Mike Saks (2010), Professionalism involves specialized knowledge and skills that are typically acquired through extensive education and training. Meanwhile, Professionalism in Business Education as related to academia is characterized by competencies such as pedagogical expertise, ethical conduct, and a proactive approach to problem-solving. In business education, professionalism ensures that instructors teach not only theoretical concepts but also integrate practical applications that align with evolving industry standards. As Njoku (2006) emphasized, business education is dynamic and requires educators to continually update their skills and methodologies to remain relevant. Staff who demonstrate high levels of professionalism contribute to effective programme management by fostering innovation, maintaining ethical integrity, and ensuring academic rigor

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However, staff development includes structured training and opportunities that enhance skills, promoting innovation and adaptability to contemporary challenges in education and industry. The rising demand for quality education and the ever-changing nature of business environments require a workforce capable of bridging academic knowledge with practical business needs. The relationship between staff professionalism and development directly impacts the management of academic programmes, affecting outcomes such as curriculum relevance, student engagement, and overall programme efficiency. Also, Staff development refers to initiatives aimed at improving the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of academic staff. This can include workshops, conferences, mentorship programs, and advanced training. Research has shown that structured staff development is linked to increased productivity and professionalism, equipping educators with the tools needed to achieve institutional goals effectively (Ddamulira, 2009). Moreover, Staff development refers to the continuous process of improving the skills, competencies, and knowledge of employees to enhance their performance and adapt to changing organizational needs. Effective staff development focuses on structured training programs, mentoring, workshops, and other learning opportunities tailored to align with individual and organizational goals.

In Nigerian universities, the lack of consistent training opportunities and resources has often led to underperformance and challenges in programme implementation. Meanwhile, the Interrelationship between professionalism and staff development is essential for the effective management of business education programmes. Staff development enhances professionalism by providing academic staff with opportunities to refine their skills, stay updated on global trends, and adopt new teaching methodologies. Professionalism, in turn, motivates educators to actively pursue personal and professional growth opportunities, fostering a culture of excellence within academic departments. A study focusing on tertiary institutions in Southwest Nigeria indicated that inadequate staff development initiatives result in low morale, decreased commitment, and limited contributions to institutional growth. Conversely, institutions that prioritize staff training and promote professional development report higher levels of programme efficiency and staff satisfaction (Ijefam, 2020). Implications for Business Education in Nigerian Universities For business education programmes to thrive, Nigerian universities must invest in both professionalism and staff development. This investment entails designing policies that support regular training, providing resources for skill acquisition, and promoting an environment where professionalism is recognized and rewarded. Integrating these elements ensures that programs remain relevant, innovative, and aligned with national and global economic demands. By addressing these factors, business education programs in Nigerian universities can better prepare students for the complexities of modern business environments while fostering a robust academic culture that drives institutional growth.

In the contemporary landscape of higher education, the effective management of business education programmes is pivotal for producing graduates equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to thrive in a competitive global market. Nigerian universities face numerous challenges in this domain, including maintaining high standards of professionalism among staff and ensuring robust staff development programmes. The correlation between these factors and the overall effectiveness of business education programme management remains underexplored. Despite efforts to enhance educational outcomes, there are persistent issues such as inadequate training for educators, lack of continuous professional development opportunities, and insufficient support for staff to stay abreast of current industry practices and pedagogical advancements. Meanwhile, Bassey, Umoren, and Akuegwu (2019) reported that continuous professional development (CPD) for educators is directly linked to improved teaching practices and student performance. However, in Nigerian universities, a lack of structured CPD opportunities has been a persistent issue. These shortcomings potentially undermine the quality of education provided to students and the operational efficiency of business education programmes particularly in the South-South Universities. Moreover, the evolving demands of the business world necessitate that educators not only possess academic proficiency but also exhibit high levels of professionalism, including ethical conduct, effective communication, and leadership skills. The impact of such professionalism on the management and success of business education programmes is crucial yet under-researched in the Nigerian context. Based on this premise, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between professionalism and staff development, and how these elements correlate with the effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities. Understanding these correlations will provide insights into how Universities can better structure their staff development initiatives and promote a culture of professionalism to enhance the overall management and success of their business education programme. Therefore, the rationale for this study is based on the urgent need to tackle

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the challenges in the effective management of business education programs in Nigerian universities, particularly in the South-South region.

Objective of the Study

1. To evaluate the adherence to ethical standards and professional conduct among staff in business education programmes in South-South Universities.
2. Analyze the correlation between staff professionalism and Staff development for effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities.
3. To examine the extent to which Staff Professionalism and Staff Development correlate to effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of professionalism among the staff of business education programme in South-South Universities?
2. What is the relationship between staff professionalism and Staff Development for effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities?
3. To what extent do Staff Professionalism and Staff Development correlate to effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities?

Hypotheses

1. There is no significant relationship between Staff professionalism and the effective management of the business education programme in South-south Universities.
2. There is no significant relationship between staff development and the effective management of business education programmes in South-South universities.
3. There is no significant difference relationship between the influence of professionalism and staff development as correlates of effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities

Methodology

This study investigates the relationship between professionalism, and staff development on the effective management of business education programmes in South-South universities in Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design was utilized for this study, focusing on all business educators across five selected universities in the South-South geopolitical zone. The sample comprised a total of 98 business educators from the following universities: Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Edo State (9 educators); Cross River University of Technology, Calabar, Cross River State (26 educators); Delta State University, Abraka (15 educators); Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rumuolumini, Rivers State (12 educators); University of Benin, Benin-City, Edo State (12 educators); and University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State (23 educators). To collect data, an instrument titled “Comparative Relationship between Professionalism and Staff Development on Effective Management of Business Education Programmes Questionnaire” (CRPSTDEMBEQ), was employed. This questionnaire, validated by a business education specialist, included 35 statements related to professionalism, staff development, and the effective management of business education, structured on a 4-point rating scale. The internal consistency of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.736. The researcher personally administered copies of the questionnaire to the respondents with the help of five research assistants. The collected data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation, correlation, and regression analysis to test the null hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. If the p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected; if it was equal to or greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis was accepted.

Presentation of Results

Research Question 1: What is the level of professionalism among the staff of business education programme in South-South Universities?

Table 1: Mean and standard Deviation on the level of Professionalism exhibited among Business Educators.

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S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
1.	Staff demonstrate a high level of preparation and organization for their teaching activities.	98	3.33	.77	Agreed
2.	Staff maintain professional relationships with students and colleagues.	98	2.96	.84	Agreed
3.	Staff regularly engage in professional development activities to enhance their skills and knowledge.	98	3.11	.66	Agreed
4.	Staff adhere to ethical standards in their academic and administrative duties.	98	2.74	.98	Agreed
5.	Staff provide constructive feedback and mentoring to students promptly.	98	3.14	.59	Agreed
6.	Staff effectively balance their academic, administrative, and research responsibilities.	98	2.50	.94	Agreed
7.	Staff demonstrate a positive attitude towards their responsibilities and workplace challenges.	98	2.95	.59	Agreed
Aggregate		98	3.00	0.76	Agreed

Note. SD = standard deviation

Data presented in Table 1 shows respondents' mean and standard deviation on the level of Professionalism exhibited among Business Educators in South-south universities. The mean responses of all 7 items ranged from 2.50 to 3.33. In contrast, the values of the standard deviation ranged from .59 to .98. The aggregate standard deviation of .76, along with the standard deviation of all the measures (questions) being less than one (1), clearly shows that the responses on the level of professionalism fall above the criterion aggregate mean score of 2.50 set for a high level of professionalism. Therefore, the aggregate mean score of 3.00 signifies a moderate overall level of professionalism, but with variations across the assessed areas. Thus, it suggests a need for targeted interventions, such as ethics training, workload management strategies, and professional development programmes, to enhance the professionalism of business educators in the region.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between staff professionalism and Staff Development for effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities?

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation on the relationship between professionalism and Staff Development for effective management of Business Education Programme.

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
Staff Professionalism					
8.	Staff professionalism significantly influences the success of business education programs.	98	3.45	.75	Agreed
9.	Adherence to professional ethics by staff enhances programme management.	98	3.16	.68	Agreed
10.	Regular professional development improves staff teaching effectiveness.	98	3.46	.59	Agreed
11	Staff with a high level of professionalism contribute more effectively to curriculum development.	98	3.53	.63	Agreed
12.	Professional conduct among staff fosters a positive learning environment for students	98	3.40	.89	Agreed
13.	Staff professionalism improves significantly when they participate in development programs.	98	3.40	.62	Agreed
14.	Professional staff are more likely to take advantage of development programs.	98	3.73	.49	Agreed
Aggregate		98	3.45	0.66	Agreed
Staff Development					

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S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
15.	Staff development programmes are essential for improving staff skills in business education programme.	98	3.77	.51	Agreed
16.	Workshops and seminars for staff improve their ability to manage business education programs effectively.	98	3.64	.61	Agreed
17.	Financial support for professional training motivates staff to engage in continuous learning.	98	3.39	.68	Agreed
18.	Staff development initiatives enhance collaboration and teamwork among colleagues.	98	3.41	.51	Agreed
19.	Continuous professional development programs lead to innovation in teaching methodologies.	98	3.38	.53	Agreed
20.	There is a strong link between staff training and their ability to implement effective management strategies.	98	3.42	.55	Agreed
21.	Effective staff development contributes to a culture of professionalism in business education programs.	98	3.29	.626	Agreed
	Aggregate	98	3.47	0.57	Agreed
	Effective Management				
22.	Trained professional staff effectively manage business education programs through regular training	98	3.52	.69	Agreed
23.	Staff professionalism ensures better decision-making in programme management.	98	3.33	.67	Agreed
24.	Development programmes empower staff to address challenges in programme implementation effectively	98	3.24	.72	Agreed
25.	Professional and well-trained staff attract more students to business education programmes	98	3.16	.55	Agreed
26.	The combination of professionalism and development enhances the overall quality of business education programmes	98	3.27	.62	Agreed
27.	The synergy between professionalism and development enhances the overall effectiveness of programme management.	98	3.22	.62	Agreed
28.	Professionalism and staff development are mutually reinforcing for the successful management of business education programs	98	3.31	.58	Agreed
	Aggregate	98	3.29	0.64	Agreed

Note. SD = standard deviation

The data presented in Table 2 displays the aggregate mean and standard deviation regarding the relationship between staff professionalism and staff development, specifically for the effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities. The aggregate mean scores and standard deviations across the three dimensions are as follows: Staff Professionalism (M=3.45, SD=0.66), Staff Development (M=3.47, SD=0.57), and Effective Management (M=3.29, SD=0.64). This indicates that both professionalism and staff development are critical factors influencing the success of these programmes. It can be concluded that staff professionalism and development are closely linked and essential for the effective management

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of business education programmes. The high aggregate mean scores across these dimensions highlight the importance of these factors in fostering innovation, enhancing teaching quality, and achieving program goals.

Research Question 3: To what extent do Staff Professionalism and Staff Development correlate to effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation on how Staff Professionalism and Staff Development correlate to effective management of business education programmes.

S/N	Item Statement	N	Mean	SD	Remarks
29.	Staff adherence to professional ethics has a positive impact on the management of business education programmes	98	3.53	.69	Agreed
30.	Participation in staff development initiatives enhances business educators' ability to manage this programme effectively.	98	3.34	.66	Agreed
31.	Professional conduct among Business educators fosters a supportive environment for programme administration.	98	3.26	.71	Agreed
32.	Continuous professional training increases Business educators commitment to achieving programme objectives.	98	3.14	.56	Agreed
33.	Universities that prioritize staff development tend to have more efficiently managed business education programmes.	98	3.24	.63	Agreed
34.	A strong culture of professionalism among staff is associated with improved programme quality and better student outcomes.	98	3.19	.65	Agreed
35.	Collaboration among professionally trained Business educators leads to more effective decision-making in Business education programme management.	98	3.28	.62	Agreed
Aggregate		98	3.28	0.65	Agreed

Note. SD = standard deviation

The data in Table 3 indicate the average responses on how Staff Professionalism and Staff Development correlate to effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities. The table shows that the average responses range from 3.14 to 3.53, while the standard deviation values range from 0.56 to 0.71. It is worth noting that the standard deviation of all the measures (questions) is less than one (1), which indicates that the level of acceptance falls above the criterion aggregate mean score of 2.50 set for a possible influence. The aggregate score of 3.28 (SD = 0.65) suggests that professionalism and staff development are interdependent and collectively enhance the management of business education programmes. This, underscore the importance of institutions investing in staff development and fostering a professional culture to ensure the sustainable success of their programme.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between Staff professionalism and the effective management of the business education programme in South-south Universities.

Table 4: Correlation between Staff Professionalism and the Effective Management of Business Education

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	R	P
Staff Professionalism	98	24.1327	2.80146	.553**	.000

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Effective Management 98 23.0510 2.98233

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

		Staff Development	Effective Management
Staff Professionalism	Pearson Correlation	1	.553**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	98	98
Effective Management	Pearson Correlation	.553**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	98	98

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

Table 4 presents the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation between staff professionalism and the effective management of business education programs in South-South universities. The result was found to be a moderately positive and statistically significant correlation. Specifically, the correlation analysis revealed a moderately positive and statistically significant relationship between staff professionalism and the effective management of the Business Education programme in South-south Universities ($r = .553^{**}$, $p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between staff development and the effective management of business education programmes in South-South universities.

Table 5: Correlation between the Staff Development and the Effective Management of Business Education

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	R	P
Staff Development	98	24.2857	2.22914	.550**	.000
Effective Management	98	23.0510	2.98233		

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

		Staff Development	Effective Management
Staff Development	Pearson Correlation	1	.550**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	98	98
Effective Management	Pearson Correlation	.550**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	98	98

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

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Table 5 presents the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation between staff development and the effective management of business education programme in South-south Universities. The result was found to be a moderately positive and statistically significant correlation. Specifically, the correlation analysis revealed a moderately positive and statistically significant relationship between staff Development and the effective management of the Business Education programme in South-south Universities ($r = .550^{**}, p < 0.05$).

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant difference relationship between the influence of professionalism and staff development as correlates of effective management of business education programmes in South-South Universities

Table 6: Table 6: Shows the summary of the findings about hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis	Regression Weights	Beta Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Hypothesis Supported
Ho	P-- EM	.400	4.172	.000	Yes
Ho	SD-- EM	.493	4.100	.000	Yes
R	.410				
F (2, 95)	33.06				

Note: * $p > 0.05$. P: Staff Development, EM= Effective Management.

The results in Table 6 show that there is no significant difference between the influence of Professionalism and Staff Development as a correlate of business education programmes in South-south Universities. The dependent variable EM was regressed on predicting variable of professionalism, and staff development. The independent variables Statistically significantly predicted effective management, $F(2, 95) = 33.06, p < .05$ which indicates that the two factors under study have a significant influence on effective management. Moreover, the $R^2 = .410$ depicts that the model explains 41% of the variance in effective management.

Discussion of Findings

This study investigates the relationship between professionalism, staff development, and the effective management of business education programs in South-South universities in Nigeria. The first research question reveals a moderate overall level of professionalism, though it varies across different assessed areas. All seven items on the questionnaire recorded mean scores above the benchmark average, indicating a need for targeted interventions. These interventions may include ethics training, workload management strategies, and professional development programmes to enhance the professionalism of business educators in the region. This study aligns with the findings of Shrestha and Koirala (2020), who also reported a moderate overall level of professionalism among teachers, with notable differences in areas such as classroom management, ethical behavior, and collaboration with peers. Similarly, the study supports the work of Hodges, Ginsburg, and Cruess (2019), who identified variations in professionalism across dimensions such as patient communication, interprofessional collaboration, and adherence to ethical practices in healthcare settings.

The results of the second research question indicate that staff professionalism and staff development are closely linked and essential for the effective management of business education programmes in South-South universities. The high aggregate mean scores across the three dimensions emphasize the importance of these factors in fostering innovation, enhancing teaching quality, and achieving programme goals. The corresponding hypothesis 1 and 2 further revealed a moderately positive and statistically significant relationship between staff Professionalism and Staff Development for effective management of the Business Education programme in South-South Universities. This finding aligns with the work of Nwachukwu and Chikezie (2019), which identifies staff development initiatives, such as workshops and certifications, as crucial for maintaining professionalism and ensuring effective program management. Additionally, the study's findings support the research of

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Ogbondah (2015), which connects ongoing professional development to higher academic standards in Nigerian universities. This highlights the positive impact of well-trained and professional staff on the effectiveness of program management.

The results of the third research question affirm that professionalism and staff development are interdependent and collectively enhance the management of business education programmes. The correspondence hypothesis three affirms that Professionalism and Staff Development have a significant influence on effective management. Moreover, the $R^2 = .410$ depicts that the model explains 41% of the variance in effective management. This finding aligns with the work of Garavan, and McGuire (2015) who reported that both professional conduct and staff training are significant contributors to effective leadership and management outcomes.

Conclusion

The study concludes that professionalism and staff development are essential for effectively managing business education programmes in universities located in South-South Nigeria. It identifies a moderate level of professionalism with opportunities for improvement, highlighting the need for targeted interventions such as ethics training and professional development. The findings indicate a positive and significant relationship between professionalism and staff development, which together account for 41% of effective management. Consistent with previous research, the study underscores that investing in staff training and ethical practices is vital for fostering innovation, enhancing teaching quality, and achieving program objectives.

Recommendations

Based on the preceding information and the results of this study, the following recommendations deemed necessary were proffered:

1. Universities should prioritize ongoing professional development by providing funding and facilitating access to workshops, conferences, certifications, and online courses.
2. Universities should regularly conduct ethics training workshops for business educators to address identified gaps in ethical conduct.
3. To motivate staff to actively engage in development initiatives and demonstrate high professionalism in their roles, financial incentives, promotions, and recognition awards should be introduced.
4. University management should create policies that prioritize professionalism and staff development as core institutional values, with measurable objectives linked to the efficient management of business education programmes.
5. Encourage universities to institutionalize mentorship programmes for staff to uphold professionalism.

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Influence of Parents' Socioeconomic Status on Performance of School Children in Kabong, Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of parents' socioeconomic status on the performance of school children in Kabong, Jos North LGA, Plateau State, Nigeria. The purpose is to critically study how parents' occupation and environment affect the educational outcomes of the child. The social survey design was employed for the study. The study adopted mixed method and used questionnaire tagged: Parents' Socioeconomic Status and Performance of School Children Questionnaire (PSSPSCQ) of Parents and Educational Performance of a Child Questionnaire, and accompanied by interview guide as instruments of data collection. Instruments were subjected to content validity and questionnaire was tested after a pilot study using Cronbach's reliability test which yielded a coefficient of 0.837. A sample size of 378 parents and teachers was determined using Krejcie & Morgan formula. Respondents were selected using multi-stage sampling technique. Data collected was collated using SPSS v.26 and presented in simple percentages and cross tabulations, while qualitative data collected was analyzed using thematic content analysis. The study discovered that, socio-economic status of parents affects the educational outcomes of children to a large extent. Lower income generally correlates with lower academic outcomes and vice versa; conducive home environment affects children's academic performance, particularly the availability of a quiet reading space and access to educational resources. The study recommended that: there is need to improve the occupational status through welfare programs, flexible job opportunities, and vocational training to enhance financial stability and school involvement. NGOs, FBOs, and CSOs should provide learning resources such as such as reading spaces, computers, and internet access can significantly enhance academic performance, especially for children from underprivileged backgrounds, since many homes lack conducive study environments.

Key words: Socioeconomic status, children's educational performance, occupation and environment,

Introduction

The onus is on parents for the proper training and development. In other words, parents are wholly responsible for the upbringing of children by catering for their physical, social, emotional and psychological needs as well as instilling in them, societal norms and values that will help in building strong moral character and stimulating their intellect for better reception of education. This is only achieved by having a congenial home environment for the children. Education received by a child from parents and others at home is most likely to have dominant effects on the behaviors of the child later in life. Bhat (2022) helped us to understand the role of parents in education when he observed that, education originated as a way of transmitting cultural information down through the generations with parents serving as conduits for each successive generation.

Suffice it to say, education is deeply intertwined with the home environment and parental efforts. The home serves as the first learning space where children acquire foundational knowledge about life, society, and social interactions. Parents lay the groundwork for intellectual and personal development by shaping their children's values, beliefs, and habits, which, in turn, influence their academic success (Stipanovic & Fairchild, 2010). According to Abdu-Raheem (2015), parents' socioeconomic status – comprising factors such as education level, occupation, income, and place of residence – significantly impacts

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children's educational performance. These factors determine access to resources that enhance learning and academic achievement.

UNICEF (2022) reports that children in slum neighborhoods often perform poorly in school compared to their counterparts in urban areas due to limited access to learning facilities and other necessary resources. Urban slums are characterized by overcrowding, poor sanitation, high disease prevalence, low-paying jobs, and inadequate social amenities like water and electricity. They are also regarded as underserved areas. Schools in these areas face shortages of basic infrastructure (such as health, power and water supply), qualified teachers, learning materials, and environmental challenges, all of which hinder academic performance. Additionally, the rising insecurity – manifesting in banditry, kidnappings, and violent attacks – has exacerbated economic disparities and forced rural migrants into urban slums as safe havens, further straining already inadequate educational resources. These challenges necessitate a critical examination of how socioeconomic factors shape children's educational outcomes in such environments.

Despite these underlying problems, less attention has been given to underserved areas such as Kabong Community to mitigate the learning challenges thereby improve the educational outcomes of the children. It has been well established by several studies that parental socioeconomic status, including factors such as educational level, occupation, and income, place of abode, significantly influence students' educational achievement (Ahmad, & Najeemah, 2013; Abdu-Raheem, 2015; Garba, & Sanda, 2007). However, no close attention has been given to families in slum neighborhoods or underserved areas where the major population of people in town resides. Thus, there is need to critically examine how the socioeconomic status of parents, that is, income, occupation, education and environment influence continually hamper the educational performance of children in Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to examine influence of parental socioeconomic status on children's educational performance in Kabong, Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State. However, the study specifically seeks to:

- (i) Determine the effect of occupational status of parents on children's performance in Kabong, Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State.
- (ii) Examine environmental factors related to socioeconomic status that affect the educational performance of children in Kabong, Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State.

Research Question:

1. What is the effect of occupational status of parents on children's performance in Kabong, Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State?
2. What are the environmental factors related to socioeconomic status that affect the educational performance of children in Kabong, Jos North Local Government Area, Plateau State?

Socioeconomic Status and Parenting

Socioeconomic status (SES) refers to the social and economic factors that characterize an individual or family, influencing their access to resources, opportunities, and overall quality of life. It is commonly assessed through a combination of income, education level, and occupation, reflecting how individuals or groups relate to society in terms of power, privilege, and access to economic resources (Lareau, 2011). Socioeconomic status (SES) is defined by American Psychological Association, (2020) as the social standing or class of an individual or group, often measured as a combination of education, income, and occupation. SES influences various aspects of life, including health, educational attainment, and access to resources. The World Health Organization (WHO) describes socioeconomic status as the social and economic factors that influence an individual's or group's position within a hierarchical social structure. These factors include income, education, occupation, and access to healthcare, which collectively impact health outcomes and quality of life (WHO, 2019). Furthermore, Galobardes, Shaw, Lawlor, Lynch, and Davey Smith, (2006) define socioeconomic status as a composite measure that reflects an individual's or household's

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economic and social position relative to others, based on income, education, and occupation. They argue that understanding SES is crucial for examining education, income, health disparities as well as social inequalities in society.

Socioeconomic status is generally classified into three categories: lower, middle, and upper. The lower class includes individuals with low income, limited education, and less prestigious jobs, often facing challenges like restricted access to healthcare and education (Domhoff, 2011). The middle class comprises professionals such as teachers and nurses with stable incomes and better educational opportunities, leading to an improved quality of life (Goldthorpe, 2013). The upper class consists of wealthy individuals in high-ranking positions, such as executives and doctors, who enjoy exclusive resources and greater life opportunities (Domhoff, 2010).

Parenting on the other hand encompasses the behaviors, practices, and roles that parents undertake to raise their children. It involves providing for the child's physical needs, ensuring their safety, nurturing emotional well-being, fostering social development, and guiding educational and moral growth. Baumrind (1991 cited in Adekoya, 2021) defines parenting as the collection of practices, strategies, and actions employed by parents to raise their children, emphasizing different styles such as authoritative, authoritarian, and permissive parenting. These styles are characterized by varying levels of responsiveness and demandingness.

Socioeconomic status (SES) significantly influences parenting by shaping the resources, opportunities, and environment available for child development, (UNICEF, 2022). Parents with higher SES often have greater financial stability, higher education levels, and access to quality healthcare, which allows them to provide better educational support, extracurricular activities, and a nurturing home environment (Zehri, & Abdelbaki, 2023). In contrast, lower SES parents may struggle with job instability, limited educational attainment, and financial constraints, leading to challenges in meeting their children's academic and emotional needs (UNDP, 2023). Additionally, SES affects parenting styles, as higher-income parents tend to engage in more authoritative and involved parenting, while lower-income parents may adopt more authoritarian approaches due to economic stress and limited time (Smith, & Johnson, 2023). These differences in parental involvement and resources ultimately impact children's cognitive, social, and emotional development.

Occupational Status of Parents and Children's Performance

Parental occupation plays a significant role in shaping children's academic performance, as highlighted in various studies. Research by Owuor, Simatwa, and Ndolo (2023) found that stable occupations positively influence children's academic success, emphasizing the importance of parents as role models. Additionally, Munir, Faiza, and Daud (2023) discovered that higher socioeconomic status (SES) families tend to provide better educational resources, parental involvement, and stable home environments, leading to higher academic achievement. However, the study did not fully address variations within the same SES group, as some students from lower SES backgrounds still excelled due to strong parental engagement or motivation. Furthermore, Zhang and Xie (2017) found that parents in higher occupational classes, with more social capital, positively impacted their children's educational performance, though the findings were more reflective of Chinese society and may differ in other regions, such as Nigeria and Kabong. Other studies further explore the link between parental occupation and academic performance. Zehri and Abdelbaki (2023) found that children of parents in higher-status jobs, like government or business roles, had more resources and better academic outcomes, while those with parents in lower-status jobs faced more challenges. Similarly, Sullivan, Ketende, and Joshi (2013) used data from the UK Millennium Cohort Study to show that children of parents in professional occupations achieved higher academic results. Studies from Srivastava and Singh (2017) and Onyedikachim and Ezekiel-Hart (2021) also emphasize how parental involvement and occupational status contribute to academic success, especially when parents are educated or have stable jobs.

Environmental Factors Related to Socioeconomic Status and Children's Educational Performance

Okoye and Musa's (2024) study explored the impact of environmental factors on educational outcomes in urban and semi-urban areas in Nigeria. They found that students in urban areas generally outperformed those in semi-urban areas due to better infrastructure and access to resources. However, they also highlighted significant disparities within urban areas, especially in

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slums, where overcrowding and inadequate facilities hindered academic progress. The study stressed the importance of improving infrastructure and resources in underprivileged urban areas to address these challenges. Similarly, Adewale and Eze (2023) examined the relationship between housing conditions and academic performance, revealing that poor housing in densely populated urban slums, characterized by factors like overcrowding and noise pollution, negatively impacted students' academic outcomes. They concluded that improving housing quality through better urban planning could enhance educational performance, though their study lacked theoretical frameworks to fully explain how housing affects cognitive development. Other studies also highlight the role of environmental factors in academic success. Smith and Johnson's (2023) research found that students from higher-SES families had enriched home environments with access to learning materials and quiet study spaces, which positively impacted their academic performance. Additionally, Voight, Shinn, and Nation (2012) investigated the effects of residential mobility on academic outcomes and found that frequent moves, especially in low-income families, were linked to lower academic performance due to disruptions like changing schools and losing social networks. Their study concluded that housing stability is essential for consistent academic achievement, though it did not offer a clear theoretical explanation for the impact of residential mobility.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Bioecological Systems Theory, developed by Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979), as it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the environmental systems that influence a child's development, including their educational performance. The theory emphasizes the interconnectedness of various environmental systems, such as the family, school, peers, community, sociocultural beliefs, and policy regimes. It categorizes these influences into three levels: the microsystem, mesosystem, and exosystem. At the microsystem level, children from higher socioeconomic backgrounds often benefit from enriched environments, including access to resources and supportive family dynamics, which positively affect their academic outcomes. On the other hand, children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may face challenges like unstable home environments and limited resources, which can hinder their academic success. The mesosystem and exosystem levels further explain the influence of family-school relationships and external factors like parents' workplaces and community resources. Higher SES parents tend to have positive relationships with teachers and engage more actively in their children's education, fostering academic success. In contrast, lower SES families may struggle with involvement due to work demands or limited resources. The exosystem highlights how external factors, such as community support and safe neighborhoods, indirectly influence educational outcomes. Despite its strengths in providing a holistic view of development and environmental factors, the Bioecological Systems Theory is critiqued for being complex and challenging to apply in practice, especially in understanding individual differences and internal processes. Nonetheless, this theory forms the basis for the study, as it offers insights into how environmental factors, particularly socioeconomic status, shape educational performance.

Area of the Study

The location of the study was Kabong District, Jos North Local Government Area. Kabong is the most dynamic suburb within Jos-North Local Government Area of Plateau State in North Central Nigeria. Before the creation of Jos North LGA in 1992, it was under Du in the old Jos LGA. Kabong gained her autonomy and became a district of her own in 1983. Kabong gained her autonomy and became a district of her own in 1983.

Methodology

The study adopted social survey design as it is considered suitable as it also facilitates the collection of data from large population through questionnaire, interview and observation. It is suitable also in describing social characteristics and assessing the perception of people about a particular subject (Fowler, 2014). Mixed method which combines quantitative data and qualitative data was used for wholistic data collection. Hence, three key instruments were used for data collection namely: Structured Questionnaire tagged: *Parents' Socioeconomic Status and Performance of School Children Questionnaire (PSSPSCQ)*, Interview Guide and Observation. A sample size of 378 parents and teachers was determined using Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula with 0.5 margin of error and a total population of 68,559, (Dung, 2017). The study used a multi-stage sampling approach. First, 24 streets were randomly selected from six chosen Angwas. Next, four households with children were randomly chosen from each street, totaling 96 households. Finally, four respondents were selected from each household,

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from there 378 is gotten. A pilot study was conducted with 50 respondents from Tudun Wada Community in Jos North LGA, Plateau state and was analyzed using Cronbach's reliability test which yielded a coefficient of 0.837. Data from questionnaire was analyzed using SPSS version 26 while interview was analyzed using thematic content analysis through developing themes and codes such as: work nature, parental support, economic challenge, and community infrastructure. Presentation of data from questionnaire, interview and observation was done in a triangulating manner – side by side to confirm the veracity of the data.

Presentation of Results

Findings from the study are presented below:

Question 1: Does the nature of work of parents allow them to give adequate attention to the school need of the school child[ren]?

Table 1: Respondents' view on whether their nature of work allow them to give adequate attention to the school need of their school child[ren]

Response	Frequency (n)	Percent (%)
Yes	168	47.7
No	148	42.0
Can't Say	36	10.2
Total	352	100.0

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 1 shows that, 47.7%(n=168) of the respondents affirmed that their nature of work stops them from giving adequate attention to the school needs of the children while 42.0%(n=148) of the respondents negated this assertion and 10.2%(n=36) of the respondents could not say. The table reveals that the nature of job parents are engaged in affects the quality of time and attention of parents given to children in relation to their school. Furthermore, in an interview conducted with a community leader in Angwan Mission and religious leader in Angwan Jirgi, the respondents observed that children of the community suffer from the negligence from their parents. Parents are always busy looking for money without giving close attention to the things that matter which is the children. The religious leader observed that no amount of money will ever make up for the time lost and parents often forget this. Beyond the educational needs of the children, their psychological wellbeing is also affected because they are mostly alone, they will feel withdrawn and not open up their problems at home and will later translate to how they react and interact with their peers and teachers at school. This corroborated with the work of Onyedikachim and Ezekiel-Hart (2021), observed that nature of work of parents affects the educational outcomes of the children. Students with highly involved parents, especially those who were well-educated or had stable professional occupations, exhibited better academic outcomes.

Question 2: How frequent do parents attend PTA, Open Day or any meeting at school for their child[ren]?

Table 2: Parents' Attendance of PTA/Open Day in School and Position of Children in Class

Position of Children	Attending PTA/Open Day in School										
	Always		Severally		Only When chanced		Rarely		Never		Total
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1-5	12	27.3	12	16.7	8	4.9	0	0	0	0	32
6-10	8	18.2	20	27.8	24	14.6	0	0	0	0	52
11-15	24	54.5	28	38.9	104	63.4	12	30	4	10	172
16-20	0	0	12	16.7	20	12.2	16	40	28	90	76
21 & Above	0	0	0	0	8	4.9	12	30	0	0	20
Total	44	100.0	72	100.0	164	100.0	40	100.0	40	100.0	352

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In Table 2, the cross-tabulation results indicate a strong relationship between parental involvement in school events or activities of children, such as PTA meetings, and the academic performance of children. Among the students ranked 1-5, 12 children have parents who attend these meetings always or several times, highlighting a correlation between frequent parental engagement and higher academic performance. Conversely, the 11-15 ranking shows that 104 out of 172 parents only attend when they have time, which may contribute to the children's lower performance. By implication, the data shows that increased

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parental participation in school activities significantly impacts children's academic achievements, emphasizing the importance of fostering a school environment that encourages and facilitates active parental involvement for better educational outcomes.

Question 3: In what ways has parental level of income affected the position of the child in class?

Table 3: Level of Parental Income and Position of Children in Class

Position of Children	Parental Income												Total
	<20k		21k – 40k		41k – 60k		61k-80k		81k-100k		>100k		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1-5	20	35.7	12	7.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32
6-10	0	0	28	18.0	24	43.0	0	0	0	0	0	0	52
11-15	8	14.3	88	56.4	60	62.5	4	100	8	100	4	12.5	172
16-20	12	21.4	24	15.4	12	12.5	0	0	0	0	28	87.5	76
21 & Above	16	28.6	4	2.5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	20
Total	56	100	156	100	96	100	4	100	8	100	32	100.0	352

Source: Field Survey, 2024 (SPSS Output)

In Table 3, the cross-tabulation between parents' monthly income levels and their children's class positions reveals a significant relationship, indicating that higher income correlates with better academic performance. Out of the 352 parents surveyed, 20 children of parents earning less than N20,000 ranked in the 1-5 category, suggesting some level of academic success despite lower income. However, the 6-10 ranking category shows a notable concentration of 28 children whose parents earn between N21,000 to N40,000, reflecting a trend where moderate income supports improved academic performance. The largest group, comprising 88 children, falls within the 11-15 category, primarily associated with parents earning between N21,000 to N40,000 and N41,000 to N60,000, indicating that financial stability may enhance academic outcomes. Conversely, in the 16-20 category, 28 children belong to parents earning above N100,000, suggesting that even higher income does not guarantee academic success. This implies that while income plays a crucial role in shaping academic performance, it is not the sole determinant; other factors such as parental engagement and educational support may also be significant contributors to children's success in school.

Furthermore, in an interview with a Religious leader (male) in Angwan Mission, the participant observed said the following:

Families here are middle- and low-income families...this level of income of the families play a part in the child's education. In these turbulent economic times where food is very expensive and things are very hard, parents suffer more to buy food, buy clothes, take care of bills and also pay the school fees of children. Families are living by the Grace of God you know, so their education is also in the hands of God. It is very few families. ... quite alright quality of schools varies in this community. There are the ones that are good and there are those that are average but it depends on the affordability of parents. Parents in times like these do not have much money to send their children in good schools but some parents take their schools in other areas like Rock Haven, Zaria Road and so on and you can see the busses coming every morning to pick these children here but the ones that are going to LEA primary schools are, tor... all I can say is that it is God that has been helping these children.

In line with this, Cooper and Stewart (2023) emphasize that household income plays a crucial role in shaping educational attainment. Income facilitates access to educational resources, such as better schools, private tutoring, and extracurricular activities, which are pivotal in academic success. Also, parental involvement and a supportive home environment, which are more likely in higher-income families, contribute to children's educational achievements. Chetty, Hendren, Lin, Majerovits, and Scuderi, (2018) maintained that increase in family income can impact children's opportunities and outcomes in education and beyond. Also, Hanson, et al (2024) observed that higher parental income significantly correlates with improved academic performance and cognitive development, particularly in areas such as memory, problem-solving, and verbal skills. Neuroimaging revealed that children from higher-income households showed greater development in brain regions associated

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with learning and memory. Conversely, children from lower-income families exhibited more challenges in these areas, often exacerbated by stress and limited access to educational resources.

Question 4: What is the connection between the availability of a quiet reading space at home and children's performance in class?

Table 4: Availability of Reading Space at Home and Class Position of a Child

Position of Children	Availability of Reading Space						Total
	Yes		No		Can't Say		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1-5	20	16.1	12	6.1	0	0	32
6-10	12	9.7	36	18.4	4	3.0	52
11-15	72	58.1	84	42.9	16	50	172
16-20	20	16.1	44	22.4	12	37.5	76
21 & Above	0	0	20	10.2	0	0	20
Total	124	100.0	196	100.0	32	100.0	352

Source: Field Survey, 2024 (SPSS Output)

In table 4, the cross-tabulation results reveal a notable connection between the availability of a quiet reading space at home and children's academic performance. Among students ranked 1-5, 20 out of 32 parents indicated that they have a designated quiet reading space for their children, suggesting that such an environment may contribute positively to their academic success. In contrast, the 11-15 ranking shows a higher proportion of parents (over 84) without a quiet reading space, which correlates with lower academic performance. Implicatively, the significance of a conducive home environment, particularly the availability of a quiet reading area, in fostering better educational outcomes for children, thus, the need for parents to create spaces that encourage focused study and reading is imperative. In line with this Okoye and Musa (2024) observed that urban students performed better than their semi-urban counterparts, primarily due to superior infrastructure and resource availability.

Question 5: How does access to educational resources [specifically computers, the internet, and tutoring] affect the academic performance of children in the Kabong community

Table 5: Availability of Computer, Internet, Tutoring at Home and Position of Children in Class

Position of Children	Availability of Computer, Internet, Tutoring						Total
	Yes		No		Can't Say		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1-5	4	10	28	10.1	0	0	32
6-10	8	20	36	13.0	8	22.2	52
11-15	16	40	140	50.7	16	44.5	172
16-20	12	30	52	18.9	12	33.3	76
21 & Above	0	0	20	7.3	0	0	20
Total	40	100.0	276	100.0	36	100.0	352

Source: Field Survey, 2024 (SPSS Output)

From Table 5, the cross-tabulation analysis illustrates a clear correlation between access to educational resources – specifically computers, the internet, and tutoring – and the academic performance of children in the Kabong community. Among those students ranked 1-5, only 4 out of 32 parents reported that their children have access to these resources, indicating a potential disadvantage in academic performance. In stark contrast, the 11-15 ranking category shows a significant proportion (140) of children lacking access to these vital educational tools. This implies that limited access to technology and tutoring may hinder academic achievement. According to Katz, Huffman, & Morris (2017), students with reliable internet access at home tend to have better grades and higher test scores due to easier access to information, educational resources and online learning tools.

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Cueto, Santiago and Wills (2006) observed that access to home computers can improve children's academic performance, particularly in subjects like mathematics and language, by facilitating educational activities homework.

Question 6: What is the effect of the presence of role models in the neighborhood on children's academic performance in the Kabong community?

Table 6: Presence of Role Models in the Environment and Position of Children in Class

Position of Children	Presence of Role Models in the Environment						Total
	Yes		No		Can't Say		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1-5	0	0	28	15.6	4	5.3	32
6-10	24	25	24	13.3	4	5.3	52
11-15	60	62.5	76	42.2	36	47.4	172
16-20	12	12.5	44	24.5	20	26.3	76
21 & Above	0	0	8	4.4	12	15.7	20
Total	96	100.0	180	100.0	76	100.0	352

Source: Field Survey, 2024

In Table 6, the cross-tabulation data reveals a notable relationship between the presence of role models in the neighborhood and children's academic performance in the Kabong community. Among students ranked 1-5, no parents indicated the existence of motivating role models, with 28 out of 32 reporting no such influence. Conversely, for students ranked 11-15, 60 parents acknowledged the presence of role models, suggesting that inspiration from community figures may positively impact motivation and academic achievement. This pattern highlights the potential significance of having accessible role models, as their influence can encourage students to strive for higher academic standings, emphasizing the need for community initiatives that foster positive role models to enhance educational outcomes.

To further substantiate this, an interview conducted with a male teacher in one of the schools in Anguwan Soya observed that the community has a bad influence on the people because there are many areas in the community that sell alcohol, there are also many betting shops and youths of the community always indulge in either betting, alcoholism and crime which does not give the children a good example; also, noise pollution affects the child. A respondent specifically said this:

No, I don't think we have good role models in this community that these children will look up to. I am not saying that the community is entirely bad but my observation is coming from the area of majority. Majority of the youths just want quick money so you will see them in bet9ja shops from the morning till night. Sometimes they do not have money to bet so they steal from neighbours and sometimes in the street at night. Many people have complained of phone snatching, you know 'kolat' now, but it has reduced these days sha. ... good role models are lacking in this area. See those areas, they are all bet shops, the other side there by the street are just burkutu houses where people drink and misbehave. ... also the community is choked up with people and there is so much pollution, when there is so much noise, fight and disturbances, the child cannot concentrated in his study.

Another participant who is a community leader in Rafin Gambo (male) observed that:

Well, I can say there are good ones and there are bad ones but the bad ones here outshine the good ones. We are trying our best to sanitize this community from the bad eggs so that the children that are coming up can pick something good and make their lives better. It is very important.

In relation to this, Stipanovic and Fairchild (2010) observed that adolescents who perceive their parents, elder ones and peers as role models are more likely to have higher educational expectations and academic performance. The presence of supportive and successful role models encourages students to strive for higher educational goals.

Discussion of Findings

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The study discovered that socio-economic status of parents affects the educational outcomes of children to a large extent. Low-income status of parents greatly affects the educational performance of their children in a negative direction. The level of income of parents in Kabong is low, around 41,000 to 60,000 monthly which is often not sufficient to cater for all the needs of the family including the educational needs of the children. The level of income of parents delays the early enrollment of the child in school which affects how the child adjusts in school and excel. More so, the nature of job parents are engaged in affects the quality of time and attention of parents given to children in relation to their school. The cross-tabulation analysis in Tables 2 and 3 revealed the impact of parents' income levels and involvement in school activities on children's academic performance. Higher income generally correlates with better academic outcomes, as seen in the 1-5 ranking category, where children of parents earning less than N20,000 still achieved academic success, though moderate-income levels (N21,000–N40,000) supported a larger number of students in the 6-10 ranking. However, financial stability alone does not guarantee success, as 28 children in the 16-20 category had parents earning above N100,000, suggesting other influencing factors. Similarly, parental involvement in school activities, such as PTA, School Meetings and Open Day activities meetings, significantly impacts performance, with 12 children in the top-ranking category having parents who actively participate, whereas 104 parents of lower-ranking students attended only occasionally. This corroborated with the work of Onyedikachim and Ezekiel-Hart (2021), observed that nature of work of parents affects the educational outcomes of the children. Students with highly involved parents, especially those who were well-educated or had stable professional occupations, exhibited better academic outcomes.

The study discovered that a conducive home environment affects children's academic performance, particularly the availability of a quiet reading space and access to educational resources. Students ranked 1-5 were more likely to have a designated reading area at home, while those ranked 11-15 lacked such spaces, correlating with lower academic performance. Similarly, limited access to computers, the internet, and tutoring at home was associated with poor academic outcomes, reinforcing findings by Katz, Huffman, and Morris (2017) that students with reliable internet access perform better. Cueto, Santiago, and Wills (2006) also noted that home computers enhance learning, especially in mathematics and language. Furthermore, interviews revealed that environmental factors beyond the home also significantly impact children's academic performance. Issues such as poor community infrastructure, the absence of positive role models, the prevalence of betting and alcohol consumption centers, noise pollution, and inadequate sanitation contribute negatively to educational outcomes. The lack of role models and exposure to social vices like gambling, substance abuse, and criminal activities limit children's aspirations and motivation for academic success. Additionally, overcrowded living conditions and persistent noise create distractions that hinder concentration and effective study. Poor sanitation increases the risk of illnesses such as malaria and cholera, leading to prolonged school absences, while the inadequate availability of healthcare facilities further worsen the situation. In relation to this, Stipanovic and Fairchild (2010) observed that adolescents who perceive their parents, elder ones and peers as role models are more likely to have higher educational expectations and academic performance. The presence of supportive and successful role models encourages students to strive for higher educational goals. This also supports Bronfenbrenner's Bioecological Systems Theory (1979) as the theory demonstrates how a child's home and community environment, including access to resources, parental involvement, and neighborhood conditions, collectively influence academic performance.

Conclusion

Parental socioeconomic status affects the educational outcome of children in no small measure. Low-income levels in Kabong, typically ranging between N41,000 to N60,000 monthly, often hinder parents' ability to provide for their children's educational needs, leading to delayed school enrollment and difficulties in academic adjustment. The cross-tabulation analysis revealed that while higher income generally correlates with better academic performance, financial stability alone does not guarantee success. For instance, some children from low-income families excel academically, while some from high-income families struggle, indicating that factors beyond income, such as parental involvement and access to learning resources, play a crucial role. Active participation in school activities, such as PTA meetings and open days, was found to have a significant impact on academic performance, with children whose parents are actively involved performing better than those whose parents participate only occasionally. Furthermore, environmental factors beyond the home significantly impact children's educational outcomes. The absence of positive role models, the presence of gambling and alcohol consumption centers, noise pollution, and poor sanitation contribute negatively to students' academic performance. Exposure to social vices such as substance abuse and crime lowers children's aspirations, while overcrowded living conditions and persistent noise create distractions that hinder effective study. Additionally, poor sanitation leads to frequent illnesses, such as malaria and cholera, resulting in prolonged

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school absences, and the lack of adequate healthcare facilities exacerbates the problem. Therefore, cogent and urgent measures need to be taken to improve the educational outcomes of the children

Recommendations

To improve the learning outcomes of children, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. It is essential to address the occupational status of parents by promoting welfare programs and encouraging job opportunities that offer flexibility, allowing parents to dedicate more time to their children's education. The Ministry of Education, in collaboration with social workers, should advocate for workplace policies that enable parents, especially those in low-income jobs, to have work schedules that accommodate school involvement. Additionally, vocational training and skill acquisition programs should be promoted to help parents transition into occupations that provide financial stability and flexibility, enabling them to actively participate in school activities such as PTA meetings and open days. Social welfare programs should also be strengthened to provide financial assistance to struggling families, ensuring that economic hardship does not prevent children from receiving quality education.
2. The provision of essential learning resources such as reading spaces, computers, and internet access can significantly enhance academic performance, especially for children from underprivileged backgrounds. Since many homes lack conducive study environments, NGOs, Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) should invest in establishing community learning centers equipped with libraries, computers, and internet access. These centers should serve as safe spaces where children can study, complete assignments, and access digital learning tools. Additionally, these organizations should provide educational grants and scholarships to ensure that children from low-income families and underserved communities have the necessary resources to succeed academically.

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Qualitative Study on Curriculum Development Trends in Teacher Education Programs in Nigeria: Challenges and Remedies

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Abstract

Education in general and teacher education in particular is germane to growth and development of knowledge and the society in general, but it is unfortunate that teacher education today is beset with systematic and operational problems. Teacher education curriculum is being faulted for its ineffectiveness to provide learners with adequate intellectual and professional background which makes them to be stunted academically and professionally. The paper therefore, highlights the importance of teacher education, the relationship that exist between teacher education and the curriculum, while the paper also, pointed out the irrelevance of today's teacher education curriculum, because it has isolated today's teacher from the realities of the modern world and why it is important to move with the new trends in curriculum development and design, as well the need to incorporate new methods in preparing the 21st century teachers which must find its way into the teacher education curriculum. Finally, the paper draws conclusions based on the fact that it is only when and if teachers are made to be a part of the development and designing of the curriculum in Nigeria, to suggest innovative contents and ideas that we can have a functional teacher education curriculum

Key words: Education, Teacher Education, Curriculum, Curriculum Development

Introduction

The Concept of Education

Education is seen as an important part of raising learners and preparing them to live successful lives and that is why educators and scholars have posited that the quality of every society is largely dependent on the quality of its educational systems, this is because all over the world, education is seen as the instrument for growth and development as well the ability to harness and manage the resources (human and natural) in the environment to make it functional (Dangara, 2016). This is an indication that education has the capacity to enable one develop his/her innate potentials, and build man to think and reason so as to put his mind at work for the purpose of development. Lawal (2015) describe education as widely been acknowledged as a potential tool for positive social transformation and natural development. While to Osokoya (2003), education involves the transmission of society's cultural heritage, societal values and norms, indigenous knowledge and technology from one generation to another in order to enhance expected future change. In his own words. Adesina (1985), describes education has always been related to variables such as purpose of learner, the aims of the teacher as well as the technological problems of the society. And because, it will be difficult to pin the concept of education down to a particular definition. He therefore, defines education as, the tool for the integration of the individual effectively into a society, so that the individual can achieve self-realization, develop national consciousness, promote unity and strive for social, economic, political, scientific, cultural and technological progress. But despite the fact that education has divergent interpretations, and means different things to different individuals and scholars, there is something like a common ground to all the definitions, and motives of education shared (Akinkotu and Olufowobi, 2016). A good education should integrate individuals into their society, and any education that alienate individuals from their

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society is mis-education, and because education is a process of transferring or imparting knowledge to the individuals in the society in order to understand what is expected of them or what they should know. This is an indication that education is the development of the whole man, soul, body, intellectual, emotional, and physical being. However, today, more than ever before in human history, the wealth or poverty of nations are dependent on education, and quality education. So, education is the bedrock and vehicle for the nations development, it is the fulcrum of any societal change that will ever occur, and the quality of education determines the kinds of citizens it produces, and that was why it was clearly stated in the nations National Policy on Education (2013), that no nation can achieve economic, social and technological progress and self-sufficiency without a good system of education to sustain its development. Since education is one of the most important factors contributing to social and economic development, quality education therefore, is essential to ensure that individuals are equipped with the skills and knowledge necessary to succeed in life. Education in Nigeria and in other places comes at different levels, with the higher education as the apex of the formal education structure blazing the trail in matters of development through knowledge and innovation.

In Nigeria, the National Policy on Education (2024) defines higher education as the post-secondary section of the national education system, which is given at the universities, polytechnics and colleges of technology, including courses as are given by colleges of education, advanced teachers training colleges, correspondence colleges and such institutions as may be affiliated to them.

Teacher Education

Teacher education has been discovered to be indispensable of human progress, and that education in general and teacher education in particular, is fundamental to the construction of ideas required in a knowledge driven economic development (Ekundayo and Lawal, 2016). Teacher education programme therefore, shall be structured to equip teachers for effective performance of their duties (FRN, 2004; 2013). And since all teachers in the educational institutions shall be professionally trained as stated in the policy document. Teacher education refers to a formal and systematic process of preparing would-be teachers for the task ahead, in such institutions specially designed for that purpose. Teacher education could also mean the educational programme that is specifically designed to equip potential teachers and those already on the job with required cognitive knowledge (relevant in their areas of specialization); affective dispositions (good interpersonal relationship and personal dispositions); and psychomotor competences (Suraasa, 2024). Izuagba and Obiefuna (2019) also sees teacher education as the policies and procedures designed to equip prospective teacher with the knowledge, attitude, behavior and skills they require to perform their task effectively in the classroom. And so, the National Policy on education (2013) asserts that no nation can achieve economic, social and technological progress and self-sufficiency without a good system of education to sustain its achievement. So, it was stated in the policy document as one of the objectives that teacher education emphasizes; the preparation of highly-motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all the levels of education.

Quality, however is central to teacher preparation, this is because once quality is compromised, all other process in teacher preparation will be affected (Popoola, 2024). It is in recognition of the importance of teacher quality, that it was clearly stated in section 9(57) of the National Policy on Education that teacher education will continue to be to be given a major emphasis in all our educational planning and maintain that “no education system can rise above the quality of its teachers” pp.33. (70), (FGN). It was in recognition of this, that the policy identified the goals of teacher education to include the following:

- i. Produce a highly motivated, conscientious and efficient classroom teachers for all levels of the nations educational system;
- ii. Further encourage the spirit of enquiry and creativity in teachers.

Stressing the importance of teachers and teacher education in Nigeria and corroborating the NPE, the National Teacher education Policy (2009), in its latest articulation of the vision and goals of teacher education in Nigeria in section 7.1 (ii) of the policy; states that Teacher Education in Nigeria is to produce quality, highly skilled, knowledgeable and creative teachers, based on explicit performance standards through pre-service and in-service programmes, who are able to raise a generation of students who can compete globally.

It has been established that teacher education in a nation is vital, as it plays a necessary and increasing important role in human, societal and economic development of a nation (Burton, 1998; Escrigas, 2008). Then, there must be something to indicate the objectives, content and learning experiences as well the evaluation process. This is what is referred to as the curriculum.

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Concept of Curriculum in Teacher Education Programs

The curriculum plays a significant role in the process of imparting knowledge, and so, to have a meaningful education and quality teacher education programme that would produce quality teachers, then, there must be in place a meaningful curriculum that would help in actualizing the objectives of such programme. The curriculum is the instrument through which the process of education is achieved. The reasons why scholars such as Kolawole (2012; Obanya, 2020) posited that the process of education at any level cannot be described without a meaningful and workable curriculum. Hence, it is believed that a good curriculum both in content and design will always help in the achievement of the objectives of any educational enterprise. It was a little wonder that Kolawole (2012) describe Curriculum and Education as “siamese twins”. Curriculum is the means through which education is transmitted. Without the curriculum, education has no vehicle, nothing through which to transmit its values. Curriculum is believed to be at the heart of the educational enterprise and it is seen as the instrument with which to implement societal educational goal. It is the framework that determines everything that goes on in the educational system (Popoola, 2024), and those that are the center of the curriculum are the teachers.

Kolawole (2016) asserts that a curriculum is a pivot on which everything that takes place in the school revolves, this is because, it gives shape and directions to education. From these therefore, he describes curriculum as the “what” and “how” of an educational enterprise. Dada, Kolawole and Arikpo (2012) defines curriculum as “what” and “how” of any educational enterprise. ‘what’ is the content or body of knowledge and “how” is the procedure or methodology to be adopted. Following this lead therefore, Popoola (2024) sees curriculum as the “why”, “what”, “how” and “what” of an educational programme. The ‘why’ is the objectives, the ‘what’ is the content, the ‘how’ is the procedure, while the ‘what’ is the evaluation process to determine whether the objectives were achieved or not.

To Ivowi (2010), he opined that a curriculum is a tool, designed for educating a person to change the orientations, behaviours, actions and values of that person whose concern is not only to developing self, but also the world around him. To achieve all of these, a curriculum must be developed. To Wile and Bondi (2011), they see curriculum as a desired goal or set of values that can be activated through a developmental process culminating in experience for learners. While to Nichols (2012), curriculum was defined as what happens to students for which the school is responsible. It is the sum total of human endeavor geared towards the realization of aspirations of the society through the institution of school. The major variables in human endeavor are the teachers (who implement the curriculum); the student, (who are basically learners that the curriculum is planned for, the support system (from government and private initiatives) and the curriculum planners (who are usually experts that design the curriculum, recommend implementation strategies and evaluate to ascertain the extent of achievability of the curriculum objectives. As curriculum can be described as all learning experiences that learners are exposed to under the guidance of the school. The curriculum therefore, is the most important ingredients of any educational enterprise.

Curriculum Development in Teacher Education Programs

Curriculum development in its simple form can mean all the process of constructing and implementing a curriculum. According to Lewy (1991) curriculum development is not just a process of writing instructional objectives, selecting contents, organizing learning experiences and stating evaluation procedures. It is seen as a dynamic process, that is why Okebukola (1992), describes the curriculum development process as one that is concerned with the questions like who is involved in curriculum construction, what procedure to follow, what are the structure and contents of the curriculum and how is it to be implemented and evaluated when it is developed. However, Lewy, (1991) reported curriculum development to be a more complex process, because it cut across development and dissemination stages. It must however be noted that according to Zais (1976) curriculum development/planning is broader than curriculum design. Other scholars, such as Lawton (1978) and Doll (1964) have also expressed divergent opinions on what differences exist between curriculum development and curriculum design.

Therefore, curriculum development is the process of planning learning experiences for a target group of learners taking into considerations their needs, interests, abilities as well as those of the society. As Hass (1983) have reported, curriculum development is the process of gathering, sorting, selecting, balancing and synthesizing relevant information from many sources in order to develop and design those experiences that will assist the learners in attaining the goals of the curriculum. This implies that curriculum development is a systematic process of collating, sorting and synthesizing information to ensure its relevance to the need of the target population as well the need of the society.

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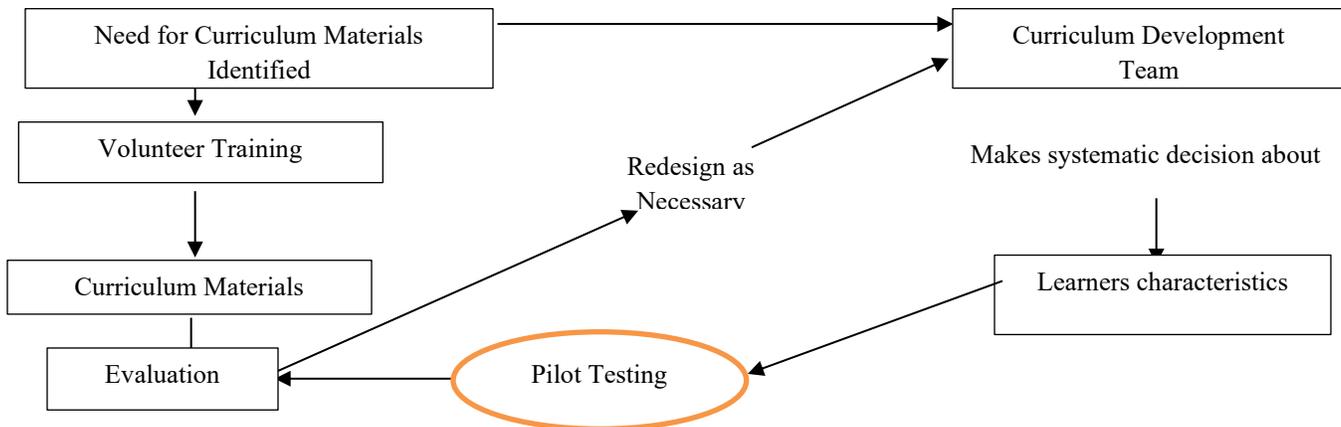
The process of curriculum development also involves the creation of appropriate curriculum materials, such as text and non-text materials, teachers guides and instructional resources that are to be used in the implementation of the developed curriculum. In other words, curriculum development involves the whole process of designing and re-designing of curriculum materials, trial-testing, collating and synthesizing data emanating from the trial tests to ensure that they are appropriate, suitable and will facilitate the achievement of the set objectives. The curriculum development processes systematically organize what will be taught, who will be taught, and how it will be taught. Each component affects and interacts with other components. For example, what will be taught is affected by who is being taught (e.g. age, interest, maturity and level of education). Methods of how content is taught are affected by who is being taught, their characteristics, and the setting. The three above essential components should be widely held on to in considerations for effective curriculum development. The best person that can easily achieve this are the teachers, this is because they are the closest to the learners

Essential Considerations for Curriculum Development

- i. Issue/Problem/Needs of the learner and the Society-What
- ii. Characteristics and needs of learners (target audience)-Who
- iii. Changes intended for learners (intended outcome/objectives)-What learners are should be able to do
- iv. The important and relevance-(content)-What
- v. Methods to accomplish intended outcomes-how
- vi. Evaluation strategies- for methods, content and intended outcomes-what works

Curriculum Development Model

The curriculum development model shows how these components are related to each other;



Source: Overview of Curriculum Development Process. <https://www.fao.org>>.....

However, as laudable as this process is, the success only depends on the teacher, quality teacher in the educational system, that can interpret these processes in the classroom during the curriculum implementation process.

Curriculum Implementation

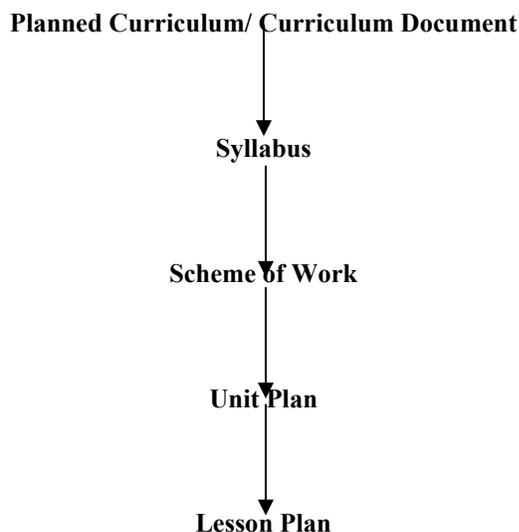
Curriculum implementation is seen as the most critical stage in the curriculum development process, but unfortunately, it is always at this level that we have always falter as a nation (Yang Yang, Wu and Liu, 2013). Curriculum implementation process starts outside the classroom with the teacher making preparation for what to teach (planning before teaching) making adequate preparation for all classroom problems that might likely prevent effective presentation and learning in the classroom. However, the process most of the times ends in the classroom or a classroom environment created by the teacher to facilitates teaching and learning, with the teacher interacting with the learners to facilitates effective learning, using materials that have been developed for that purpose, which is the main reason why implementation is taking place. That is why, what the teacher does or cannot do, what the teacher know, or do not know, has a lot of implication (effect) on the learner (Popoola, 2024).

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Braimoh, (2017), describe curriculum implementation as a deliberate plan through which learners will be made to interact with the content knowledge, learning activities and learning materials to acquire expected learning outcomes. To Izuagba (2012), curriculum implementation takes place in the classroom, it is the execution of the planned curriculum using curriculum materials that have been developed for that purpose. At this stage, the learner for whom the programme is planned interact with the content and materials in order to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities. She posited that the arduous task of implementing the curriculum lies on the teacher.

Therefore, curriculum implementation is the process of putting all that has been planned as a curriculum document into practice in the classroom through the combine efforts of teachers, learners, school administrators, and parents, as well as interaction with the facilities, instructional materials, instructional strategies and psychological and social environment (Andrew and Henry, 2024). Curriculum implementation process goes thus:



Source: Izuagba (2012)

This is an arduous task that can only be undertaken by qualified and a well-trained teacher that have been specially trained to do so. Ohiare-Udebu, Jacob and Sarafadeen (2021) listed the following as the problems facing effective curriculum implementation as;

- i. Inadequate funding
- ii. Shortage of curriculum experts
- iii. Inadequate infrastructure, and
- iv. Brain-drain

Unfortunately, the main problem of curriculum implementation has always been the non-involvement of teachers (lecturers) even those at the teacher preparation institutions whose axe of implementing the curriculum falls upon. They are the one who interpret the curriculum, they are the closest to the learners, and they are the one who serves as the middle men between the learners, the curriculum and the society in the development of the curriculum that they are meant to implement. Scholars, such as (Onyeachu, 2008; Kolawole, 2011; and Adewuya, 2013) reported that in Nigeria, the critical agents (teachers/lecturers) who will interpret and implement the curriculum were not always involved in the process of designing and development of the curriculum at all levels of the nation's education system, and the danger in this is that many teachers (lecturers) are not always aware of the curriculum they implement, which will always mar the effective implementation of the curriculum.

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Kolawole, (2006) reported that most teachers (lecturers) even in most teacher preparation institutions do not know what a curriculum means until they come in contact with one in the classroom (which is mostly a syllabus or course outline). Supporting this, Philip-Ogoh and Okloho (2013) reported that teachers in most cases do not understand their roles and neither were they conversant with the objectives of the curriculum. This is the basis upon which Kabir (2014), noted that, for successful implementation of the curriculum, and to achieve its objectives, opportunity must be created for teachers (lecturers) to participate in curriculum development and design.

Trends in Teacher Education Curriculum Development

Having x-rayed the importance of education, teacher education, curriculum and what their relationships are to each other as well the pivotal roles teacher plays in the implementation of the curriculum, it is important to highlight where the nation is headed as far as teacher education and teacher preparation is concerned. A teacher cannot truly teach, unless he is still learning himself, by consistently keeping abreast of current research and pedagogical skills and techniques, the teachers are better equipped to designing an engaging, and productive learning environment. Professional or new developments in teacher education are critical, because they give teachers the skills and information they need to adjust to the ever-changing demands of the learner. And so, teacher education curriculum should be dynamic, it has to be with the changing needs of the learners as well as that of the society (Shibsankar, 2023). However, in the past teacher education was centered on traditional lecture method of teaching learners, and this is because the emphasis on the curriculum is based on knowledge acquisition with less emphasis on the development of an all-round learners (cognitive, affective and psychomotor), most especially skill acquisition.

Teaching and learning in the 21st century ought to have moved beyond the teacher dolling out information to the learners in the classroom. According to Obioma (2007), Nigerian education has some key curricular issues, and gave the following:

Identification of minimum competencies and aligning them to the methodology of classroom transactions including pedagogical skills needed and instructional materials; linking learning to the word of work of learners in the cultural context; emphasis on functional literacy, numeracy and strategic communication skills; infusion of relevant and functional entrepreneurial skills using relevant subject contents as drivers; consolidation of some contents and subjects in the basic education and context thus reducing subject/content overload; the inclusion of strategic life-long skills as well as positive national values, civic, moral, and ethical education as a course of study; infusion of elements of critical thinking and of such emerging issues as HIV/AIDS education, anti-corruption studies, capital market studies.

Unfortunately, curriculum issues in teacher education has also moved beyond these and that is why we have scholars raising concern about the Nigerian teacher education curriculum and the product of such curriculum. Obanya (2020) asserts that there is no functionality of learning, as many graduates of education cannot creatively transfer what they have learnt into real life situations. This might be because, the curriculum experiences are misdirected or that the curriculum content is irrelevant, or the curriculum is not made available for the lecturers' use. Kolawole (2012) posited that despite the efforts made to improve teacher preparation and teacher quality, all is not well with the teachers, teacher education curriculum, teacher preparation as well as teaching and learning in Nigeria. Supporting this position, Obemeata (1995) calls the attention of all stakeholders to the common complaints that new entrants into the teaching profession in Nigeria are no longer adequately equipped to deal with the problems that teacher encounter in the course of their duties. The acquisition of knowledge of the subject matter at the completion of teacher education programme by these teachers is below expectation. Therefore, there is the to revisit the curriculum that produces these teachers.

Major Trends in Teacher Education Curriculum

The teacher, in order to deliver on his duty, must constantly update his content knowledge and pedagogical skills. This is only possible through teacher participation and engagement in continuous development programmes. Education globally has developed beyond traditional and crude strategies of teaching. Students of today are inquisitive and ready to explore. Therefore, teachers have got no option than to move ahead of them. Obanya (2009), Mkpa (2000), Priestly (2011) and Yates (2012), the major trends in curriculum manifest as:

Global developments which now have significant influence on national and regional curriculum actions, there is increased emphasis on skills and dispositions which are relevant to life-long learning, employment and social participation and creativity,

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educational content and teaching-learning materials now appear to be more functional, diversified and operational in nature, movement is now towards information and communication technology, low-cost, portable hand held devices for students use that can be connected through global networks and tailored for specific tasks or application. This advancement in technology is leading to a multitude of approaches that are standing a million of curriculum that caters for the needs of the learners and the society worldwide, and there is emphasis on the need for teachers to use differentiated curriculum, multiple learning styles and engage in transformational teaching.

The following are therefore suggested in the teacher education curriculum and there should be a concerted effort to train and re-train those already on the job through workshops and conferences on the need to move with the world, so that we will not be left behind in teacher education practices and deliveries.

Teacher education curriculum should include the following among others; Active teacher (lecturer) participation in curriculum design and development; Collaborative learning; Experiential learning; Online learning; Hybrid learning; Blended learning Digital citizenship and digital literacy; Genius hour; Gamification and Game-based learning; Metacognition development; Social emotion learning; Bite-size learning; Constructivist learning; Transformational learning and Pedagogical switch

Active teacher participation: Teacher participation in the curriculum design and development process is very key and important. Teachers are the closest to the learners, and because they know the learners and what their needs are, they should not be neglected nor be ignored when developing the curriculum. It is only when this is done that, we can have a functional curriculum that will solve both the learner's problems and the societal problems.

Collaborative learning: This method of teaching allows peer-to-peer or large group teaching and learning. This involves learners working in pairs or small groups to discuss concepts or find solutions to problems. Learners teach each other by clarifying misconceptions.

Online learning: This is the most popular trends today and realities was evidently placed on us during the scourge of covid-19 pandemic. But it was unfortunate that many teachers (lecturers) as well as learners were left behind in the online teaching-learning process, because they were not technology compliant. This should be included in the teacher education curriculum and those already on the job should be made to upgrade their knowledge to enhance their technological knowledge.

Artificial Intelligence: Artificial intelligence (AI) has the potential to revolutionize education in ways that we cannot see or imagined. This has the capacity for automation and self-learning. This should be included in the teacher education curriculum, so that when would-be teachers are prepared with this method, they can also prepare their learners with this method and the teachers on the jobs should be engaged along this line as well.

Hybrid learning: This is a method of teaching that combine both the traditional teaching method and the virtual learning method of teaching. Hybrid are most helpful to learners who for one reason or the other could not access school. Such as sickness, disability and most especially in this period of economic hardship. Hybrid learning should therefore be included in the teacher education curriculum

Blended learning: This is an approach to teaching and learning that utilizes various learning approaches at the same time, this include in-person, hybrid, and online to enrich learning opportunities through flexible and adaptive models.

Mobile learning: as mobile devices are now becoming part of our daily lives, such as smartphones, tablets, laptops and other digital devices. They can also benefit us more in learning to simplify our lives. These devices have been an ideal way to keep up with the ever-changing worlds. That is why it has occupied a good position at the top trends in teacher education today.

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Genius hour: This is an approach in education, where learners are guided by their own interest, background knowledge and curiosity to learn. It is an open-ended method of learning, characterized by self-direction, passion-based learning, inquiry and autonomy. Genius hour allows learners to create something personal and compelling, and then be learning through the process

Gamification: This is a process of incorporating game elements and some principles into non-game setting, to teach the learners. This allows for more learner participation and makes them to stay and endure to finish their work.

Personalized learning: in a personalized classroom, learners are given more opportunities to share their opinions and make decisions as well move at their own pace. This type of learning styles acknowledges and accommodates diverse learning styles of learners.

Conclusion

Conclusively, teacher education institutions must show the society at large what they are doing and how well they can do it. Education for the good life has been one of the most persistent concerns of man throughout history. Nema, (2001) noted that teachers have two jobs; they have to teach and they have to learn to teach. This cannot happen except they have a workable curriculum with which to prepare them for the task ahead. Teacher education curriculum according to UNESCO (2008), is to develop in the teacher trainee the knowledge of general education theory and practices, personal culture, ability to teach others, awareness of principles which underlie good human relations within and across national boundaries and a sense of responsibility to contribute by teaching to social, cultural and economic progress of the nation.

However, in Nigeria, teachers are not always involved during policy formulation or development of the curriculum, even though the onus of implementing the curriculum eventually lies on them (Ajibola, 2008), supporting this, Carl, (2002) argued that the voices of teachers have always been ignored or not heard at all. It must be noted here that implementing a curriculum you are not part of its development might prove to be a herculean task for the teachers. One important engine for firing accelerated development in the nation is the curriculum. So therefore, all hands must be on deck to develop a comprehensive teacher education curriculum for the nation's development, with the teachers who are to implement the curriculum takes an active part in suggesting appropriate content and methods as well the materials for effective implementation of the curriculum. The following recommendations are hereby made.

Recommendations

To change the narratives of teachers' education curriculum and teacher (lecturers) education in Nigeria;

1. teachers must be actively involved in the process of planning, designing and the development of a curriculum, so that appropriate contents and procedures will be suggested.
2. Teacher educators should be effectively monitored in curriculum implementation to ensure they follow new trends in the preparation of would-be teachers.
3. In-service teachers should be monitored to ensure compliance with new trends in their classroom interactions.
4. Government should provide an enabling environment by ensuring adequate provision of funds and other teaching and learning materials for effective implementation of the curriculum in the nation's teacher preparation institutions.
5. Government must ensure constant evaluation of the implementation process to monitor the progress being made in the nation's teacher preparation institutions.

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Peace and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Secondary School Staff in Ughelli North Local Government Area, Delta State: Counsellors' Perspective

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Abstract

This study examined Peace and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Secondary School Staff in Ughelli North Local Government Area, Delta State: Counsellors' Perspective. Five research questions guided the study. This study adopts a descriptive survey design to investigate the study variables. The population of this study covers all 48 public secondary school teachers in Ughelli North LGA, Delta state. The random sampling technique was used to select 20 public secondary schools while purposive sampling technique was used to select 10 teachers, giving a sample size of 200 participants. Questionnaire was the main instrument used in collecting information for this study. The responses to the questionnaire's items were designed on a four-point scale of measurement. The weighted mean of 2.5 was used as the bench mark for assessing the instrument. Descriptive statistics and, mean rating statistics were used to analyses the data gotten from the survey. The outcome of the study revealed that there are some major sources of school conflicts among secondary school staff, there are many reasons why conflict resolution is important among secondary school staff. and numerous challenges involved in conflict management. There are several strategies that school counsellors can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff. There are essential conflict resolution skills needed by school counsellors. Conclusion was drawn and useful recommendations made which include among others that in-service training should be granted to school counsellors on strategies for conflict resolutions. These trainings will enable them to acquire leadership skills to manage school conflicts effectively.

Key Words: conflicts, school counsellors, strategies, conflict resolution skills

Introduction

Conflict is endemic in all social life, an inevitable phenomenon in any system that involves human presence and interaction. It is an unavoidable part of living because it is related to situations of scarce resources, division of functions, power relations and role-differentiation (CRESTCON, 2020; Bercovitch, 2011). School staffs often see themselves at crossroads over certain decisions and often clatter over vital resolutions involving resources, policy issue directions, manner of statements and collaborations. It is therefore not an incongruity to imagine conflicts in school structure. At times, these conflicts and crisis sometimes grow to enormous proportions where they become detrimental to the parties involved and the schools, thereby distracting school administration and staff job performance.

Ositoye, Adebayo, Alade and Omolade (2012) attributed conflict to be a clash of interests, values, actions or directions that often spark the phenomenon (conflict). There can be conflicts about conflict of facts, conflict of values and conflict of interests (Kauth, 2020). In addition, conflict is the inability of one of these parties i.e. principal and teacher, to reach agreement on any issue connected with school activity. Conflict is equally a mental or spiritual struggle within, often unconscious, resulting from the opposition, clashing or variance of opposed principles, statements, arguments or the simultaneous functioning of mutual exclusive impulses, desires or tendencies. Christina and Anna (2022). defined conflict as the ferocious collision, a brawl or context, a battle or a mental struggle which can be destructive in any organization. Kitz (2018) identified Lack of Motivation, Anti-authority and chronic deviants as some of the challenges of conflict resolution.

The school as a social system has its own norms and values and it is characterized by complex relationships between members of the system: principals, teachers, non-teaching staff and students. Therefore, conflict exists when the reduction of one motivating stimulus involves an increase in another, so that a new adjustment is demanded. Conflicts may exist when students

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Peace and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Secondary School Staff in ... Amede, L. (2025) violate the school rules, students not doing manual work, students not respecting teachers, students engaging in vices like theft, fights, bullying or not attending lessons; teachers not respecting the principal or not completing curriculum, the principal's style of leadership that is characterized with demeaning teachers and disregarding students, among others (Mboya, Kiplagat & Yego, 2017).

These conflicts have negative effects on the school administration; lowering teachers' morale, students' discipline and also hampering the general interpersonal relationships in an institution of learning (Okorji & Nzekwe, 2019). Bano, Ashraf and Sumita (2013) stressed that conflicts are not always bad. The concern is how they are managed. When conflicts are constructively managed, they add value to the organization as opposed to when they are poorly managed; they turn destructive (Mboya, et al, 2017). The first step in resolving conflict is clarifying its source. Defining the cause of the conflict will enable you to understand how the issue came to grow in the first place (Krakoff, 2021). Additionally, you will be able to get both parties to consent to what the disagreement is. And to do so, you need to discuss the needs which are not being met on both sides of the issues. Also, you need to warranty mutual understanding. Ensure you obtain as much information as possible on each side's outlook. Continue asking questions until you are confident that all the conflicting parties understand the issue. And to agree on the best, you need to identify the solutions which each party can live with. Afterward, determine the responsibilities each party has in resolving the conflict.

Conflict management strategies help to not only resolve disputes but to cultivate an environment where collaboration thrives, enriching the delivery of educational services (Kottler, 2018). According to Sorensen (2017), empathy is the ability to share and understand the emotions and feelings of others. Taking initiative, whether it's on a new project or facilitating conflict resolution is a leadership skill, and worth developing if you aspire to work in a managerial or supervisory role (Parag, 2023). Assertiveness can help to enhance your management skills (Mcgroarty, 2022). According to Frey, Bühler & Ruppert (2022) and Krakoff (2021), mediators should use this chance to identify the root cause and ensure this issue will not come about again. They need to look at own behaviour from the point of view of an outsider (Obi, & Obineli, 2015). Research by Cahn and Abigail (2014), found that effective communication among teachers is crucial for sharing information, aligning instructional goals, and establishing a common understanding of expectations. In a meta-analysis by Ulrich, (2020). found that negotiation emerged as a key strategy for addressing conflicts in educational settings. Coleman (2015) emphasized the importance of collaborative professional learning communities in addressing conflicts among teachers

Strategies according to Smith (2016) refer to techniques, approaches, methods, and interventions adopted to solve problems. King (2016) added that a strategy is a plan of action intended to accomplish a specific goal. Consequently, the search for new strategies is still ongoing. King (2016), Lawal (2017), and Nezera (2017) have endorsed the use of counseling interventions as an effective strategy for managing conflict in secondary schools. Nezera (2017) recommended six counseling strategies that could be used to manage conflicts in secondary schools effectively. They are, allow the client to explore (ace strategy), using silences in the relationship (usr strategy), and paraphrasing strategy. Counseling helps individuals explore their perspectives, manage emotions, and develop constructive ways to navigate conflicts. Support services may include mediation, facilitation, and educational resources to empower individuals with the skills needed to manage and resolve conflicts effectively (Lederach, 2015). Assertiveness can help to enhance your management skills (Amede, 2022).

Conflicts in the workplace are inevitable, but with effective conflict resolution strategies, they can be managed and even transformed into opportunities for growth and improved understanding. Ignored conflicts have a tendency to fester over time and reappear at inopportune moments, so do your team a favor and address conflicts when they occur, nipping a potentially toxic situation in the bud as soon as you recognize it (Krakoff, 2021). This study therefore examined school counsellors' strategies in resolving conflicts among secondary school staff.

Conflict is not a strange thing for people. Conflict occurs in every organization such as schools. Conflicts in school system should be handled with care and promptly in order not to disrupt effective education delivery. These conflicts range from conflicts between principal-teachers, teachers-teachers, and students-teachers to teachers-students, principal-community, and principal-student conflicts. We all have our values, needs and habits, so it's easy to misunderstand or irritate one another or worse, to fall into conflict. Stakeholders in education are worried about these conflicts. However, if left

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Peace and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Secondary School Staff in ... Amede, L. (2025) unchecked, conflict can lead to bad decisions and outright disputes, bullying or harassment. Teamwork breaks down, morale drops, and projects grind to a halt. Conflict affects effective teaching and learning and by extension affect students' academic performance. Organizations feel the hit with wasted talent, high absenteeism, and decreased staff turnover. The concern of this researcher is that if effective strategies of managing conflicts in schools are not put in place, education delivery will not be effective. This study therefore attempted an examination of school counsellors' strategies in resolving conflicts among secondary school staff in Ughelli North LGA, Delta state.

Objective of the study

This project examined school counsellors' strategies in resolving conflicts among secondary school staff in Ughelli North LGA, Delta state. Specific objective includes:

1. Identify the major Causes of conflicts among secondary school staff.
2. Estimate the importance of conflict resolution among secondary school staff.
3. Examine the challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff.
4. Evaluate the essential Conflict Resolution Skills needed by school.
5. Identify the strategies that school counsellors can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study

1. What are the major Causes of conflicts among secondary school staff?
2. Why are the importance of conflict resolution among secondary school staff in in Ughelli North LGA, Delta state?
3. What are the challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff?
4. What strategies can school counsellors' employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff?
5. What are the essential conflict resolution skills needed by school counsellors?

Methodology

The researcher used descriptive survey design for this study because it allows a wide coverage within a limited time. It allows the researcher to select the sample from the segment of population and to have a representative opinion of the characteristics of the subjects. The population of this study covers all 48 public secondary schools' and 870 teachers in Ughelli North LGA, Delta state. The random sampling technique was used to select 20 public secondary schools while purposive sampling technique was used to select 10 teachers from the each of the selected school, giving a sample size of 200 public secondary school teachers. This sample size is adequate because according to Asika (1991), 10% element selected randomly from a population is to all intents and purposes deemed to be representative of the population and the findings from a study of that sample can be generalized for the population.

Questionnaire was the main instrument used in collecting information for this study. The questionnaire is titled "Counsellors' Conflict Resolution Strategies Inventory (CCRI)." The questionnaire has sisections A and F. Section A sought information on the respondents' personal information while Section B - F consisted of fifty (50) items in line with the five (5) research questions raised. The responses to the questionnaire's items were designed on a four-point scale of measurement. Thus; Strongly Agree (SA): 4 points Agree (A): 3 points Disagree (D): 2 points Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point. The weighted mean of 2.5 was used as the bench mark for assessing the instrument.

Validation of the instrument

Some notable research experts determined the validity of research instruments. A sample of the instrument was shown to some experts in measurement and evaluation in the Faculty of Education, NOUN for expert corrections and comments which were unified into the final draft of the instrument to ensure that it had content validity. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering it on a sample of 30 public secondary school teachers in Warri North local government area of Delta state, which was not part of the original sample population. The exercise was repeated in two weeks interval and the data from both tests were analyzed with the Pearson product moment correlation coefficient. The coefficient of reliability was 0.83,

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which was suitable for the studies.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

The questionnaire was administered to the respondents by the researcher and was retrieved back immediately. Out of the 200 respondents administered with the questionnaire, 188 were successfully retrieved thereby constituting 94%. The Descriptive statistics and mean rating statistics were used to analyses the data gotten from the survey.

Presentation of Results

Research Questions1: What are the major causes of school conflicts among secondary school staff?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on some major sources of school conflicts among secondary school staff.

S/N	some major sources of workplace conflicts	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1	differences in communication styles	188	535.00	2.8457	.75476
Q2	conflicting goals	188	507.00	2.6968	.77982
Q3	personality clashes	188	507.00	2.6968	.80013
Q4	Misunderstandings	188	515.00	2.7394	.78157
Q5	Competition for resources	188	526.00	2.7979	.74690
Q6	competing priorities	188	522.00	2.7766	.80313
Q7	economic factors such as innovation, price war, market share conflict	188	500.00	2.6596	.84084
Q8	Favoritism and being oppressed	188	516.00	2.7447	.73034
Q9	Lack of Motivation	188	515.00	2.7394	.76776
Q10	Unclear responsibilities	188	468.00	2.4894	.89257
		1880	5111	2.72	.79

Table 1 showed the Descriptive statistics on some major sources of school conflicts among secondary school staff. It revealed the total sum of 5111, average mean of 2.72 and a standard deviation of 0.79. The average mean of 2.72 is greater than the bench mark of 2.5. The implication is that there are some major sources of school conflicts among secondary school staff.

Research Questions 2: Why are the importance of conflict resolution among secondary school staff?

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on why conflict resolution is important among secondary school.

S/N	Importance of conflict resolution in the workplace	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q11	Resolving conflict can reduce the stress levels of conflicting parties	188	550.00	2.9255	.71260
Q12	Resolving conflict provides the opportunity to understand a different point of view.	188	568.00	3.0213	.71618
Q13	increased focus on tasks	188	565.00	3.0053	.80438
Q14	ultimately enhancing overall team productivity	188	524.00	2.7872	.81263
Q15	improved morale, and a more efficient workflow	188	555.00	2.9521	.71114
Q16	promotes collaboration	188	556.00	2.9574	.61904
Q17	ensures issues are addressed before they escalate	188	554.00	2.9468	.70699
Q18	Resolving conflicts promptly maintains a harmonious working	188	561.00	2.9840	.61597
Q19	helps maintain a positive work environment where team members feel valued	188	564.00	3.0000	.66220
Q20	Develop leadership skills	188	552.00	2.9362	.57224

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Peace and Conflict Resolution Strategies among Secondary School Staff in ... Amede, I. (2025)	188	5549	2.95	.69
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Table 2 above revealed the Descriptive statistics on the why conflict resolution is important among secondary school staff. It revealed the total sum of 5549, average mean of 2.95 and a standard deviation of 0.69. The average mean of 2.95 is greater than the bench mark of 2.5. The implication is that there are many reasons why conflict resolution is important among secondary school.

Research Questions 3: What are the challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff?

Table 3: Mean rating on the challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff

S/N	Challenges involved in conflict management	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q21	Conflict can be emotionally charged, and managing those emotions can be difficult.	188	530.00	2.8191	.77339
Q22	Communication breakdowns can occur during conflicts, making it hard to understand each other's perspectives and needs.	188	556.00	2.9574	.73732
Q23	Fear of reprisal attack when employees are punished	188	557.00	2.9628	.65709
Q24	Favoritism and nepotism	188	571.00	3.0372	.68106
Q25	Power imbalances can make it challenging to find a mutually beneficial solution.	188	536.00	2.8511	.78703
Q26	Unspecified responsibilities	188	516.00	2.7447	.73034
Q27	Cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings, making it harder to find major ground.	188	562.00	2.9894	.68591
Q28	Jumping to Conclusions without Having the Facts. ...	188	510.00	2.7128	.76867
Q29	Poor leadership	188	554.00	2.9468	.66810
Q30	There can be multiple perspectives on the same issue, making it hard to find a solution that satisfies everyone.	188	500.00	2.6596	.84084
	Total	1880	5392	2.87	.73

Table 3 showed the Mean rating on the challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff. Favoritism and nepotism tops the list with average mean score of 3.0372 closely followed by cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings, making it harder to find major ground. (2.9894); again, by fear of reprisal attack when employees are punished (2.9628) and communication breakdowns can occur during conflicts, making it hard to understand each other's perspectives and needs. (2.9574). The total sum was 5392 and the average mean was 2.87 which is above the standard average of 2.5. The implication is that there are many challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff.

Research Questions 4: What strategies can school counsellors employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff?

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics on the strategies that school counsellors can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff

Strategies employed by school principals to prevent conflicts from escalating					
S/N		N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q31	Listen actively and let everyone have their say	188	497.00	2.6436	1.16344
Q32	setting clear expectations	188	467.00	2.4840	1.18582
Q33	Cognitive behaviour therapy	188	492.00	2.6170	1.11965
Q34	school counsellors should, understanding perspectives, and acknowledging emotions	188	494.00	2.6277	1.08449
Q35	Anger management	188	462.00	2.4574	1.05633
Q36	Using paraphrasing during counseling	188	487.00	2.5904	1.05836
Q37	Motivational Enhancement Therapy	188	470.00	2.5000	1.20383
Q38	Focus on behavior and events, not on personalities	188	510.00	2.7128	.99863
Q39	Fostering a transparent communication culture	188	495.00	2.6330	1.20088

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Q40	Problem solving skills	188	450.00	2.3936	1.03643
Total		1880	4824	2.57	.11

Table above revealed the Descriptive statistics on the strategies can principals' employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff. It revealed the total sum of 4824, average mean of 2.57 and a standard deviation of 0.11. The average mean of 2.57 is greater than the bench mark of 2.5. The implication is that there are several the strategies that principals can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff.

Research Questions 5:

What are the essential conflict resolution skills needed by school counsellors?

Table 5: Mean rating on the essential conflict resolution skills needed by school counsellors

S/N	Essential Conflict Resolution Skills needed by school counsellors'	N	Sum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q41	Self-disclose	188	487.00	2.5904	1.14570
Q42	Show Empathy	188	449.00	2.3883	1.16696
Q43	Listen carefully	188	448.00	2.3830	1.12441
Q44	Acknowledge Criticism	188	475.00	2.5266	1.10145
Q45	Accommodating	188	457.00	2.4309	1.06500
Q46	Self-control	188	455.00	2.4202	1.07922
Q47	Assertive communication	188	470.00	2.5000	1.19491
Q48	Assertive communication	188	511.00	2.7181	1.00814
Q49	Problem-solving	188	503.00	2.6755	1.19984
Q50	Investigate the situation	188	471.00	2.5053	1.05210
Total		1880	4726	2.51	.13

Table 5 showed the Mean rating on the essential Conflict Resolution Skills needed by school counsellor's Assertive communication tops the list with average mean score of 2.7181, closely followed by problem-solving (2.6755); again, by disclose your feelings (2.5904) and acknowledge criticism (2.5266) The total sum was 4726 and the average mean was 2.51 which is above the standard average of 2.5. The implication is that there are essential conflict resolution skills needed by school counsellors.

Discussion of Findings

Research Question 1: What are some major sources of school conflicts among secondary school staff? The finding shows there are some major sources of school conflicts among secondary school staff. This agrees with Ositoye, Adebayo, Alade and Omolade (2012) who attributed conflict to be a clash of interests, values, actions or directions that often spark the phenomenon (conflict). Conflicts may exist when students violate the school rules, students not doing manual work, students not respecting teachers, students engaging in vices like theft, fights, bullying or not attending lessons; teachers not respecting the principal or not completing curriculum, the principal's style of leadership demeaning teachers and disregarding students, among others (Mboya, Kiplagat&Yego, 2017).

Research Question 2: Why is conflict resolution important among secondary school staff? The study reveals that there are many reasons why conflict resolution is important among secondary school staff. Conflict management strategies help to not only resolve disputes but to cultivate an environment where collaboration thrives, enriching the delivery of educational services (Kottler, 2018).

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Research Question 3 attempted to examine the challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff. The analysis revealed that there are many challenges involved in conflict management. This agrees with Kitz (2018), who identified Lack of Motivation, Anti-authority and chronic deviants as some of the challenges of conflict resolution.

Research Question 4 sought to survey the strategies that principals' employ can to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff. The analysis revealed that there are several the strategies that counsellors can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff. This agrees with Krakoff (2021) who pointed out that the first step in resolving conflict is clarifying its source. Consequently, King (2016), Lawal (2017) and Nezera (2017) have endorsed the use of counseling interventions as an effective strategy for managing conflict in secondary schools. Nezera (2017) recommended six counseling strategies that could be used to manage conflicts in secondary schools effectively. They are, allow the client to explore (ace strategy), using silences in the relationship and paraphrasing strategy.

Research Question 5 established that there exist essential conflict resolution skills needed by school counsellors. Develop leadership skills: According to Sorensen (2017), empathy is the ability to share and understand the emotions and feelings of others. Taking initiative, whether it's on a new project or facilitating conflict resolution is a leadership skill, and worth developing if you aspire to work in a managerial or supervisory role (Parag, 2023). Assertiveness can help to enhance your management skills (Amede, 2022).

Implication of the Study to School Counsellors

The study examined school counsellors' strategies in resolving conflicts among secondary school staff in Ughelli North LGA, Delta state. The outcome of the study would motivate school counsellors to comprehend the modalities of resolving problems in school. Strict applications of the findings in the research undertaking would enable school counsellors to maintain peaceful atmosphere in school and enhance the job commitment of teachers, and advance students learning.

Conclusion

The outcome of the study revealed that there are some major sources of school among secondary school staff. There are many reasons why conflict resolution is important among secondary school staff. There are many challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff. There are several the strategies that school counsellors can employ to prevent conflicts from escalating among secondary school staff. There are essential conflict resolution skills needed by school counsellors. However, Delta State Government should identify major sources of conflicts among secondary school staff and employ proactive measures to nip them at the bud.

Recommendations

1. Delta State Government should identify major sources of conflicts among secondary school staff and employ proactive measures to nip them at the bud.
2. Parent Teacher Association should be established in schools to mediate and resolve conflict before they escalate beyond control.
3. School counsellors should identify the challenges involved in conflict management among secondary school staff and utilize professional skills to curb them.
4. In-service training should be granted to school counsellors on strategies for conflict resolutions. These trainings would enable them to acquire leadership skills to manage school conflicts effectively.

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Correlation Between National Values Consciousness and Corrupt Tendencies of Tertiary Institution Students in Niger State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study determined the relationship between national values consciousness and corrupt tendency of students of tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria. The study adopted a correlational research design. The population consisted of all final year students in four public tertiary institutions in Niger State. Using random and accidental sampling techniques, 261 students were selected from four tertiary institutions in the State. Data was collected using self-developed and validated instrument titled "Values Consciousness and Behaviour Tendency Scale" with a reliability coefficient of 0.79. Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to test the hypotheses in the study. The result showed that there is a significant negative correlation between values consciousness and corrupt tendency of students of tertiary institutions in Niger State and gender did not moderate the correlation that exists between the independent and dependent variables. The study concluded that students who are conscious of the national values have low tendency of engaging in corrupt practices. The study therefore recommended among others that, a course on national values should be taught at all levels in the tertiary institutions irrespective discipline of study to increase students consciousness of the Nigerian core values and regular re-orientation Counselling on Nigeria core values should be organised via seminars and workshops for students in the tertiary institutions of learning.

Key words: Values. National values, consciousness, corrupt tendency, students of tertiary institutions

Introduction

Corruption is a global dilemma which has added to the growing rate of poverty and under development in many nations of the world. The rate of poverty in many African countries including Nigerian is dependent on the high level of corruption. Nigeria is one of the countries with high trace of corrupt practices in spite of the level of religiosity of its citizens. The issue of corruption is not new and it is not stereotypic to a nation, rather its level however differs from one nation to the other. This involves the mismanagement of revenue i.e tax money or revenue generated spent on personal interests rather than social and economic development. According to Jimoh, Joji and Jibril (2022), corruption is the abuse of entrusted power and position for personal advantage. The issue of corruption is not limited to people in authority but also the followers. Corruption is an unlawful, disreputable and unapproved utilization of one's position for self-benefits. Corruption perception index reveals that corruption is everywhere, whether it is a poor or rich country, but the index reveals that not all countries are within the same level of corruption (Abun, Magallanes, Foronda & Encarnacion, 2020). This implies that no country in the world is considered to be clean or zero corruption according to the report by Transparency International (World Economic Forum, 2019). According to

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Transparency International (2022), Nigeria is the 150 least corrupt nations out of 180 countries. This implies that Nigeria is among the 31 most corrupt countries in the world. In Nigeria, there exist evidence concerning widespread nature of corruption and it's demoralizing effects on the Nigerian social, economic and political structure. Corruption runs through all levels of the Nigerian government and sectors. Corrupt behaviours and practices are seen in contract fraud (inflation of contract figures), bribery, money laundering, embezzlement, withholding workers' salaries, salary shortfall, nepotism, misappropriation, election rigging, vote buying, superficial award of allowances, budget padding, trafficking (drug and human), counterfeiting, using proxy name to buy properties, adulteration of manufactured goods, baby factories, diversion of funds, ghost workers problems, tribalism, piracy, extortion, cybercrime, armed robbery, oil bunkering and subversion of justice (Idris, 2013; Ngwube & Okoli, 2013; Chiazor and Abah, 2015; Onyekuru & Njoku, 2017). In the education sector corrupt practices involve examination malpractices, plagiarism, skewed admission criteria, dereliction of duties and responsibilities, manipulation of results, extortion, sexual harassment, admission and job racketeering, forcing student to buy books, exchange of sex for grades and poor attitude to work. This information is based on the researchers' experiences and from knowledge accumulated as participant observers in tertiary institutions.

The destructive power of corruption is immeasurable. Karman (2013) explained that corruption has domino effects on the nation which include loss of financial status, decrease ability to improve the welfare of the poor, lack of confidence in the administration of justice, increase conflicts and bankruptcy of a state. As reviewed by Uchenndu and Akeke (2020), corrupt practices threaten the achievement of national educational goals, depreciate the resources available to educational institutions, restrict access to education and decrease value of services offered by the institutions and reduce ethical values of students. Both teachers/lecturers and students believe that putting in great effort in their work is no longer rewarding. This makes students not to see the essence of personal effort but rather on favouritism, nepotism, bribery and extortion. Corrupt behaviours of public office holders are rampant and the question is "are these behaviours learnt on the job or what one came into the job with? If an individual is to avoid bottleneck or facilitate delivery of a service, then one must settle or wet the ground (give bribe). Corrupt tendency is the inclination or probability of an individual to engage in corrupt behaviours if given an opportunity to serve in a position. Corruption in Nigeria has been well-established in the national ethics, politics, civil society, public and private sectors and has profoundly permeated in a pervasive and weakening culture so much so that it has been institutionalized.

One of the factors of corruption in Nigeria is the lack of values consciousness of it's citizens. According to Osalusi and Ajayi (2021), from cultural point of view, values are statements of what ought to be. Values are broad principles that underline beliefs, specific statements that people hold to be true about their living and existence. Ohwovorione (2013) claimed that values and human life cannot be separated because human is a rational being and thinks to consider what is good or bad. Osanakpo (2015) viewed values as beliefs or convictions that guide and direct a person's behaviour, purpose and vision. These are qualities that define people, influence people's behaviour and attitude and serve as broad guidelines in problem solving, decisions making or goals setting (Akpan & Okoro, 2018).

National values are the code of conduct and standards of life lay down by a society (Oluwagbohunmi, 2017). National values form the basis or principles upon which decisions of good and bad are considered. National values denote encouraged behaviour and attitude displayed by members of a society for its desirability to the generality of mankind. It is based on this that Nigeria in section 23 of the 1999 constitution, state that the national ethics (values) shall be discipline, integrity, dignity of labour, social justice, religious tolerance, self-reliance and patriotism. To instill these values in her citizens, Federal Republic of Nigeria (2013) stated in the 6th edition of the National Policy on Education (section 1 subsection 9) that the quality of instruction at all levels of education shall be oriented towards the inculcation of the following values:

1. Respect for the worth and dignity of the individual;
2. Faith in man's ability to make rational decisions;
3. Moral and spiritual principles in inter-personal and human relations;
4. Shared responsibility for the common good of the society;
5. Promotion of the physical, emotional and psychological development of all children; and
6. Acquisition of functional skills and competencies necessary for self-reliance.

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These values as observed by Jimoh et al (2022) are briefly put together for easy acquaintance. This is seen in the national identity and symbol of the nation such as Nigerian national anthem, pledge and coat of arm. Decline in these values and lack of its consciousness have made Nigerians shift from their societal values to the values of others. National values consciousness seems to be at its lowest ebb in Nigeria. This is seen in the degenerating nationalism and patriotism of citizens, disunity and disrespect for elders, insensitive to integrity, hard work and honour, the passion to be rich by public office holders, lawlessness at all the levels of the society and deviation from public rules. Going by the just 2023 concluded general elections, it is observed that the values of love, patriotism, honesty, religious tolerance and trust have deteriorated in Nigeria. Therefore, the researchers sought to investigate relationship between values consciousness of students in tertiary institutions and their corrupt tendencies since they are the prospective civil servants and future leaders of Nigeria.

Corruption is the most pervasive in the disruption of development in any nation of the world. Several activities of Nigerian powerful individuals have been revealed to engage in corrupt behaviour through the use of anonymous companies to buy properties abroad, make secret investment and deals. The effect of corruption is felt in all aspects of human endeavour in Nigeria. In an attempt to curb corruption and fulfill the injunction of the 1999 constitution section 15 sub-section 5 which states that “the state shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power”, Nigeria has made determined efforts to obey to the constitution. These include the establishment of anti-corruption agencies. The establishment of Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC), Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), Fiscal Responsibility Commission, Bureau for Public Procurement, Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI), Budget Monitoring and Price Intelligence Unit (which handles a new process of contract award, otherwise known as due process) and Code of Conduct Bureau.

The ICPC has made effort to draw up national values curriculum to promote positive values in young Nigerians. In the curriculum, infused values are honesty, discipline, justice, right attitude to work, citizen right and duties, national consciousness, contentment, courage, concern for family values and traditional values. In spite of these efforts, corrupt behaviours by Nigerians remain worrisome. The 2022 ranking placed Nigeria among the 31 most corrupt nations globally. Therefore, there is the need for empirical study to find out the relationship between values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in Niger State tertiary institutions since the students are prospective civil servants or public office holders in Nigeria.

Research Questions

Two research questions were formulated in this study:

1. What is the correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria?
2. What is the correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendency of students in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria based on gender?

Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were tested in the study at 0.05 significant levels.

H₀₁: There is no significant correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students of tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria.

H₀₂: There is no significant correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria based on gender.

Significance of the study

The findings of this study will be of great importance to counsellors, psychologists and social workers to better understand the level of values consciousness of Nigerian students and its implications towards corrupt behaviours in the society. This will also help the Niger State Government to understand the challenges ahead in the employment of young graduate and the need to re-orientate civil servants on national values and virtues in order to reduce corrupt practices in public service.

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey design of correlational type. The target population of this study was comprised of all final year students of tertiary institutions in Niger State. 261 students were selected to participate in this study. Accidental sampling procedure was adopted to select the required sample from the four randomly selected institutions in Niger State

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(Federal University of Technology Minna, Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University Lapai, Federal College of Education Kontagora and Niger State Polytechnic Zungeru). The sampled population was comprised of final year students and the choice was based on the premise that, they will be in short period of time prospective job seekers in the labour market. To collect data from the sampled population, a questionnaire titled “Values Consciousness and Behaviour Tendency Scale” was used. The questionnaire has three sections (A, B & C). Section A obtained demographic data, section B with 20 items was developed by the researchers to obtain data on national values consciousness and section C also has 20 items adapted from Orellana and Bossio (2021) to obtain information on corrupt tendencies of the students. The instrument was given to three experts in the field of counselling psychology and measurement and evaluation for face and content validity. Their corrections and observations were effected which ascertain the validity of the instrument. Using test re-test method of reliability, the coefficient of 0.79 was obtained. The data generated was analysed using inferential statistics of Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis to test the formulated null hypotheses.

Presentation of Results

Demographic Profiles of the Respondents

The demographic data of the respondents are presented using frequency and percentage as shown in Table 1 below

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent (%)
Male	131	50.2
Female	130	49.8
Total	261	100.0

Table 1 shows that out of the 261 respondents that participated in this study, 131 (50.2%) were males; while 130 (49.8%) were females. This implies that majority of the respondents are males.

Hypotheses Testing

H₀₁: There is no significant correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria.

Table 2: Pearson’s (r) Statistics Showing the Correlation between National Values Consciousness and Corrupt Tendencies of Students in Tertiary Institutions

Variables	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. r	p-value
NVC	261	68.48	9.88	259	-0.19*	0.045
CT	261	53.09	10.45			

* Sig. at $p < 0.05$; NVC = National value Consciousness; CT = Corrupt Tendency

Table 2 shows that at degrees of freedom (df) of 259, the calculated r-value of -0.19 ($p = 0.045 < 0.05$) is statistically significant. This indicates that there is a significant negative correlation between values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in tertiary institutions of learning in Niger state; hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

H₀₂: There is no significant correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria based on gender.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis Results by Gender of Correlation between National values Consciousness and Corrupt Tendencies of Students

	Coefficients	SE	t-Stat.	p-value	R	R ²	F-ratio
Constant	63.128	3.813	16.555	0.000			
Corrupt Tendencies	0.111	0.059	1.886	0.060	0.120	0.014	1.888
Gender	-0.350	1.225	-0.286	0.775			

The R is 0.014, which indicates a weak linear correlation between the predictors (national value consciousness and corrupt tendencies) and the response variable (gender). The R-square is 0.014, which indicates that 1.40% of the variance by gender

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can be explained by the predictor variables. The F-ratio is 1.888, which indicates that the regression model provides a weak fit to the data set. The coefficient values 0.111 and -0.350 (with corresponding p-value of 0.060 and 0.775 respectively) indicated that gender does not moderate the correlation that exists between national value consciousness and corrupt tendencies among the students of tertiary institutions of learning in Niger State; hence, the null hypothesis is retained.

Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study revealed that the null hypothesis one which states that there is no significant correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies among students in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria is rejected. The findings show that there is a significant negative correlation between values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in tertiary institutions of learning in Niger state. This is an indication that the higher the consciousness of the students about the national values the lower the tendency of the student to engage in corrupt practices or behaviours. This may be because values are standards for socially acceptable behaviour in any society and it encourages positivity in behaviour. In the study of Abun et al (2020), individual's knowledge or cognitive attitude of good and bad brings about the disagreeableness to be corrupted in the future. This shows that the consciousness of an individual about of the values and norms of the society determines the attitude and behaviours exhibited.

The intent to engage in any form of behaviour is seen in the consciousness of that behaviour in the society. Values generally, form the basis or principles upon which decisions of being good and bad is considered. Osalusi and Ajayi, (2021) stated that national values implies behaviour and attitude exhibited and encouraged by members of the society as against those behaviours condemned and discouraged. Therefore, values influence behaviour because of their use as guiding principles in deciding action and reaction towards life concept and situations. As revealed by Nomishan, Andzenge, Kolawole and Oyigebe (2022) that, cultural values are imperative as they comprise desirable trans-situational goals that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or social entity. A society that has sound cultural values guiding the behaviour of its people will lack corruption; this is because such a culture will make it very difficult for it's people to indulge in corrupt practices (Nomishan et al, 2022). In support of this study, a researcher by Tatarko and Mironova (2016) on values and attitudes towards corruption showed that, individual values have reverse correlations with the acceptance of corruption than direct ones. This indicates that, values play a vital role in limiting corrupt behaviours. Barr and Serra (2010) investigated the effect of prevailing social norms and values in society and their decisions about corruption among undergraduate students in the United Kingdom. One of the values that were investigated was bribery and with mixed respondents from different countries, it was found that, the students would act corruptly in the future in their home countries. This finding suggests that when the youths are raised in a corrupt environment, they will also be corrupt in the future.

The findings retained the second hypothesis of this study, which states that there is no significant correlation between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies of students in tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria based on gender. The finding showed that gender does not moderate the correlation that exists between national value consciousness and corrupt tendencies among students of tertiary institutions in Niger State, Nigeria. The tendencies to be corrupt have nothing to do with being a male or female. This may be because every student target is to be rich after school.

Conclusion

This study concluded that students who are conscious of the national values have low tendencies of engaging in corrupt practices. The level of consciousness of an individual about the community values determines his or her extent of involvement in corrupt behaviours and practices. Gender of the students does not significantly moderate relationship between national values consciousness and corrupt tendencies in tertiary institutions in Niger state, Nigeria.

Recommendations

1. Considering the rate of corruption in Nigeria and the graduates from the nation tertiary institutions especially constitute the labour force, the study recommends that, a course on national values at all levels should be taught in tertiary institutions irrespective of discipline of study to increase students consciousness of the Nigerian core values. The course should be a core one and be in all levels.

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2. Regular re-orientation counselling on Nigerian core values should be organized via seminars and workshops for students in the tertiary institutions of learning as well as civil servants on the job in Niger State, Nigeria. This will help in increasing their consciousness of the nation's values and its relation to communal living.

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Effect of Watching Blunder Comedy on Test Anxiety among Postgraduate Students in University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the effect of watching comedy on test anxiety of the Master of Education students, Department of Education, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. Quasi experimental design was employed to facilitate the study. The population of the study comprised forty (40) Master of Education students of the Department of education university of Maiduguri, 2020/2021 Academic session. Since the population was small, the whole population was used. The students were randomly assigned into two groups of 20 participants each in control and experimental group. The Website Test Anxiety Scale was adopted and used as an instrument for data collection. Pre-test was administered to both groups to determine the degree of their anxiety prior to treatment. The experimental group was exposed to watching blunder comedy for twelve weeks while, the control group was not exposed to watching comedy. Post-test was administered to the both groups in order to compare with the pre-test to determine the effect of the experiment. The results from pre-test and post-test of the two groups were analyzed using ANCOVA. The study revealed that, there was significant effect of watching blunder comedy on test anxiety of Master of Education students, University of Maiduguri. Based on the findings, the researchers concluded that watching blunder comedy has significant effect by reducing test anxiety of Master of Education students, Department of Education, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. The study recommended that; students should watch blunder comedy to reduce test anxiety before taking any test of the Department. The University of Maiduguri should provide facilities where students can watch blunder comedy before taking test to reduce test anxiety.

Keywords: Blunder Comedy, test anxiety, Postgraduate students

Introduction

Comedy is a pleasant experience recognized by many people across the globe. By exploring the complexities of human experience, comedy offers a refreshing and entertaining perspectives to the individuals. It refers to a multifaceted and dynamic form of entertainment that provoke laughter, amusement and joy in audiences. It provides catharsis, offering safe outlet for emotions and tensions. Comedy provides unique way to comment on life's absurdities. It is more than just a simple form of entertainment; it is a reflection of society, a commentary on human nature, way to bring people together and means of tension relaxation. (Cohen, Gottlieb & Underwood, 2015). One of the most beloved and cherished comedy which makes people more laughter and happier is blunder comedy. It has been shown to reduce anxiety by releasing endorphins also known as "feel-good" hormones (Yim, 2016). Blunder comedy, a genre characterized by absurdity, chaos and physical humor has captivated audiences for century. This type of comedy often involves characters navigating ridiculous situations, leading to hilarious consequences. It relies on the art of mishandling, mismanaging and misinterpreting situation, resulting in comedic gold. However, Blunder comedy continues to delight audiences with its absurdity, physical humor and chaos. It provides a light heart escape from anxiety by embracing the ridiculous and the illogical acts, offering a much-needed dose of laughter and entertainment whether through classic films, TV show or live performance (Yim, 2016).

Blunder comedy elicits laughter-a natural physiological response that has been scientifically linked to test anxiety reduction. When we laugh, our brain release endorphins, the body's feel-good chemicals that promote a sense of well-being. Simultaneously, laughter reduces the level of cortisol, the hormone associated with test anxiety. This dual effect produces an immediate calming influence on both the mind and the body. The deep, involuntary muscle relaxation that follows a good laugh mimic the physical state of tranquility, offering temporary relief from the physiological symptoms of test anxiety such as muscle tension, rapid heartbeat and shallow breathing (Ford, Gross & Mauss, 2022).

Test anxiety refers to transitory apprehensive, uneasy or nervous feelings immediately before, during and after taking a specific test. Test anxiety is a feeling of nervous, worry, uneasiness and apprehension which students experience before, during or after writing a test or examination (Nemati & Habibi, 2012). Test anxiety represents a real threat to the validity of the achievement test scores used to assigned letter grades. Testing in an academic setting provokes anxiety in all students in higher education. When students experience high levels of anxiety, their performances could be affected and may not represent an accurate assessment of students' academic performance (Akinsola & Nwajei, 2013). Research works exhibits that, test anxiety is one of the most serious and dangerous psychological condition that affect the validity and reliability of a test (Zeidner, 2004; Ergene, 2003 & Ossai, 2011). Most of the learners are capable to succeed in assessments but the degree of test anxiety which they suffer hinders their performances, hence seize the opportunities and advantages for being success in their dream lives (Zeidner, 2004). Test anxiety can interfere with classroom and aptitude test performance, cause lower self-esteem, contribute to academic dropout and limit educational and vocational development (Ihuoma, 2000). Ergene (2003) is of the view that, high test anxiety can lead students to follow a discipline or career path that is not part of their dreams. The disparity in learners' performances depends largely on the level of their anxiety before and during the test. A high test-anxious student is unable to focus and pay attention on the test than a low test-anxious student (Ossai, 2011). A learner with moderate level of test anxiety is of an advantage to concentrate and perform well in any kind of test (Chapel, Blanding, Siverstein, Takashi, Newman, Gubi & Mccain, 2005).

Ossai (2011) study found out that, there was strong positive correlation between test anxiety and attitude towards cheating in examinations. Students with high level of test anxiety were prone to examination malpractice. There are notable variations in terms of performances between students with high level of test anxiety and those with low level of test anxiety. Those with low test anxiety are more confident and conscious to the test than those with high test anxiety. A low test-anxious student concentrates and pays much attention to the test, while a high test-anxious student is disturbed emotionally and cognitively by the anxiety they suffered (Ossai, 2011). Moadeli and Ghazanfari-Hesamabedi (2005) argued that learners can never be free from stress and anxiety when evaluated or tested, but high level of anxiety limits their ability and leads to poor performance. Empirical studies revealed that there is strong correlation between test anxiety and lower academic performance. For instance, Rana and Mahmood (2010) conducted a study on test anxiety and students' achievement scores in Pakistan and found out that there was significant negative relationship between them. Cassidy and Johnson (2002) studied the effect of test anxiety on students' academic performance and the findings revealed that, there was negative impact of cognitive test anxiety on academic performance measures. Research have shown that, numerous factors correlate test anxiety. For example, Oyama (2009) found out that there were significant positive relationships among test anxiety, attitude, instructional facilities, parental socio-economic status and students' tendency to cheat during examination.

Fear, stress, worry, nervous and anxiety are considered to be part of the natural factors that affect individuals leaning outcomes. Most of the assessment results failed to yield out accurate and authentic learners' abilities and performances due to the test anxiety the learners suffered. However, one of the researchers who was a master of education student, through his interaction with colleagues during their Master Degree Programme observed that, master students of the department of Education University of Maiduguri 2020/2021 academic session suffer test anxiety when writing test. They are scared, worried and stressful without having any means to reduce the anxiety before taking test. Thus, this study determined to examine if watching comedy have significant effect on reducing test anxiety of Master of Education students, Department of Education, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.

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Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to determine the Effect of Watching Blunder Comedy on Test Anxiety of Master of Education students, Department of Education University of Maiduguri

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of watching blunder comedy on test anxiety of Master of Education Students, Department of Education, University of Maiduguri

Methodology

The study adopted quasi-experimental design to determine the effect of Watching Blunder Comedy on Test Anxiety of Master of Education students, Department of Education University of Maiduguri. The population of the study comprised all forty (40) Master of Education Students of the Department of Education University of Maiduguri in the 2020/2021 academic session. Since the population was small, the whole population was used, as such no sample was drawn for the study. The researchers employed two research assistants who were professionals of educational technology to assist them installing and operating devices for the experiment. The participants were randomly selected and divided into two group - control and experimental. Each group consist 20 participants. Pre-test was administered to both groups to determine the degree of their anxiety prior to treatment. The experimental group was exposed to watching blunder comedy for thirty minutes every day up to twelve weeks while, the control group was exposed to watching horror for thirty minutes every day up to twelve weeks. After the treatment, Post-test was administered to the both groups in order to compare with the pre-test to determine the effect of the experiment. The Website Test Anxiety Scale was adopted and used to collect data. The test consists of twenty items. These twenty items were divided into two subscales- worry subscale and emotional subscale. Each subscale consists ten items followed by five-point scale which indicate the degree of test anxiety where the participants were expected to select the one that best suit their feelings. The instrument was pilot tested using participants who were master of education students, Department of Continue Education University of Maiduguri. Test-retest technique was used to determine the reliability of the instrument and yielded reliability coefficient of 0.78. The study used ANCOVA to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. ANCOVA was used to analyze data in order to reduce error variance, increasing the precision of the analysis and making it more likely to detect significant effects. It increased the statistical power of analysis to detect smaller effect that might not have been significant otherwise.

Presentation of Results

Hypothesis: There is no significant effect of watching blunder comedy on test anxiety of Master of Education Students, Department of Education, University of Maiduguri.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation for Pre-Test and Post-Test

Groups	Pre-test		Post-test	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Control	33.30	4.24	34.40	3.14
Experimental	30.00	3.72	21.90	4.67

The results of mean and standard deviation obtained from pre-test in the table I shows that both the groups were suffering from test anxiety before the treatment. After the treatment, the mean and standard deviation obtained from post-test for both groups indicate that, the control group was still suffered test anxiety while, the experimental group was free from test anxiety, as the mean of the control group goes higher than that of experimental group. This exhibits that, watching comedy has significant effect on test anxiety.

Table 2: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects of Watching Blunder Comedy on Test Anxiety

Source	Type III Sum of				Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
	Squares	Df	Mean Square	F		
Corrected Model	914.880 ^a	2	457.440	44.972	.000	.841
Intercept	14.658	1	14.658	1.441	.246	.078
Pre-test	146.080	1	146.080	14.361	.001	.458
Grptyp	402.891	1	402.891	39.609	.000	.700
Error	172.920	17	10.172			
Total	16880.000	20				

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Corrected Total 1087.800 19
a. R Squared = .841 (Adjusted R Squared = .822)

The results of data analysis on Table 2 above show that there is significant effect of watching blunder comedy on test anxiety of Master of Education Students of the Department of Education University of Maiduguri at significant P-value ($p < .05$).

Discussion of Findings

The finding of the study revealed that, watching blunder comedy has significant effect on test anxiety of Master of Education Students, Department of Education, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria. This finding is in line with the findings of Yim (2016) who revealed that, watching comedy reduces anxiety by releasing endorphins also known as “feel-good” hormones. It provides a light heart escape from anxiety by embracing the ridiculous and the illogical acts, offering a much-needed dose of laughter and entertainment. However, what was found in this study is also confirmed that of Ford, Gross and Mauss (2022) which revealed that, Blunder comedy elicits laughter-a natural physiological response that has been scientifically linked to test anxiety reduction. The deep, involuntary muscle relaxation that follows a good laugh mimic the physical state of tranquility, offering temporary relief from the physiological symptoms of test anxiety such as muscle tension, rapid heartbeat and shallow breathing. However, the finding of this study agreed with Cohen, Gottlieb and Underwood (2015) which also reported that comedy provides catharsis, offering safe outlet for emotions and tensions. Comedy provides unique way to comment on life’s absurdities. It is more than just a simple form of entertainment; it is a reflection of society, a commentary on human nature, way to bring people together and means of tension relaxation. The conformity and uniformity between this study and the findings of the previous studies might happen as a result of the power of the natural factor. Anxiety is a natural factor that occurs beyond human control. As human being shares the same characteristics, every individual can suffer the pain of test anxiety before and during assessment or evaluation which may subsequently affects the results. Therefore, this might be the reason why different studies reveal similar findings.

Conclusion

Based on the finding of the study, the researchers concluded that, watching blunder comedy has great significant effect by reducing test anxiety of Master of Education students, Department of Education, University of Maiduguri, Borno State, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study recommended that, students should be encouraged to watch blunder comedy to reduce test anxiety before taking any test of the Department. The University of Maiduguri should provide facilities where students can watch blunder comedy before taking test to reduce test anxiety.

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Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of Civic Education Studies among Secondary School Teachers in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching and assessment of civic education in secondary schools in Gusau educational zone, Zamfara state, Nigeria. The research explores how persistent security threats such as banditry, kidnappings, and school attacks affect teachers' effectiveness, student engagement, and assessment practices in Civic Education. Utilizing a survey research design. The population of the study comprised all the 156 civic education teachers in the study area. A multi-stage sampling technique was used to select 108 Civic Education teachers for the study. A validated structured questionnaire was used in the study. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of 0.83 was derived to satisfy the internal consistency of the instrument. Findings indicates that insecurity significantly disrupts Civic Education teaching, leading to reduced instructional time, lower teacher motivation, and decreased student participation. Additionally, assessment and evaluation of students are negatively impacted, with delays in examinations, limited assessment diversity, and reduced teacher confidence in evaluating students. The study concludes that insecurity poses a severe threat to the quality of Civic Education, potentially weakening students' understanding of civic responsibilities and national identity. The study recommends enhanced security measures in schools, psychological support for teachers and students, and policy interventions on assessment practice for quality teaching and assessment of Civic Education despite prevailing security challenges.

Keywords: Assessment, Civic Education, Insecurity, Quality Teaching, Teachers Engagement

Introduction

Insecurity is a complex issue that encompasses vulnerability, fear, and lack of protection due to real or perceived threats. It manifests in multiple forms, including physical, economic, social, and psychological dimensions, affecting individuals and societies alike. It can be defined as the absence of stability and safety, which fosters fear, uncertainty, and vulnerability (Achumba, Ighomereho, & Akpor-Robaro, 2013). In socio-economic contexts, insecurity results from a lack of resources and opportunities, leading to poverty and social instability (Omotoso, 2020). It also influences individuals' emotional well-being, often causing self-doubt and anxiety due to a perceived lack of control over personal circumstances (Vogel et al., 2020). More broadly, insecurity disrupts daily life, particularly through violence and armed conflict, leading to displacement, loss of lives, and weakened social systems, which in turn affect education, healthcare, and general well-being (Barakat & Uitto, 2019).

In recent years, Nigeria has encountered growing security challenges, particularly in the northern region, significantly affecting multiple sectors, including education. Zamfara State, with Gusau as its educational center, has been particularly impacted by these security threats. The prevailing insecurity, characterized by banditry, kidnappings, and communal conflicts, has severely disrupted the educational system. In northern Nigeria, the education sector has been deeply affected, as evidenced by numerous attacks on secondary schools over the past 15 years, including student and staff kidnappings and fatalities (Adams et al., 2021). These incidents have led to a decline in educational standards, disrupted academic activities, reduced school attendance, and inflicted psychological trauma on both students and teachers (Ogona & Anele, 2021).

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The situation in Zamfara State is particularly severe, as banditry and kidnappings have instilled fear among students and educators, leading to irregular school attendance and a decline in instructional quality. The insecurity has also posed significant challenges to student assessment, with examinations often delayed or canceled due to safety concerns. Additionally, the destruction of school infrastructure and displacement of communities have further exacerbated the challenges faced by the education sector (Ogona & Anele, 2021). Civic education, which is critical for fostering national consciousness and responsible citizenship, has also suffered due to these disruptions. The interruptions in teaching, learning and assessment of civic education have created gaps in students' understanding of civic responsibilities and societal roles.

Civic education is the process of equipping individuals with knowledge about their rights, responsibilities, and roles within society, particularly in a democratic setting. It fosters an understanding of governance, political participation, and social responsibilities, helping students develop critical thinking skills and civic engagement (Torney-Purta, 2002). This field of education not only informs students about political structures but also encourages active participation in democratic processes and community affairs (Westheimer & Kahne, 2004). Additionally, civic education emphasizes global citizenship while preserving democratic values (CIRCLE, 2020). It employs various instructional strategies, including discussions, debates, and participatory activities, to enhance students' understanding of government systems, democratic principles, and civic duties (Hess, 2017). By playing these roles, assessment in civic education also helps students develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for active citizenship and informed participation in democratic society.

Assessment is defined as a systematic process used to gather evidence of students' learning outcomes and performance, often to evaluate instructional effectiveness and guide future learning activities (Mertler, 2020). This process involves a range of tools and strategies, such as tests, assignments, and observations. Assessment in civic education refers to the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data to evaluate student knowledge, skills and values necessary for active citizenship. It helps educators gauge educational progress, identify areas requiring improvement, and inform instructional decisions. Assessment can be broadly classified into formative and summative types (Andrade & Cizek, 2019). Formative assessment provides ongoing feedback to enhance learning, while summative assessment evaluates students' overall performance at the end of a learning period. Both types are essential in fostering academic development. Modern perspectives emphasize assessment as an integral part of the learning process, shifting the focus from mere performance measurement to active student engagement in their educational journey (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Furthermore, contemporary assessment approaches highlight the importance of equity and inclusivity, ensuring that evaluation methods accommodate diverse learning needs and provide all students with fair opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge (Stiggins, 2017).

The growing insecurity in Zamfara State, particularly in the Gusau Educational Zone, has emerged as a major challenge for the education sector. Frequent violent attacks, kidnappings, and general instability have created an unsafe learning environment, making it difficult for teachers to perform their duties effectively. Schools frequently experience disruptions, leading to irregular teaching schedules, diminished classroom engagement, and declining instructional quality. Teachers often struggle to teach effectively due to fear and anxiety, resulting in reduced focus and motivation. Civic education, a crucial subject for promoting democratic values, national unity, and responsible citizenship, has been significantly affected. Insecurity also impacts student assessment in civic education, as repeated school closures and disruptions hinder students from taking exams and completing assignments as scheduled. Teachers face difficulties in evaluating student progress due to irregular attendance and limited instructional time. If the insecurity in Gusau Educational Zone remains unaddressed, the long-term effects could be severe, leading to a generation of students with insufficient civic knowledge and a weakened sense of national identity. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the extent of insecurity's impact on civic education and explore solutions to create a safe and conducive learning environment.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching of civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State.
2. To assess how insecurity affects the assessment and evaluation of students in civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State.

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Research Questions

1. How does insecurity impact the quality of teaching civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?
2. In what ways does insecurity affect the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?

Research Methodology

A survey research design was adopted for this study. The population of the study comprised all 156 civic education teachers in the 45 public secondary schools in the two local government areas (Gusau and Tsafe) that made up Gusau Educational Zone. Based on Research Advisors' (2006) recommendation, a sample size of 108 was selected using a multi-stage sampling technique. A structured questionnaire titled "Impact of Insecurity on the Quality of Teaching and Assessment of Civic Education Questionnaire (IIQTACEQ)," was used in the study. The questionnaire was validated by experts in the Department of Educational Foundations, Federal University Gusau, and pilot-tested to ensure reliability, yielding a Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.83. The data collected was analyzed using the descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation.

Presentation of Results

Answering Research Question One

The research questions in this study was answered using mean scores and standard deviation.

Research Question One: How does insecurity impact the quality of teaching civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?

Table 1: Impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching civic education in secondary school in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara state

S/N	ITEMS	N	M	S.D	Ranking
1.	Insecurity has resulted in a decrease in the number of hours allocated for civic education lessons in schools.	108	3.08	.83	7 th
2.	Due to insecurity, teachers of civic education often have to cancel or reschedule classes.	108	1.83	.81	10 th
3.	Insecurity affects the availability of teaching resources, such as books and materials, for civic education in my school.	108	3.26	.87	4 th
4.	Teachers are less motivated to deliver effective civic education lessons due to the fear of insecurity.	108	3.09	.59	6 th
5.	Insecurity has caused a reduction in the quality of interaction between civic education teachers and students.	108	3.06	.70	8 th
6.	The insecurity situation in Gusau Educational Zone limits the use of fieldwork or practical activities in civic education classes.	108	3.36	.82	3 rd
7.	Teachers in my school are less likely to use innovative teaching methods for civic education due to concerns over insecurity.	108	2.03	.88	9 th
8.	Students are less engaged in civic education lessons due to the ongoing insecurity in the region.	108	3.42	.79	1 st
9.	Insecurity has led to a lack of teacher-student interaction outside the classroom in relation to civic education.	108	3.37	.66	2 nd
10.	The safety concerns related to insecurity in the region significantly hinder the ability of teachers to cover the full civic education curriculum.	108	3.12	.77	5 th
	Cumulative Mean/StD	108	2.96	.77	

Decision mean = 2.500

Note: M=Mean, StD=Standard Deviation, SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree.

Table 1 reveals the impact of insecurity on the quality of teaching civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara state. The findings of the study indicated that insecurity has reduced teaching and learning activities in civic

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Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of ... Sheu, A. L. & Sule, M. (2025) education, such as caused students to less engaged in civic education lessons, reduced teacher-student interaction, limits the use of fieldwork or practical activities in civic education classes, hinder the ability of teachers to cover the full civic education curriculum etc. with mean score of 3.42, 3.37, 3.36, 3.27, 3.12, 3.09, 3.08, 3.06, 2.03 and 1.83 respectively.

Research Question Two: In what ways does insecurity affect the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State?

Table 2: Effect of insecurity on the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State

S/N	ITEMS	N	M	St.D	Ranking
11.	Insecurity has led to frequent postponements of civic education assessments and exams.	108	3.15	.74	6 th
12.	Security concerns have affected the ability to conduct practical or field-based evaluations for civic education students.	108	3.14	.78	8 th
13.	Due to insecurity, teachers find it difficult to assess the full understanding of civic education among students.	108	3.33	.69	4 th
14.	Insecurity has limited the use of diverse assessment methods, such as group projects or community involvement, for civic education students.	108	3.43	.66	3 rd
15.	Insecurity has greatly reduced the quality of learner's assessment of civic education.	108	3.56	.49	1 st
16.	Insecurity has reduced the frequency of assessments and evaluations for civic education students in my school.	108	3.54	.58	2 nd
17.	The current insecurity situation has led to changes in how civic education exams are structured, often making them less comprehensive.	108	3.22	.77	5 th
18.	Insecurity affects the timely grading and feedback on civic education assessments.	108	3.15	.74	6 th
19.	Teachers are less confident in evaluating civic education students due to the ongoing insecurity in the region.	108	1.93	.84	9 th
20.	Insecurity has caused an increase in the reliance on written assessments, rather than other forms of evaluation like discussions or oral exams, for civic education.	108	1.96	.85	10 th
Cumulative Mean/StD		108	3.04	.67	

Decision mean = 2.500

Note: M=Mean, SD=Standard Deviation, SA=Strongly Agree, A=Agree, D=Disagree SD=Strongly Disagree.

Table 2 shows how insecurity affects the assessment and evaluation of students in civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State. The table revealed that Insecurity has greatly reduced the quality of learner's assessment of civic education, frequency of assessments and evaluations for students, limited the use of diverse assessment methods such as group projects or community involvement, assessment of the full understanding of civic education among students, brought about changes in how civic education exams are structured etc with mean values ranging from 3.56 to 1.86 respectively. Also, the cumulative mean was 3.04 which is above the decision mean. Thus, evidence suggests that insecurity has adversely impacted the assessment and evaluation of civic education students in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State.

Discussion of Findings

The first major finding indicates that insecurity greatly undermines the quality of civic education instruction. The rise in criminal activities and the presence of armed groups in the region have created an unsafe environment, making it difficult for teachers to conduct lessons effectively. Many educators report feeling unsafe, which reduces their ability to engage students in meaningful learning experiences. Adeyemi (2012) emphasizes that a secure learning environment is crucial for effective teaching, as it fosters better teacher-student interaction. However, in Gusau, the frequent disruption of school activities due to

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Impact of Insecurity on Quality of Teaching and Assessment of ... Sheu, A. L. & Sule, M. (2025) security threats leads to recurrent closures, significantly reducing instructional time for civic education an essential subject that promotes democratic values and responsible citizenship (Harris & Jones, 2020). Moreover, the unstable security situation discourages teachers from utilizing interactive teaching methods, such as group discussions and experiential learning activities, which are vital for deepening students' understanding of civic issues. Instead, educators often rely on lecture-based instruction, limiting students' ability to critically engage with governance and citizenship topics. McKnight (2017) argues that active learning strategies are essential in civic education as they enhance students' critical thinking. However, due to safety concerns, teachers are compelled to abandon these methods, affecting students' comprehension of civic concepts.

The second key finding highlights that insecurity significantly disrupts student assessment in civic education. Continuous school closures and the displacement of teachers and students result in incomplete syllabi, making it difficult to track academic progress. Afolabi (2018) asserts that consistent student-teacher engagement is necessary for effective assessment, yet insecurity weakens this interaction, compromising the quality of evaluations. Teachers in Gusau Educational Zone face challenges in administering structured assessments, such as written exams and hands-on evaluations, due to safety concerns. As a result, they often resort to informal methods, such as oral questioning, which may not accurately measure students' understanding of civic concepts. Gokce and Arslan (2017) stress the importance of formal assessments in gauging students' critical thinking, particularly in civic education. However, insecurity makes it difficult to implement these assessments systematically. Additionally, Fagbemi (2015) highlights that the inconsistency in student evaluations due to insecurity affects the reliability of academic records, making it difficult to make informed decisions regarding students' performance. Apple (2016) similarly points out that conflict-affected education systems often experience weakened assessment structures, reducing the overall quality of education. In Gusau, these challenges have severely impacted the evaluation of students' comprehension of civic values, limiting their preparedness for active civic participation.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study conclude that insecurity has significantly affect the teaching and assessment of civic education in secondary schools in Gusau Educational Zone, Zamfara State. These challenges has weaken teachers and students' civic knowledge and national identity, ultimately affecting their ability to contribute meaningfully to society.

Recommendation

1. Local authorities should collaborate with security agencies to enhance safety around schools by deploying security personnel and establishing safe routes for students and teachers.
2. Schools should implement emergency response protocols and engage with communities to ensure a secure educational environment.
3. Teachers should adopt flexible assessment methods such as continuous assessments, project-based evaluations, and online testing to mitigate disruptions caused by insecurity.

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21st Century Girl-Child Education in Insecurity-Prone Areas of Nigeria: Prospects and Challenges

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Abstract

This paper examined 21st century girl-child education in insecurity-prone areas of Nigeria: prospects and challenges. Girl-child education is a fundamental driver of national development, yet insecurity remains a critical barrier in many parts of Nigeria, particularly in the northern regions. Widespread insurgency, banditry, kidnappings, and communal conflicts have led to school closures, reduced enrollment, and heightened parental fears, disproportionately affecting female students. This study examines both the prospects and challenges of 21st-century girl-child education in insecurity-prone areas of Nigeria, using feminist theory as a framework. The research highlights how gender-based violence, economic hardship, and cultural norms exacerbate educational inequality. Despite these obstacles, initiatives such as digital learning, community engagement, and government interventions offer potential solutions. The study recommends a multi-sectoral approach involving enhanced school security, policy reforms, psychosocial support, and economic empowerment programs to ensure safe and equitable access to education for girls in conflict-affected areas.

Keywords: Girl-Child Education, Insecurity, Feminist Theory, School Safety, Nigeria

Introduction

Education is a fundamental human right and a critical tool for individual and societal development. However, in Nigeria, insecurity has become a significant barrier to girls' education, particularly in the northern regions. The rise in insurgency, banditry, kidnapping, and communal conflicts has led to widespread school closures, fear among parents and students, and a decline in girls' enrollment and retention in schools. Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a critical driver of national development (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2021). However, in many developing countries, including Nigeria, access to quality education remains a challenge, particularly for the girl-child. The 21st century has witnessed global efforts to bridge gender disparities in education, yet insecurity remains a significant barrier, especially in regions prone to violence and armed conflict (United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], 2022).

Nigeria, as Africa's most populous nation, has faced persistent insecurity challenges, including insurgency, banditry, and kidnappings, which have disproportionately affected the education sector. The Boko Haram insurgency, which began in 2009, has targeted educational institutions, with girls being particularly vulnerable to abductions and attacks (Omenma et al., 2020). The abduction of 276 schoolgirls in Chibok, Borno State, in 2014 by Boko Haram and subsequent kidnappings in states such as Zamfara, Kaduna, and Niger highlight the severe threats to girl-child education in Nigeria (Maiangwa, 2021). Despite these challenges, the 21st century has also brought opportunities for enhancing girl-child education through policies, technological innovations, and community-driven initiatives. The introduction of digital learning platforms, alternative schooling methods, and international interventions, such as the Safe Schools Initiative, have provided some relief (World Bank, 2022). However, persistent cultural barriers, economic constraints, and fear of attacks continue to hinder progress. Scholars such as Okafor and

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Adeleke (2020) argue that a multifaceted approach—combining security reforms, community engagement, and educational policy interventions—is crucial to overcoming these challenges.

Theoretical Frame Work

Feminist theory is a critical framework that examines gender inequalities, power structures, and social norms that perpetuate discrimination against women and girls (Tong, 2019). Originating from feminist movements advocating for women's rights, the theory seeks to understand and challenge societal structures that marginalize females in areas such as education, politics, and the economy (Lorber, 2021). One of the core tenets of feminist theory is the belief that education is a tool for empowerment, allowing women and girls to break free from systemic oppression (Nussbaum, 2020). Scholars like hooks (2000) argue that education is a form of resistance against patriarchy and a crucial mechanism for achieving gender equality. However, in contexts where insecurity prevails, such as northern Nigeria, the fight for girl-child education is compounded by violence, cultural barriers, and structural inequalities. Feminist theory highlights how patriarchal norms restrict girls' access to education. In Nigeria, deep-rooted cultural beliefs prioritize male education over female education, particularly in rural and conflict-prone areas (Akinwale, 2021). Many families fear sending their daughters to school due to security threats, forced marriages, and economic constraints, reinforcing gender disparities in education.

However, insecurity in Nigeria, particularly in the northern states, has further exacerbated educational inequalities. The Boko Haram insurgency, which opposes Western education, has systematically targeted schools, especially those attended by girls (Omenma et al., 2020). The kidnapping of schoolgirls, as seen in the Chibok and Dapchi abductions, underscores how violence is used to suppress female education and maintain patriarchal dominance. Feminist scholars argue that such acts of violence are not just about insecurity but are also tools for reinforcing gender-based oppression (Mohanty, 2021). Crenshaw's (1989) concept of intersectionality within feminist theory is relevant in understanding how multiple layers of discrimination gender, poverty, and insecurity intersect to limit educational opportunities for girls in Nigeria. Girls from poor households are disproportionately affected by insecurity, as they lack access to safe schools, digital learning alternatives, or financial support to continue their education in displacement settings (UNESCO, 2021). From a feminist perspective, education is a fundamental tool for dismantling patriarchal structures and achieving gender equity. When girls receive quality education, they are more likely to escape cycles of poverty, participate in decision-making, and contribute to economic development (Nussbaum, 2020). Feminist theorists advocate for policies and interventions that promote safe schooling environments, gender-sensitive curricula, and community engagement to support girls' education in conflict zones (World Bank, 2022).

Concept of Insecurity

Insecurity refers to a state of uncertainty, vulnerability, or lack of safety, often associated with threats to physical, emotional, economic, or social well-being. It can manifest in various forms, such as personal insecurity, economic instability, political unrest, and community safety concerns. Nwolise (2012) defines insecurity as "the absence of safety, danger, hazard, uncertainty, and lack of protection, which makes individuals, groups, or nations vulnerable to harm or threats" (p. 45). Beland (2005) describes insecurity as a state of fear or anxiety stemming from a perceived or real lack of protection, stability, or certainty in different aspects of life, including economic, political, and personal security. Achumba, Ighomereho, and Akpor-Robaro (2013) define insecurity as "a state in which individuals or groups feel threatened due to a lack of adequate measures to prevent risks and dangers that affect their safety, well-being, or survival" (p. 81). Albert (2017) conceptualizes insecurity as "a social condition characterized by widespread fear, instability, and the breakdown of mechanisms that ensure security, law, and order in a society".

Types of Insecurity

Personal Insecurity: Personal insecurity is characterized by persistent self-doubt, low confidence, and fear about one's capabilities and future (Greenberg et al., 1997). People who experience personal insecurity may struggle with feelings of inadequacy, fear of failure, or low self-esteem, which can hinder their personal and professional development. This insecurity may stem from childhood experiences, past setbacks, societal pressures, or psychological influences. For example, a student who constantly questions their intelligence may avoid academic challenges, limiting their potential for growth.

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Social Insecurity: Social insecurity refers to anxiety related to social acceptance, relationships, and status within a community. It often arises from a fear of rejection, exclusion, or judgment from others (Leary, 2005). Individuals dealing with social insecurity may avoid social interactions, struggle with trust, or experience identity crises. Contributing factors include bullying, discrimination, and inadequate social support. For instance, marginalized groups may feel socially insecure due to systemic inequalities and exclusion from mainstream opportunities.

Economic Insecurity: Economic insecurity is the uncertainty surrounding financial stability, job opportunities, and access to basic necessities like food, housing, and healthcare (Hacker et al., 2014). It can result from unemployment, inflation, economic crises, or poor financial management. Economic insecurity negatively impacts mental health, family stability, and overall well-being. For example, individuals who live paycheck to paycheck without financial savings often experience significant stress and anxiety.

Political Insecurity: Political insecurity refers to instability in governance, leadership, and policies that create uncertainty and fear among citizens (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). It can be caused by corruption, weak institutions, frequent policy shifts, and authoritarian rule. Political instability discourages investment, hampers economic growth, and can lead to social unrest. For instance, in politically unstable nations, businesses may hesitate to invest due to concerns over sudden regulatory changes or potential conflicts.

Physical Security Insecurity: Physical security insecurity is the fear of harm due to crime, terrorism, armed conflict, or violence (Newman, 2005). It affects individuals and communities by restricting movement, disrupting economic activities, and causing psychological distress. Factors such as weak law enforcement, political instability, and poverty contribute to physical insecurity. For example, in Zamfara State, Nigeria, frequent attacks by armed groups have led to mass displacement, school closures, and economic hardships, severely impacting the well-being of residents (Alemika, 2013).

Concept of Girls' Child Education

Girls' child education refers to the formal, informal, and non-formal education provided to female children to enhance their knowledge, skills, and development. It encompasses primary, secondary, and tertiary education, as well as vocational training, life skills, and social education, empowering girls to contribute meaningfully to society. UNICEF (2020) defines girls' education as "the process of ensuring that female children and adolescents acquire knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for their personal growth, economic empowerment, and active participation in their communities." While World Bank (2018) states that "girls' education is a fundamental human right that enables social and economic development, reduces poverty, and improves health outcomes for individuals and societies." Girls' child education as the structured and systematic process through which female children gain academic, moral, and social knowledge, equipping them with the skills necessary to participate fully in society and the economy. To Malhotra, Pande, and Grown (2003) describe girls' child education as "a transformative tool that not only benefits the girl herself but also contributes to family welfare, national development, and gender equality."

Impacts of Girl-Child Education on National Development in Nigeria

Economic Growth and Poverty Reduction: Educating girls is a key driver of economic progress, as it increases women's participation in the workforce and improves household income levels. According to UNESCO (2020), each additional year of schooling for a girl can boost her future earnings by 10–20%. Similarly, Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (2018) emphasize that investing in female education yields some of the highest returns on human capital, as educated women contribute to economic productivity and foster innovation. In Nigeria, research shows that states with higher female literacy rates tend to experience lower poverty levels. The World Bank (2021) highlights that closing the gender gap in education could add billions to Nigeria's GDP by enabling women to access higher-paying jobs. Additionally, educated women are more likely to become entrepreneurs, secure formal employment, and contribute to overall national development.

Improved Health and Reduced Child Mortality: Education plays a crucial role in improving health outcomes at both individual and community levels. Studies indicate that women with higher levels of education are more likely to seek healthcare

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services, adopt family planning practices, and provide better nutrition for their children. According to Abuya, Onsomu, and Moore (2022), maternal education is closely linked to lower infant mortality rates, as educated mothers are more likely to utilize professional maternity care and ensure their children receive vaccinations. In Nigeria, UNICEF (2022) reports that child mortality rates are significantly lower among children of educated mothers. Furthermore, women with education are more aware of diseases such as HIV/AIDS and malaria, allowing them to make informed health decisions that benefit both their families and the broader society.

Promoting Gender Equality and Social Stability: Providing girls with access to education is essential for promoting gender equality and reducing social disparities. Nussbaum (2011) argues that education empowers women by equipping them with the knowledge and confidence to participate in decision-making at household, community, and national levels. This empowerment helps to reduce gender-based violence, early marriage, and harmful cultural practices that undermine women's rights. In Nigeria, Omoniyi (2016) contends that increasing educational opportunities for girls contributes to social stability by lowering crime rates, reducing domestic violence, and preventing radicalization.

Enhancing Civic Engagement and Leadership: Educated girls grow into active citizens who play a significant role in governance and civic participation. Sen (1999) emphasizes that education enhances critical thinking and decision-making abilities, making individuals more likely to engage in democratic processes. In Nigeria, the limited representation of women in politics and leadership positions is partly due to disparities in education (Okafor & Akokuwebe, 2019). By ensuring access to quality education for girls, Nigeria can develop a generation of female leaders who advocate for policy reforms, social justice, and national development. UNESCO (2021) highlights that closing the educational gap between boys and girls creates a more inclusive society where diverse perspectives are represented in governance.

Advancing Technological and Scientific Innovation: Educated girls are more likely to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), which are essential for a nation's development. The African Development Bank (2020) notes that increasing female participation in STEM fields promotes innovation and economic diversification. However, in Nigeria, societal barriers and limited access to quality education have contributed to the underrepresentation of women in STEM. Encouraging girls to study STEM subjects can accelerate technological advancements, support industrialization, and enhance the country's global competitiveness.

Challenges of Insecurity on Girls' Child Education in Nigeria

Fear of Kidnapping and Attacks on Schools: A major obstacle to girls' education in Nigeria is the fear of abduction and school attacks. Since 2009, the Boko Haram insurgency has deliberately targeted schools, especially those educating girls. Notable incidents include the 2014 kidnapping of over 270 schoolgirls in Chibok and the 2018 abduction of 110 girls in Dapchi. These threats have led many parents to hesitate in sending their daughters to school, fearing kidnapping, sexual violence, or even death at the hands of insurgents and bandits.

School Closures and Displacement: Widespread insecurity has forced the closure of many schools, particularly in conflict-affected areas. UNICEF (2021) reports that over 1,500 schools in northern Nigeria have shut down due to safety concerns, depriving thousands of girls of education. Additionally, violence has displaced families, disrupting learning for children in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps, where formal education is often inaccessible.

Psychological Trauma and Academic Struggles: Exposure to violence severely affects girls' mental health, making learning difficult. Research shows that children in conflict zones suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression, all of which negatively impact their academic performance. Girls who have witnessed attacks or experienced violence struggle to focus, resulting in poor educational outcomes.

Early Marriage as a Protective Measure: Fear of abduction and violence compels many parents in unsafe regions to marry off their daughters at an early age, believing it ensures their safety. This practice significantly lowers girls' chances of

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completing school. Studies indicate that rising insecurity has contributed to an increase in child marriage, particularly in northern Nigeria, where cultural and religious traditions already encourage early marriage.

Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Exploitation: Insecurity heightens the risk of gender-based violence, including rape, forced prostitution, and trafficking. In conflict areas, insurgents and bandits often target girls for sexual exploitation, deterring them from attending school. Research shows that many female students in violence-affected regions face sexual harassment, contributing to high dropout rates.

Economic Hardship and Poverty: Insecurity disrupts economic activities, worsening poverty for affected families. Due to financial struggles, many families prioritize boys' education over girls', often pushing girls into domestic work or income-generating activities instead of schooling. The destruction of livelihoods by insurgents and bandits further prevents families from affording school fees, uniforms, and essential learning materials, deepening educational inequality for girls.

Prospects for Addressing the Challenges of Insecurity on Girls' Child Education in Nigeria

Enhancing School Security: Ensuring a safe learning environment for girls requires strengthening school security. This can be achieved by deploying security personnel, installing surveillance systems, and implementing early warning mechanisms to prevent attacks. Establishing secure school policies, such as fencing, emergency response plans, and collaboration with local security forces, can further protect educational institutions.

Community Involvement in Security Efforts: Involving local communities in safeguarding schools can help reduce security risks. Strategies such as community policing, vigilante groups, and neighborhood watch programs add extra layers of protection for students and teachers. Active participation from parents, religious leaders, and traditional authorities in school security fosters trust in education and encourages families to keep their daughters in school.

Alternative Learning Approaches: In conflict-prone areas, alternative education models can ensure continued learning despite security challenges. Options such as online learning, radio-based education, and mobile classrooms provide educational access for girls. Distance learning programs, community learning hubs, and the use of digital technology can help sustain education even when physical schools are unsafe.

Psychosocial Support and Trauma Recovery: Exposure to insecurity can cause trauma, affecting girls' ability to focus on education. Schools should offer psychosocial support through counseling services, peer support networks, and mental health initiatives to help students cope with emotional distress and remain engaged in their studies.

Strengthening Government Policies and Legal Frameworks: Effective policy interventions are crucial for addressing security-related educational challenges. Enforcing child protection laws, strengthening education policies, and ensuring that all children have access to schooling, regardless of security threats, can improve educational outcomes.

Economic Support and Empowerment Initiatives: Financial constraints often prevent families in insecure regions from prioritizing girls' education. Providing economic support through scholarships, conditional cash transfers, and free school meal programs can encourage parents to enroll and keep their daughters in school.

Advocacy and Public Awareness Campaigns: Changing societal attitudes toward girls' education is vital in overcoming cultural and security-related obstacles. Public awareness campaigns, community engagement efforts, and advocacy programs led by governments, NGOs, and religious leaders can help promote positive perceptions and support for girls' education.

Conclusion

The education of girls in insecurity-prone areas of Nigeria faces major challenges due to violence, cultural barriers, and economic hardships. School attacks, kidnappings, and gender-based violence continue to limit their access to education, restricting their role in national development. However, solutions such as improved security, community involvement,

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alternative learning methods, and supportive policies offer hope. Addressing the root causes of insecurity and ensuring inclusive education policies are crucial for progress. A collaborative approach involving the government, communities, and global partners can help secure a better future for girls and the nation as a whole.

Recommendations

1. Nigerian Government should strengthen security infrastructure, deploying personnel, and establishing early warning systems to protect schools.
2. Nigerian Government should raise awareness, involving traditional and religious leaders, and creating community-based protection initiatives.
3. Education stakeholders should provide counseling services, teacher training on trauma care, and peer support networks for affected students.
4. Government should enforce compulsory education, combating child marriage and gender-based violence, and increasing education funding.
5. Education stakeholders should offer financial aid, vocational training, and public-private partnerships to support girls' education.
6. Nigerian Government should Partner with global organizations to enhance school safety, provide resources, and expand education initiatives.

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Comparative Relationship Between Headteachers' Leadership Style and Teachers' Service Engagement among Government Secondary Schools in Mitooma District, Uganda

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between leadership style and service engagement of of teachers in government aided secondary schools, and to establish the relationship between laissez-faire leadership style and work engagement of teachers in government aided secondary schools in Mitooma District in Uganda. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design on a sample of 102 teachers and six head teachers from a total population of 293, including 280 teachers and 13 head teachers, respectively. A mixed method was used. Data were collected using a self-administered questionnaire and an interview guide. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, namely frequencies, percentages, and means, and inferential analyses in terms of correlation and regression analyses using SPSS software version 27, while qualitative data were analysed by first transcribing the interview results into text, coding sub-themes and themes were also carried out based on the research objectives. The findings revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between transformational and laissez-faire leadership and work engagement of teachers among others. It was concluded that transformational leadership style is essential for work engagement of teachers, transactional leadership style is not imperative for work engagement of teachers, and laissez-faire leadership style is critical for work engagement of teachers. The study recommends that head teachers should make effort to provide a transformational leadership style to promote work engagement of teachers, head teachers should minimize use of transactional leadership style to work engagement of teachers, and head teachers should be flexible to give freedom to teachers by practicing some laissez-faire leadership to promote work engagement of teachers.

Key Words: Head -Teacher, Leadership Style, Service Engagement

Introduction

An organization's general operation, particularly that of educational institutions, is greatly influenced by its leadership. The leadership philosophies of secondary school head teachers have a significant influence on how engaged teachers are at work, which in turn affects the caliber of instruction and learning. The actions and tactics used by leaders to manage, inspire, and influence their teams are referred to as leadership styles. As school leaders, head teachers are in charge of establishing an atmosphere that encourages teacher engagement and job satisfaction, both of which improve student results (Northouse, 2022).

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Education is a tool for giving people in society the abilities, pertinent information, and survival behaviours they need in a world that is constantly changing. Accordingly, education has been embraced by all nations as a tool for national development (Pang, 2013). Therefore, given its total importance to school achievement and the socioeconomic growth of any nation, worries for enhanced secondary school performance are becoming harder to ignore (Chua & Mosha, 2015). Teachers are essential to the efficient operation of secondary schools. However, the necessity of giving all children access to highly engaged teachers has been a recurrent issue in discussions about education in recent years (Klassen, Yerdelen & Durksen, 2013). Therefore, this study sought to establish those factors that relate to work engagement of teachers, particularly looking at leadership styles of head teachers.

Relationship between Transformational Leadership Style and Work Engagement

Various researchers have explored the connection between transformational leadership and work engagement. Amor, Vázquez, and Faiña (2020) examined how structural empowerment mediates the positive link between transformational leadership and work engagement among employees in the tourism industry in Galicia, northwest Spain. Their findings indicated a significant relationship between transformational leadership and work engagement. Bezuidenhout and Schultz (2013) aimed to explore the connection between transformational leadership and employee engagement at a mine in South Africa's North West Province. Their results indicated a clear relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement, suggesting that both should be viewed comprehensively. Nielsen and Cleal (2021) carried out a longitudinal study in Scandinavian countries, demonstrating that transformational leadership plays a crucial role in boosting employee engagement by fostering a sense of purpose and empowerment. Their research showed that transformational leaders, through goal-setting and providing support, improve employees' energy, dedication, and focus in their work. In a similar study conducted by Bonsu and Twum-Danso (2022) in Ghana's banking sector, it was found that transformational leadership directly and positively influenced employee engagement. The study emphasized the significance of leader behaviors like inspiring a common vision and offering individualized support, which boosted employees' emotional commitment and dedication to their work. This is consistent with Schaufeli's (2022) findings, which suggested that transformational leaders create psychological safety and trust, allowing employees to reach their full potential. In educational environments, Parker and Gibb (2023) investigated how transformational leadership impacts teacher engagement in secondary schools in the UK. Their study revealed that transformational leadership improved teachers' work engagement by fostering a positive school culture that promotes professional growth and collaboration. Teachers who experienced transformational leadership reported increased dedication and enthusiasm toward their teaching responsibilities.

In their study, Breevaart et al. (2014) explored the impact of leadership behaviors on the daily work engagement of naval cadets at a Norwegian Military University College. The results indicated that transformational leadership fostered a more supportive work environment, enhancing autonomy and leading to increased work engagement. Similarly, Gautam and Enslin (2019) investigated the connection between transformational leadership and employee work engagement in South Africa's automotive retail sector. Their findings demonstrated a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement. Additionally, Ghadi et al. (2013) studied how transformational leadership affects work engagement, focusing on the mediating role of work meaning among full-time employees in Australia. They found that the transformational leadership style impacted followers' work engagement attributes, though the direct relationship was partially mediated by employees' perceptions of meaning in their work. In this context, Gözükar and Şimşek (2015) investigated the impact of transformational leadership on the work engagement of academicians in a Turkish private non-profit university, focusing on job autonomy. Their results indicated that transformational leadership positively and significantly influenced work engagement. Similarly, Hayati, Charkhabi, and Naami (2014) explored the effects of transformational leadership and its components on work engagement among hospital nurses. Their findings revealed that the transformational leadership style had a significant positive effect on work engagement. Additionally, the study showed that transformational leaders conveyed their enthusiasm and empowerment to their subordinates through modeling and enhancing their power, which are key aspects of work engagement. The idealized influence of these leaders fostered a specific belief among employees towards them, allowing leaders to effectively share their inspirational motivation. This process contributed to a positive vision, as leaders set high standards that challenged employees while instilling enthusiasm and optimism for achieving success in their work. Mansor, Mun, Farhana, and Tarmizi (2017) examined how transformational leadership style affects employee engagement among workers in the Selangor and Klang Valley regions of Malaysia. Their findings revealed a significant relationship between the dimensions of intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration with employee engagement. In contrast, Pieterse-Landman (2012) sought to explore the connections among perceived leader behavior, employee engagement, job characteristics, and employees' intentions to quit by testing a conceptual model based on existing literature in South Africa. The results demonstrated significant positive relationships between transformational leadership and employee engagement, the motivating potential of a job and employee engagement, as well as transformational leadership and the motivating potential of a job.

Research Design

The study utilized a cross-sectional research design to gather data about the situation at a specific moment. Conducting the study at a single point in time enabled the analysis of multiple variables simultaneously and facilitated an examination of the prevalence of the research problem within the study population (Setia, 2016). The cross-sectional design was selected because it allowed collection of data using multiple tools including a questionnaire which helped to collect data examining association between variables (Al Kindy, Shah & Jusoh, 2016). The study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative approach was used to test hypotheses and make statistical

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inferences, while the qualitative approach enhanced the quantitative data by offering more detailed insights. As a result, the researcher could make statistical inferences and conduct a thorough analysis. The population for this study consisted of 293 individuals, including 280 teachers and 13 head teachers (Education Officer Report, 2021). The teachers' population supplied quantitative data for the questionnaire survey, while the head teachers contributed qualitative data to enhance the quantitative findings. The sample for the questionnaire survey comprised 102 teachers, as determined by the Table for Small Sample Technique developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) (see Appendix A). Additionally, 13 head teachers contributed interview data. The sample size for each respondent category was established using proportionate sampling. The sample was chosen using two methods: simple random sampling and purposive sampling. Simple random sampling was employed to select teachers, where each individual was randomly chosen based on a sampling frame that included the names of participating teachers. This method was preferred because it allows for the generalizability of the findings (Fricker, 2017). Only teachers were selected through simple random sampling. In contrast, head teachers were chosen using purposive sampling. This method focused on selecting specific individuals to provide detailed insights, given that the study was both quantitative and qualitative (Ames, Glenton & Lewin, 2019). Purposive sampling enabled the researcher to select a small number of rich cases that offered in-depth information and understanding of the phenomenon of interest. The individuals chosen through purposive sampling were head teachers. Data collection instruments are tools used to gather data for research, evaluation, or assessment purposes. A self-administered questionnaire, serving as a quantitative data collection tool, was employed to gather information from teachers. The questionnaire featured closed-ended questions, making it easy to administer, code, and analyze. This format also facilitated comparisons and quantification, and it was more likely to yield fully completed responses while minimizing irrelevant answers (McIntosh, Bloch & Seale, 2011). The questionnaire comprised two sections: section (A) focused on background characteristics and included nominal questions with appropriate response options. Section (B) utilized a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. This instrument was effective in collecting quantitative data. An interview guide served as a face-to-face data collection tool. Interviews were conducted with headteachers, as they could provide insights into teachers' work engagement. The interview format used was a standardized open-ended design, which encouraged participants to share detailed information through probing follow-up questions. Interviews offer in-depth insights into participants' experiences and perspectives on a specific topic (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). The qualitative analysis derived from these interviews enhanced the interpretation of the survey data. Conducting interviews was beneficial as it resulted in comprehensive responses, allowing respondents to provide the in-depth information necessary for thorough exploration and clarity.

To gather data, the researcher received a letter from the Institutional Research and Ethics Committee, which granted permission to begin the data collection after the proposal was reviewed and deemed compliant with research ethics. The researcher then presented this letter to the headteachers, who, through another letter, introduced the researcher to the teachers. Data collection was assisted by research assistants who were teachers not currently working at the schools where the data was collected. The researcher conducted the interviews personally, recording the responses during the data collection process. The researcher ensured the content validity of the instruments by confirming that the items related to the main variables (both independent and dependent) aligned with the study's conceptual framework (see Figure 1.1). Feedback from the supervisors was obtained regarding the relevance, wording, and clarity of the items, leading to the validation of the question items. This validation process focused on the clarity, completeness, and relevance of the questions concerning the study constructs (Mohajan, 2017). To determine the content validity index, inter-judge assessments were conducted with the assistance of two research consultants. Each judge rated the items on a two-point scale of Relevant (R) and Irrelevant (IR), which was used to calculate the average index (CVI). Items deemed irrelevant were either removed or replaced with appropriate alternatives. The reliability of the instrument was established by ensuring consistency among the items for the different constructs. For the interview guide, reliability was achieved by meeting the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability. Credibility ensures that the research findings accurately reflect the information from the participants, while transferability involves capturing respondents' experiences in their contexts so that the findings can be relevant in other settings (Elo et al., 2014). Dependability ensures that the results are substantiated by data collected from study participants, and conformability guarantees that interpretations are clearly based on the respondents' data (Nowell, Norris, White & Moules, 2017). For the quantitative data, the consistency and dependability of the questionnaire were assessed using Cronbach's Alpha (α) calculated with SPSS. A Cronbach's Alpha value closer to 1 indicates higher reliability. Only constructs with Cronbach's Alpha above 0.70 were considered reliable (Souza, Alexandre, & Guirardello, 2017). Thus, Cronbach's Alpha confirmed the reliability of the self-administered questionnaire.

Discussion of Results

The results of the study are described below:

Relationship Between Head Teachers' Transformational Leadership Style and Work Engagement of Teachers in Secondary Schools in Mitooma District.

The first objective of the study was to determine the relationship between head teachers' transformational leadership style and teachers' work engagement in secondary schools in Mitooma District. The hypothesis generated from this objective posited that a significant relationship exists between head teachers' transformational leadership style and teachers' work engagement. The results supported this hypothesis, indicating that head teachers' transformational leadership style is significantly related to teachers' work engagement. This finding aligns with the research of

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Amor et al. (2020), which also identified a connection between transformational leadership and work engagement. Additionally, it is consistent with Bezuidenhout and Schultz (2013), who reported that transformational leadership style and employee engagement are interrelated and should be viewed together.

The study's findings align with those of Breevaart et al. (2014), who found that transformational leadership fosters a more supportive work environment, characterized by greater autonomy, which enhances work engagement. Additionally, Gautam and Enslin (2019) noted a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee work engagement. Similarly, Ghadi et al. (2013) demonstrated that transformational leadership style impacts followers' work engagement attributes. Furthermore, Gözükarar and Şimşek (2015) reported a significant positive effect of transformational leadership on work engagement. Additionally, the findings align with those of Hayati et al. (2014), who indicated that transformational leadership style positively impacts work engagement. Transformational leaders convey their enthusiasm and empowerment to their subordinates by modeling behaviors and enhancing the elements of work engagement among employees. Mansor et al. (2017) also identified a significant relationship between the aspects of intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration concerning employee engagement. Likewise, Pieterse-Landman (2012) discovered a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and employee engagement. Given that this study's findings are consistent with previous research, it can be concluded that transformational leadership positively and significantly correlates with teachers' work engagement.

Descriptive Results on Work Engagement of Teachers

Work engagement of teachers was studied as a multi-dimensional construct involving work absorption, dedication and vigour. Each construct was studied independently and the results on the same follow.

Work Absorption

Absorption was conceived as the first aspect of work engagement of teachers. The concept was studied using six items. The results on the same follow in Table 5.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Absorption

Absorption	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
Time flies when I am working on my job assignments in this school	33 (32.4%)	44 (43.1%)	13 (12.7%)	8 (7.8%)	4 (3.9%)	2.06
When I am working on my job assignments in this school, I forget everything else around me	13 (12.7%)	37 (36.3%)	33 (32.4%)	19 (18.6%)	-	2.57
I feel happy when I am working intensely on my job assignments in this school	5 (4.9%)	27 (26.5%)	29 (28.4%)	38 (37.3%)	3 (2.9%)	3.07
I am immersed in my work in this school	6 (5.9%)	21 (20.6%)	31 (30.4%)	29 (28.4%)	15 (14.7%)	3.25
I get carried away when I am working on my assignments in this school	11 (10.8%)	18 (17.6%)	32 (31.4%)	35 (34.3%)	6 (5.9%)	3.07
It is difficult to detach myself from my job in this school	6 (5.9%)	20 (19.6%)	18 (17.6%)	51 (50.0%)	7 (6.9%)	3.32

The results in Table 5 as to whether time moved quickly when the teachers were working on their job assignments in the schools, cumulatively, the majority percentage (75.0%) disagreed, while 11.7% agreed, and 12.7% were neutral. The low mean = 2.06, close to code two, which on the scale used corresponded with disagreed, suggested that largely slowly when working on their assignments. When working on their job assignments in the schools, teachers forget everything else around them; the larger percentage (49.0%) disagreed, while 32.4% were neutral and 18.6% agreed. The low mean = 2.57 suggested that, to a lesser extent, when working on their job assignments in the schools, teachers forget everything else around them. Concerning whether teachers were immersed in their work in the schools, cumulatively the larger percentage (43.1%) agreed, while 30.4% were neutral and 26.5% disagreed. The mean = 3.25 suggested that teachers were immersed in their work in the schools. Regarding whether teachers got carried away when working on their assignments in the schools, cumulatively, the larger percentage (40.2%) agreed, while 20.0% were neutral and 28.4% disagreed. The mean = 3.07 meant that teachers got carried away when working on their assignments in the schools. As to whether teachers willingly gave time to help colleagues who had work-related challenges, cumulatively the majority percentage (56.9%) agreed with 25.5% disagreeing, and 17.6% were neutral. The mean = 3.32 suggested that neutral teachers would find it difficult to detach themselves from their job in the schools. To find out if the results on the absorption of teachers were normally distributed, the researcher calculated an average index for the six items measuring the same. The histogram 2 indicates the overall index.

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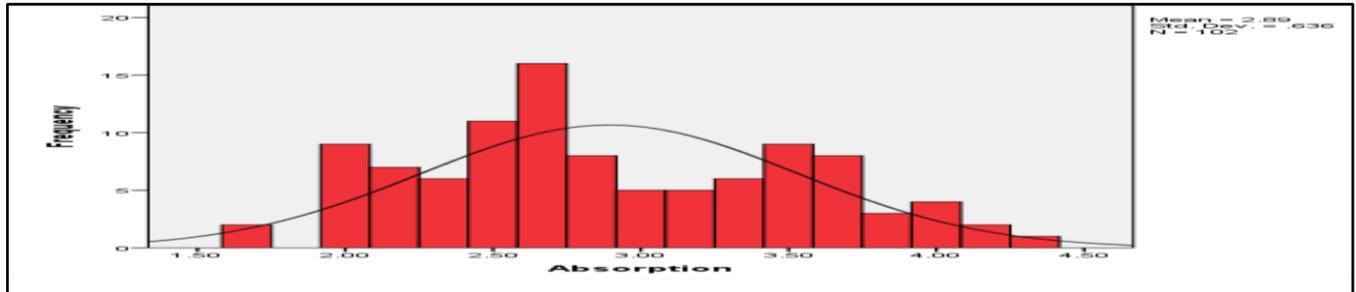


Figure 1: Histogram for Absorption

The results in Figure 2 indicate a mean = 2.89, which suggests that teachers' absorption was moderate. The low standard deviation (0.636) and the normal curve suggested that the responses were normally distributed. To explore whether the views held by the teachers on their absorption into work were what the head teachers perceived of them, in the interviews, the head teachers were asked to give their comments on the absorption into work of teachers in the schools. Several related responses were given on the same. One head teacher stated, "The large number of teachers shows absorption to work when they are expected to work. They show high commitment, and it is that which has helped the schools to improve their performance and continue to grow." In agreement with the above, another head teacher stated; In this school, most teachers show a commitment to work and, much of the time, are wholly involved in the activities of the school, such as extracurricular activities and teaching, including teaching outside the normal teaching hours. I am satisfied with the commitment teachers show to their work.

In relation to the above, another head teacher remarked; Largely, a good number of teachers shows commitment to work and are always absorbed in their work when at school. The larger number of teachers put in a lot of effort and most of the time many works even when they are not supervised. The only challenge is that the remuneration to them is low which forces to engage in different activities for survival which takes away some of the time they would be committing to the school.

The qualitative views above suggest that teachers were absorbed into their work. This finding concurs with the descriptive statistic results which indicated that absorption into work was good.

Dedication

Dedication was conceived as the second aspect of work engagement of teachers. The concept was studied using five items. The results on the same follow in Table 6.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Dedication

Dedication	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
I find the work that I do in this school full of meaning and purpose	16 (15.7%)	25 (24.5%)	36 (35.3%)	20 (19.6%)	5 (4.9%)	2.74
I am enthusiastic about my job in this school	8 (7.8%)	23 (22.5%)	26 (25.5%)	34 (33.3%)	11 (10.8%)	3.17
My job in this school inspires me	6 (5.9%)	11 (10.8%)	31 (30.4%)	44 (43.1%)	10 (9.8%)	3.40
I am proud of the work that I do in this school	9 (8.8%)	16 (15.7%)	26 (25.5%)	42 (41.2%)	9 (8.8%)	3.25
To me, my job in this school is challenging	5 (4.9%)	20 (19.6%)	12 (11.8%)	53 (52.0%)	12 (11.8%)	3.46

The results in Table 6 as to whether teachers found the work that they did in the schools full of meaning and purpose, cumulatively the majority percentage (40.2%) disagreed while 35.3% were neutral and 24.5% agreed. The low mean = 2.74 close to code three which on the scale used corresponded with were neutral suggested that neutrally, teachers found the work that they did in the schools full of meaning and purpose. As whether teachers were enthusiastic about their jobs in the schools, the larger percentage (49.0%) disagreed while 32.4% were neutral and 18.6% agreed. The mean = 3.17 suggested that teachers were neutrally enthusiastic about their jobs in the schools. With respect to whether teachers were inspired by their jobs in the schools, cumulatively the larger percentage (52.9%) agreed while 30.4% were neutral and 16.7% disagreed. The mean = 3.40 suggested that, teachers were inspired by their jobs in the schools. Regarding whether teachers were proud of the work that they did in the schools, cumulatively the majority percentage (50.0%) agreed while 25.5% were neutral and 24.4% disagreed. The mean = 3.25 meant that, teachers were proud of the work that they did in the schools. As to whether teachers found their jobs challenging, cumulatively the majority percentage (63.8%) agreed with 24.5% disagreeing and 11.8% were neutral. The mean = 3.32 neutrally teachers found their jobs

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challenging. To establish how the teachers rated their dedication of teachers and whether the results were normally distributed, the researcher calculated an average index for the five items measuring the same. The histogram Figure 3 indicates the overall index.

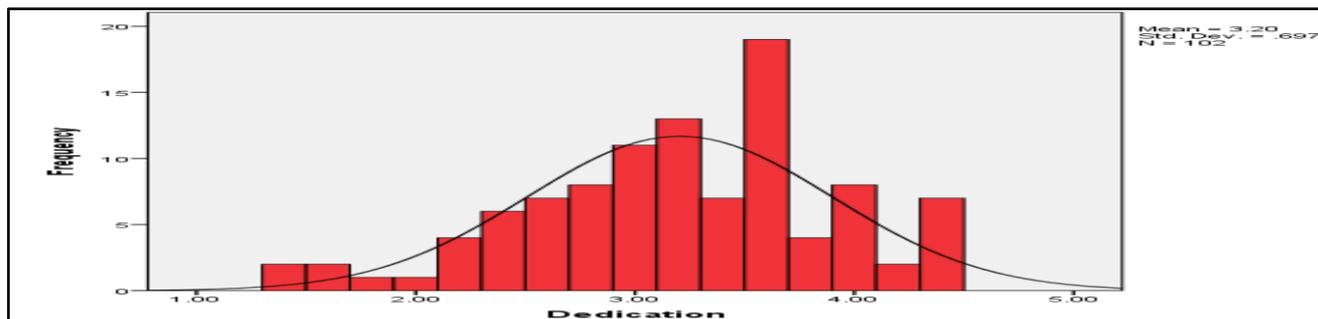


Figure 2: Histogram for Dedication

The results in Figure 3 indicate mean = 3.20 which suggest that teachers absorption was moderate. The low standard deviation (0.697) and the norm curve suggested that the responses were normally distributed. To find out whether the responses of the teachers on their dedication to work were similar to what head teachers perceived of them, in the interviews where the head teachers were asked to give their assessment of dedication of teachers to work. The head teachers gave a number of related responses indicating that dedication of teachers was good. One of the head teachers said; Teachers are dedicated to their work and work had to ensure that the school succeeds. Teachers show the desire to work including working overtime for free. Most teachers are always in the school carrying out school work. In relation to the above, another head teacher said; My teachers are dedicated to their work except for a few who are interested in part-timing in different schools. Nonetheless, teachers show dedication to work. This can be seen from the zeal the teachers put when there are activities that require their input and self-sacrifice. Teachers put effort in their work. Further, another head teacher stated; “Teachers show dedication to teaching and progress of the students. Majority of teachers show high dedication when carrying out their activities. The teachers show that they are devoted to teaching.” The results above show that dedication of the teachers was good. This finding is closely in agreement with the descriptive statistics results which revealed that good; they were dedicated to the schools.

Vigour

Vigour was conceived as the third aspect of work engagement of teachers. The concept was studied using six items. The results on the same follow in Table 7.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Vigour

Vigour	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
When at my work in this school I feel bursting with energy	15 (14.7%)	25 (24.5%)	23 (22.5%)	30 (29.4%)	9 (8.8%)	2.9
When at my job in this school I feel strong and vigorous	19 (18.6%)	35 (34.3%)	24 (23.5%)	21 (20.6%)	3 (2.9%)	2.5
When I get up in the morning I feel like going to work on my assignments in this school	7 (6.9%)	16 (15.7%)	29 (28.4%)	44 (43.1%)	6 (5.9%)	3.2
I can continue working for very long period at a time when I am on my job in this school	14 (13.7%)	11 (10.8%)	30 (29.4%)	37 (36.3%)	10 (9.8%)	3.1
At my job in this school I am very resilient mentally	8 (7.8%)	25 (24.5%)	13 (12.7%)	35 (34.3%)	21 (20.6%)	3.3
At my work in this school, I always persevere even when things do not go well	5 (4.9%)	20 (19.6%)	8 (7.8%)	50 (49.0%)	19 (18.6%)	3.5

The results in Table 7 as to whether when at work teachers felt bursting with energy, cumulatively the larger percentage (39.2%) agreed while another 39.2% disagreed and 22.5% were neutral. The mean = 2.93 close to code three which on the scale used corresponded with were neutral suggested that, when at work teachers felt bursting with energy. As whether when on their jobs working teachers felt strong and vigorous, the larger percentage (52.9%) disagreed while 23.5% were neutral and 23.5% agreed. The low mean = 2.55 suggested that to a lesser extent, when on their jobs working teachers felt strong and vigorous. With respect to whether when getting up in the morning teachers felt like going to work on their assignments in the schools, cumulatively the larger percentage (49.0%) agreed while 28.4% were neutral and 22.6% disagreed. The

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mean = 3.25 suggested that, when getting up in the morning teachers felt like going to work on their assignments in the schools. Regarding whether teachers could continue working for very long periods at the time when on their job in the schools, cumulatively the larger percentage (46.1%) agreed while 29.4% were neutral and 25.5% disagreed. The mean = 3.18 meant that, teachers could continue working for very long periods at the time when on their job in the schools. As to whether when at their jobs teachers were very resilient mentally, cumulatively the majority percentage (54.9%) agreed with 32.3% disagreeing and 12.7% were neutral. The mean = 3.35 meant that neutrally when at their jobs teachers were very resilient mentally. With respect to whether when at work teachers' work in the schools, teachers always persevered even when things do not go well, cumulatively the majority percentage (61.6%) agreed with 24.5% disagreeing and 7.8% were neutral. The high mean = 3.57 suggested that when at work teachers' work in the schools, teachers always persevered even when things do not go well. To establish how the teachers rated their vigour, and whether the results were normally distributed, the researcher calculated an average index for the six items measuring the same. The histogram Figure 4 indicates the overall index.

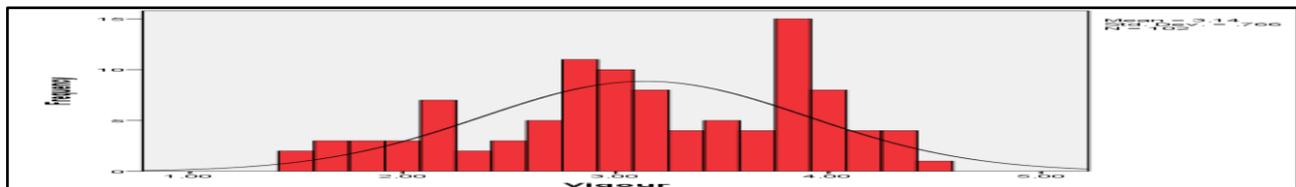


Figure 3: Histogram for Vigour

The results in Figure 4 indicate mean = 3.14 which suggest that teachers vigour was moderate. The low standard deviation (0.766) and the norm curve suggested that the responses were normally distributed. In the interviews with the head teachers about teachers' vigour, head teachers gave responses which were consistent with the results from the descriptive statistics from the responses of the teachers. One head teacher said; The level of vigour shown by teachers in this school is good. A good number of teachers follow up students by ensuring that they do what they are supposed to do and give extra time to teaching. I am satisfied with the level of classroom teaching in my school and reports I get from other head of departments and students attest to this Indeed. In relation to the above, another head teacher said; In this school, there are a number of teachers who show high energy when carrying out their work. The teachers ensure that students engage in school activities and follow the school routine programme. Teachers make roll calls, guide and counsel students. While there are some relaxed teachers, a good number work with enthusiasm and vigour. Further, another head teacher stated; "On average, teachers in this school show vigour when carrying out their work. Most teachers teach all their lessons, supervise students, manage discipline and effectively participate in co-curricular activities. Generally, most teachers do what they are supposed to do with vigour." The responses above suggest that largely, teachers showed vigour as they carried out their work. This finding largely concurs with the descriptive statistics which shows that the vigour of teachers was good.

Descriptive Results on Head teachers Leadership Styles

Head teachers' leadership styles were studied as a multi-dimensional concept involving transformational, transactional and laissez-faire leadership styles. Each concept was studied independently and the results on the same follow.

Work engagement of teachers Index

To test how overall the teachers rated their work engagement, an average index was created for three constructs of absorption (B1.1- B1.6), dedication (B2.1-B2.5) and vigour (B3.1- B3.6) (see Appendix 2). The histogram (Figure 5) presents the overall mean and displays the normality of the results.

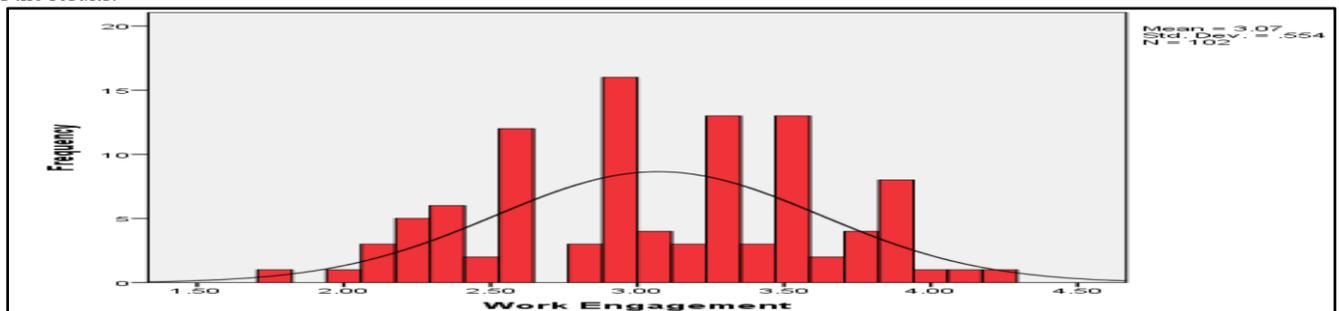


Figure 4: Histogram for Work Engagement of Teachers

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Figure 5 reveals mean = 3.07 which implied that work engagement of teachers was moderate. The low standard deviation = 0.554 implied that the results were normally distributed. Therefore, results obtained could be subjected to linear correlation and regression obtaining appropriate results.

Transformational Leadership Style

Transformational leadership style was considered as the first element of head teachers leadership styles. The concept was studied using 11 items. The results on the same follow in Table 8.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Transformational Leadership

Transformational Leadership	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean
My superiors instils pride in me	25 (24.5%)	29 (28.4%)	12 (11.8%)	34 (33.3%)	2 (2.0%)	2.60
My superiors focus on my strengths	3 (2.9%)	28 (27.5%)	40 (39.2%)	22 (21.6%)	9 (8.8%)	3.06
My superiors behave consistent with values	20 (19.6%)	13 (12.7%)	20 (19.6%)	34 (33.3%)	15 (14.7%)	3.11
My superiors treat me as a person	4 (3.9%)	27 (26.5%)	29 (28.4%)	32 (31.4%)	10 (9.8%)	3.17
My superiors talk about trusting each other	5 (4.9%)	22 (21.6%)	19 (18.6%)	40 (39.2%)	16 (15.7%)	3.39
My superiors talk enthusiastically about the future	4 (3.9%)	21 (20.6%)	12 (11.8%)	40 (39.2%)	25 (24.5%)	3.60
My superiors express confidence	4 (3.9%)	16 (15.7%)	21 (20.6%)	42 (41.2%)	19 (18.6%)	3.55
My superiors encourage staff to express ideas	4 (3.9%)	18 (17.6%)	19 (18.6%)	45 (44.1%)	16 (15.7%)	3.50
My superiors provide advice for development	3 (2.9%)	15 (14.7%)	20 (19.6%)	39 (38.2%)	25 (24.5%)	3.67
My superiors recognize my achievements	2 (2.0%)	15 (14.7%)	21 (20.6%)	47 (46.1%)	17 (16.7%)	3.61
My superiors assist basing on one's effort	6 (5.9%)	11 (10.8%)	15 (14.7%)	47 (46.1%)	23 (22.5%)	3.69

The results in Table 8 as to whether superiors instilled pride in teachers, cumulatively the larger percentage (52.9%) disagreed while 35.3% agreed and 11.8% were neutral. The low mean = 2.93 suggested that to a lesser extent superiors instilled pride in teachers. As whether superiors focussed on teacher strengths, the larger percentage (39.2%) were neutral while 30.4% agreed and another 30.4% agreed. The mean = 3.06 suggested that, superiors focussed on their strengths. With respect to whether superiors behaved consistent with values, cumulatively the larger percentage (48.0%) agreed while 32.3% disagreed and 19.6% were neutral. The mean = 3.11 suggested that, superiors behaved consistent with values. Regarding whether superiors treated teachers as persons, cumulatively the larger percentage (41.2%) agreed while 30.4% disagreed and 28.4% were neutral. The mean = 3.17 meant that, superiors treated teachers as persons. As to whether superiors talked about trusting each other, cumulatively the larger percentage (54.9%) agreed with 26.5% disagreeing and 18.6% were neutral. The mean = 3.39 meant that neutrally superiors talked about trusting each other. With respect to whether superiors talked enthusiastically about the future of teachers, cumulatively the larger percentage (53.7%) agreed with 24.5% disagreeing and 11.8% were neutral. The high mean = 3.60 suggested that superiors talked enthusiastically about the future of teachers.

As whether superiors expressed confidence, the larger percentage (59.8%) agreed while 20.6% were neutral and 19.6% disagreed. The high mean = 3.55 suggested that superiors expressed confidence. With respect to whether superiors encouraged staff to express ideas, cumulatively the larger percentage (59.8%) agreed while 21.5% disagreed and 18.6% were neutral. The high mean = 3.50 suggested that superiors encouraged staff to express ideas. With respect to whether superiors provided advice for development, cumulatively the majority percentage (62.7%) agreed with 19.6% neutrally agreeing and 17.6% disagreed. The high mean = 3.67 suggested superiors provided advice for development. Regarding whether superiors recognized teachers achievements, cumulatively the larger percentage (62.8%) agreed while 20.6% were neutral and 16.7% disagreed. The high mean = 3.161 meant that superiors recognized teachers achievements. As to whether superiors assisted basing on one's effort, cumulatively the larger percentage (68.6%) agreed with 16.7% disagreeing and 14.7% were neutral. The high mean = 3.69 meant that superiors assisted basing on one's effort. To establish how the teachers rated transformational leadership in the schools, and whether the results were normally distributed, the researcher calculated an average index for the 11 items measuring the same. The histogram Figure 6 indicates the overall index.

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Figure 5: Histogram for Transformational Leadership

The results in Figure 6 indicate mean = 3.37 which suggest that transformational leadership was moderate. The low standard deviation (0.769) and the norm curve suggested that the responses were normally distributed. To find out whether head teachers practiced transformational leadership, in the interviews they were asked to tell how they inspired teachers to achieve the set objectives and goals of the schools. In their responses, one head teacher said; I make effort to mentor my teachers to improve their skills. However, due to lack of resources, I have not been able to provide training by organising workshops for the teachers. The school cannot afford to pay facilitators. Teachers are also delegated responsibilities which involve them in the running of the school. In relation to the above, another head teacher revealed that; I make sure that teachers participate in the various activities of the school. The teacher has an input in whatever is going to be implemented. There are different teachers committees that are involved in deciding whatever is to be done in the school. Such committees include the finance, welfare, infrastructure, discipline and academic committees besides others. This inspires teachers to be part and parcel of the school. Consistent with the above, another head teacher stated; I ensure that teachers freely air out there suggestions and concerns and work as an example. I have been allocated lessons and I make effort to ensure that I teach them. Still, I make sure that every decision in this school involves teachers. Still, with the limited resources of the school, I make effort to facilitate teachers such that they have morale to their work. The views above from the head teachers indicate that they made effort to practice transformational leadership. This finding is in close agreement with the descriptive statistics which showed that head teachers use of transformational leadership was good.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it has been concluded that transformational leadership style is essential for work engagement of teachers. This is especially if superiors talk enthusiastically about the future, express confidence, encourage staff to express ideas, provide advice for development, recognize teachers' achievements and assist teachers basing on one's effort.

Recommendation

It has been recommended that the head teachers should make effort to provide transformational leadership style to promote work engagement of teachers. This should involve talking enthusiastically about the future, express confidence, encouraging staff to express ideas, providing advice for development, recognizing teachers' achievements and assisting teachers basing on one's effort.

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