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EDITORIAL

The educational landscape is undergoing rapid transformation, driven by technological advancements, evolving societal needs, and the imperative for inclusive and equitable learning opportunities. This edition of the Zaria Journal of Educational Studies (ZAJES) delves into these critical themes and presents a collection of research articles that explore contemporary issues, innovative practices, and policy reforms in education.

The contributions in this volume reflect the journal's commitment to advancing knowledge and practices in education. Regarding the role of Civic Education in conflict management among secondary school students on the impact of ASUU strikes on academic performance, the studies highlight the multifaceted challenges and opportunities within Nigeria's educational system. Other articles examine trends in admissions to educational management programs, the debate around the value of education, and the influence of allowances on teachers' job performance. Additionally, the journal explores the transformative potential of skill acquisition in reducing poverty and fostering self-reliance.

A recurring theme in this edition is the need for adaptive strategies to address disparities in access, quality, and educational outcomes. The findings underscore the importance of equitable resource allocation, teacher motivation, and curriculum innovation in meeting the demands of a dynamic global environment.

Educators, policymakers, and researchers bear the responsibility for ensuring that education remains a catalyst for individual and societal development. The insights shared in this volume are a call to action to rethink traditional approaches, embrace evidence-based solutions, and foster collaboration across sectors.

We extend our gratitude to the contributors, reviewers, and readers for their unwavering support. Altogether, let us strive for an educational system that empowers learners, bridges gaps, and drives sustainable development.

Dr. Ilesanmi Ajibola

Editor-in-Chief

ZAJES

Federal University of Education,

Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria

FOREWORD

It is with great pleasure that I present this edition of the Zaria Journal of Educational Studies (ZAJES), a platform dedicated to scholarly discourse and dissemination of impactful research in education. The articles featured in this volume address pressing issues that resonate with the current realities of Nigeria's educational system and beyond.

Education is the foundation of national development, and its continuous evolution demands rigorous enquiry and innovative solutions. This edition captures diverse perspectives from the management of educational resources in secondary schools to the critical analysis of regional disparities in higher education admissions. The journal also engages with the contentious debate on the perceived value of education, offering nuanced insights into its socioeconomic implications.

The research presented here not only identifies challenges but also proposes actionable recommendations to enhance teaching, learning, and policy implementation. For instance, the study of skill acquisition underscores its potential to alleviate poverty and empower individuals, while the examination of teacher allowances highlights the link between motivation and job performance.

As we navigate through the complexities of the 21st century, the role of education in shaping resilient and adaptable societies cannot be overstated. This journal serves as a vital resource for stakeholders committed to fostering academic excellence and equitable opportunities.

I commend the authors, reviewers, and the editorial team for their dedication to advancing educational research. This volume may inspire further dialogue, collaboration, and transformative action in the pursuit of a brighter future for education in Nigeria and globally.

Dr. Suleiman Balarabe

Ag. Vice Chancellor,
Federal University of Education,
Zaria, Kaduna State, Nigeria

BRIEF INFORMATION ABOUT THE JOURNAL

Zaria Journal of Educational Studies (ZAJES) is an official academic journal published by the Federal University of Education in Zaria, Nigeria. The journal was established in 1988, when the college was still part of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Since its inception, ZAJES has served as an important platform for scholars and practitioners in various fields of education to publish research findings, perspectives, and responses to prior work. Recognising the journal's high standards, the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) of Nigeria sponsored the production of its issues in 2010.

Mission

The mission of the ZAJES is to promote and disseminate high-quality research in education. The journal seeks to publish papers that are theoretically sound, methodologically rigorous, and relevant to the needs of the educational community. ZAJES also aims to provide a forum for exchanging ideas and perspectives on the most pressing issues in education.

Scope

ZAJES welcomes submissions on any topic related to education. To help readers easily find relevant papers, the articles were grouped into five broad subject areas.

- Arts and Social Science Education
- language and Literature Education
- Science and Mathematics Education
- Trends and Innovations in Education
- Vocational and Technical Education

Peer Review Process

All papers submitted to ZAJES underwent an initial online similarity check (plagiarism test) and only considered articles with 15% or less online similarity results and 5% same source similarity level. Accepted papers are further subjected to a rigorous peer review process. Each study was reviewed by at least two experts in the field. The reviewers provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the paper and recommended revisions. The editors of ZAJES then decide whether to accept or reject the paper.

Publication Process

Accepted papers are published on two issues annually. The journal is indexed in several major bibliographic databases.

Disclaimer

While the journal publishes a diversity of well-researched ideas and opinions, the content does not necessarily reflect the publisher's or editorial board's views. The responsibility for the accuracy and originality of the papers lies entirely in the contributing authors. However, through rigorous peer review and editorial processes, ZAJES strives to maintain high academic standards and serves as a valuable resource for the education community.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The Editorial Board of the Zaria Journal of Educational Studies (ZAJES) invites papers from stakeholders interested in education for publication in the journal. This paper focuses on analytical research, research reports, replicated research, research notes, descriptive research, book reviews, etc., from any of the following areas in education:

- Adult and Non-formal Education
- Citizenship Education
- Computer Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Education
- Continuing/Distance Education
- Creative Arts Education
- Curriculum Planning and Development
- Educational Management/Administration, Planning and Supervision
- Health and Physical Education
- Language and Literature Education
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- Philosophy and Sociology of Education
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- Pre-Primary, Primary, Secondary and Higher Education
- Psychology and Counselling
- Religious and Moral Education
- Science, Technology and Mathematics Education
- Social Science Education
- Special and Rehabilitative Education
- Vocational and Technical Education

Guidelines for Paper Preparation

Manuscripts:

- must be written in English or any other acceptable language, and should be scholarly, original, and contribute to knowledge.
- must not have been published or under consideration for publication in any other journal. Once a paper is accepted for publication in ZAJES, the author(s) cede copyright to the journal's publisher.
- should clearly state on its front cover page the title of the paper, the author's name(s), their status/rank, and institutional affiliation. The next page should also begin with the title of the paper (but not the author's name), followed by an abstract of not more than 150 words.
- should be computer typed on one side of the paper, using a font size of 12 double-spaced for the main work, and single line spacing for the abstract should not exceed 12 pages of A4 paper, including abstract, references appendices: and tables, figures, and diagrams, where applicable, should be simple, camera-ready, and kept to the barest minimum to facilitate printing.

References

The current American Psychological Association (APA) citation style (7th edition) is accepted by journals. This should be cited as follows:

In-Text Citation

An in-text citation should be deployed when the author quotes a source or paraphrases another work in their own words. These could be in the article's narrative or as parenthetical citations. See the examples below.

Narrative Citation

Narrative citations should be used when an author's work or quote is cited alongside their names. For example, the impact of colonial missionary activities on Igbo sociocultural activities is well captured by Achebe (2009), who observed that "The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peacefully along with his religion. We were amused by his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now, he has won over our brothers and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together, and we have fallen apart" (p.81).

Parenthetical Citation

This form of citation is used when someone else's work or idea is paraphrased as a summary or synthesis in their own words.

For example, Achebe (2009) narrates the development of the negative effect of colonial influence on African culture in *Things Fall Apart* (p.81). Or,

The radical factor for the disconnect between the *de iure* and *de facto* African family systems is the unbridled assimilation of Western culture by Africans (Achebe, 2009).

Book

Achebe, C (2009). *Things Fall Apart*. Penguin Books.

Chapter in an Edited Book

Swindler, L (2013). History of Inter-Religious Dialogues. In C. Cornille (Ed.) *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to an Inter-Religious Dialogue*. Wiley-Blackwell: A John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., Publication.

Journal

Maccido, M. I (1997). Recreational Activities in Federal University of Education, Zaria Academic Staff. *Zaria Journal of Educational Studies*. 2 (1), 166-172.

Conference Proceedings

Ikenga, G. U (2015). Education in 100 Years of Nigeria's existence: The needs and benefits of Public Private Partnerships in education. *Proceedings of the IRES 3rd International Conference* 74-78.

Projects/Thesis/Dissertations

Ajibola, I (2018). *A Theological Analysis of Confessional-Centric Curriculum of Christian Religious Education: Towards an Inclusive Religious Pluralistic Centred Curriculum for Nigeria Colleges of Education*. Doctoral dissertation, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA, USA.

Type of Citation	Narrative Format	Parenthetical Format
Single author	Achebe (2009)	(Achebe, 2009)
Two authors	Soyinka and Anyebe (2009)	(Soyinka & Achebe, 2009)
Three or more authors	Achebe et al. (2009)	(Achebe et al., 1999)

Submission of Manuscript/Correspondence

The submission of this manuscript is online. All articles must be submitted at zarjes.com

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MANAGING EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR EFFECTIVE GOAL ATTAINMENT IN
SECONDARY SCHOOLS: AN EMPIRICAL REVIEW

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This study investigated Managing Educational Resources for Effective Goal Attainment in Secondary Schools in Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State: An Empirical Review. Specifically, it examined the management of digital and financial resources and their relationship to goal attainment in secondary schools. Two null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. A correlational survey design was adopted. The population comprised all 99 school leaders (17 principals and 82 vice-principals) in the 17 public secondary schools within Yakurr LGA. The study employed a census sampling technique. Data were collected using an 18-item questionnaire titled Educational Resources Management and Secondary School Goals Attainment Questionnaire (ERMSSGAQ). The instrument was face and content validation by three academic experts from the University of Calabar. Cronbach Alpha reliability test yielded an index ranging from 0.79 to 0.82. The null hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Moment Correlation at a 0.05 significance level. Findings of the study revealed that there is a statistically significant relationship between management of digital resources, financial resources, and secondary school goals attainment in Yakurr Local Government Area of Cross River State. Based on the findings, the study concluded that the management of educational resources significantly relates to secondary school goals attainment in Yakurr Local Government Area of Cross River State, Nigeria. It was recommended that school principals should ensure the prudent allocation of adequate resources toward the provision and maintenance of digital facilities. This is essential for improving students' and staff access to up-to-date information as well as promoting the adoption of technology-driven teaching strategies.

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- Educational Resources
- Digital
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- Goal Attainment
- Secondary Schools

Introduction

Education is universally recognised as a fundamental instrument for developing human capital and advancing national development (Ayang et al. 2025). Nigeria's educational system is structured into three tiers: early childhood/pre-primary, primary, junior secondary, senior secondary, and tertiary education. However, the focus of this study was on the secondary tier of education. In Nigeria, the secondary school system comprises junior and senior secondary classes which are now referred to as lower-

basic and upper-basic education. These are distinct stages of formal education that the students acquired upon completion of primary education and before admission into tertiary institutions (Obona et al., 2021). Thus, secondary schools are designed to equip learners with knowledge, skills, competences, and quality learning experiences that empower them to develop independent thinking, appreciate the value of labour, and show respect for others (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2004; Madukwe et al., 2024; Difoni et al., 2024). The effectiveness

of this level of education can be assessed based on the extent of the attainment of the stated goals.

In the context of this study, goal attainment is conceptualised as the extent to which secondary schools achieve their predefined educational objectives. The National Policy on Education (FRN, 2004) outlined the goals of secondary education, including preparing students for meaningful participation in society, pursuing further education, and nurturing their individual potential, among others. Similarly, Etor et al. (2018) classified these goals into three core areas: enhancing access to higher education, facilitating knowledge acquisition, and improving teaching and learning outcomes. They also include fostering moral development, promoting civic responsibility, and preparing students for challenges in higher education (Iwogbe et al., 2025). The significance of attaining these goals lies in aligning the quality of secondary education; beyond academic achievement, goal attainment equally enhances students' productivity, reduces their stress level, and equips them with the critical skills necessary in a rapidly developing world. As Ada et al. (2019) observed, the successful realisation of secondary school goals is integral to fostering national unity and improving global competitiveness.

The attainment of secondary school goals is vital to the overall development of students, society, and the entire nation. Furthermore, it helps prepare students for higher education opportunities, enter the workforce, and develop critical thinking, sound moral values, responsible citizenship, and lifelong learning skills. This level of education is expected to nurture productive individuals who can contribute meaningfully to societal development and progress. Consequently, parents and stakeholders expect secondary schools to provide quality teaching, discipline, moral upbringing,

academic excellence, career guidance, and create a safe and supportive learning environment for their children. They also expect schools to adequately prepare students to succeed in higher education and adapt to the demands of the competitive global market economy.

The attainment of these goals is a major challenge in Nigeria, especially regarding the quality of graduates (Etor 2018; Iyiegbuniwe et al. 2025). Nyong (2013) noted that many secondary school leavers lack the essential vocational, technical, and entrepreneurial skills. This inadequacy has been linked to the rising unemployment rate because students are not well prepared for tertiary education (Odigwe et al., 2018). Ameaw (2007) attributed the mismatch between graduate competencies and labour market demands to this issue. Worsening the problem is the failure of teachers to meet instructional standards, including poor work ethics such as lateness, absenteeism, strained relationships, and low student transition to higher education (Arop et al., 2018; Obona et al., 2023; Ekaette et al., 2019b). This issue has led to increased social vices such as drug abuse, cultism, and criminal behaviour among youth (Alumona & Amusan, 2019), along with declining performance in key assessments, such as the SSCE (Amuche et al., 2014). Similar challenges are common in the Yakurr Local Government Area of the Cross River State. Many students graduate from school without acquiring vocational skills. Many others drop out because of academic difficulties and turn to illegal and criminal activities for survival. The researcher also noted overcrowded classrooms, lack of qualified teachers, poor facilities, low motivation, and an unconducive learning environment. Some parents and guardians express disappointment with their children's bad behaviour and poor academic performance. All of these factors hinder the attainment of educational goals.

Resources are the blood of every organisation. The success of any organisation, including education, relies greatly on the effective management of resources. Scholars argue that the proper utilisation of resources, such as financial, material, human, and time, is critical for achieving institutional goals (Okon & Sule, 2006; Usman, 2016; Nwankwo, 2014). Resource management in education involves effectively coordinating the assets to support teaching and learning. According to Babalola and others as cited in Obi & Ogbuagu (2020), managing resources well ensures the production of capable graduates. Enaohwo et al. (2014) classified educational resources into physical (human, material, and financial) and non-physical (time and goals). However, this study focuses on the management of digital and financial resources to achieve secondary education goals.

Theoretical Framework

The present study is based on Systems Theory, which was originally developed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy in the 1950s. This theoretical framework provides a comprehensive lens for understanding organisations, including schools. It assumes that every part of an organisation must function in coordination for the system to operate effectively and achieve its objectives. According to Systems Theory, schools function by receiving various inputs, such as human resources, instructional materials, finances, and technological tools, which are then processed through internal mechanisms such as teaching, learning, and administration. These processes yield outputs such as student achievement and moral development. Crucially, the theory emphasises the importance of feedback, which helps schools examine outcomes and make adjustments where necessary to ensure continuous improvement and adaptability within a dynamic environment.

The relevance of this theory to the present study lies in the fact that when resources are mismanaged or one component of the system fails, it can adversely affect the entire educational system and process. Therefore, school administrators should be active in coordinating resource allocation, monitoring internal processes, and responding effectively to feedback indicators such as examination results, teacher performance, and student behaviour. These measures can assist schools in sustaining high performance, addressing emerging challenges, and achieving long-term educational goals.

Review of related literature

Management of digital resources and school goals attainment

Digital resource management involves utilising online materials to enhance learning, shape administrative roles, and improve student performance through access to relevant and current information (Adeniran, 2013). This requires strategic planning, coordination, and a continuous evaluation. Digital resources are widely recognised as crucial sources of academic information for students, as they provide up-to-date and relevant content across a range of subjects (Ternenge & Kashimana, 2019). According to Adeniran (2013), these resources enhance academic performance by providing timely and suitable information. Digital tools also promote active, independent learning and collaboration among students.

Burk et al. (2013) explored the relationship between students' engagement in various digital learning tools and their academic outcomes. The study involved 919 first-year chemistry students at Carleton University and examined how the use of digital platforms influenced performance in two midterms: a final exam and overall course grades. The results showed that students frequently used digital learning systems, such as WileyPlus and WebCT,

which had a positive correlation with academic performance. These platforms were particularly effective because they encouraged consistent task engagement, problem-solving, and interaction with content and peers. Kipkosgei (2020) investigated the relationship between digital resource usage and academic achievement among undergraduate IT students. Employing a descriptive survey design and analysing data from 105 students selected via stratified sampling, the study found that the use of ebooks, electronic journals, and past test papers had a significant positive correlation with academic success.

In another study, Olabode (2016) assessed how digital resource usage affected academic performance among final-year students from the faculties of social sciences, humanities, and sciences at the Federal University of Oye-Ekiti. Using a survey and analysing 144 valid responses through SPSS, this study found that digital resources significantly contributed to improved academic outcomes. Similarly, a study by Okorie et al. (2018) at the Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, focused on HND students in the Department of Library and Information Sciences. Using a descriptive survey and analysing responses from the entire population of 385 students, the study found that digital resources, particularly e-books, were frequently used for academic tasks, such as assignments and seminar preparation, and had a positive impact on student performance. Ogunbodede and Oribhabor (2022) conducted a study at the University of Africa, Toru-Orua, Bayelsa State, to examine how digital resource usage influences academic performance. Using a validated questionnaire and analysing responses from 1,342 students using SPSS, the study confirmed a strong positive relationship between digital resource engagement and academic

achievement. The increased usage of these tools has been found to significantly boost student performance.

Olofinkua et al. (2025) conducted a study on the relationship between digital resource utilization and job effectiveness among academic staff at the University of Calabar, Cross River State, Nigeria. This study was guided by one hypothesis and employed a correlational research design. The sample consisted of 295 senior lecturers, purposively selected from the Faculty of Educational Foundation Studies. Data were collected using two validated instruments: the *Utilization of Digital Resources Questionnaire (UDRQ)* and the *Academic Staff Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (ASJEQ)*. Validation was performed by experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation, while reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha yielded coefficients of 0.81 for UDRQ and 0.84 for ASJEQ. Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the hypothesis at a significance level of 0.05. The results showed a significant positive relationship between the use of digital resources and job effectiveness of academic staff. The study concludes that the effective use of digital tools enhances academic performance, enabling lecturers to improve teaching quality, contribute to research, and advance institutional goals.

Management of financial resources and school goals attainment

Financial resources are critical for the acquisition, maintenance, and utilisation of other essential resources within the school environment. They are fundamental to ensuring that school activities run smoothly, foster staff motivation, and facilitate achievement of educational goals and objectives. Obona et al. (2024) explains that financial resource management involves strategic planning, organization, and control of funds to help institutions reach their

objectives. Similarly, Obona et al. (2025) described financial resource management as a structured approach to budgeting, allocating, and monitoring financial resources to promote transparency, accountability, and efficient fund usage. In line with this view, Obona et al. (2025) conclude that administrators' financial management strategies are significantly related to the effectiveness of the secondary school system in Nigeria.

Similarly, Okon et al. (2020) investigated the influence of principals' resource management on goal attainment in public secondary schools in Akwa, Ibm State, Nigeria. The study adopted an ex post facto design and involved 681 administrators (227 principals and 454 vice principals) across 227 public secondary schools. Using a census approach, data were collected using a self-structured instrument titled *Principals' Resources Management and Goal Attainment Questionnaire (PRMEAQ)*. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. The findings indicate that financial management practices have a partially significant relationship with school goal attainment. In another study, Wanjala et al. (2020) assessed the relationship between principals' financial management practices and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Bungoma East Sub-county. An embedded mixed-method design was employed. The sample consisted of 180 respondents, including 33 principals, 33 deputy principals, and 114 heads of departments from 33 schools selected through stratified random sampling. Data collection involved questionnaires, interviews, and document analyses. A pilot study conducted in a neighbouring sub-county ensured the reliability and validity of the research instruments. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means) and inferential statistics (Spearman's rank-

order correlation) were used for data analysis. This study found a strong positive relationship between principals' financial management practices and students' academic achievement.

In addition, Uwaleke et al. (2021) examined the relationship between principals' financial management practices and the implementation of educational laws in secondary schools in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. Using a descriptive survey design, teachers and students representing 12% of the population were sampled from three southern districts using stratified random sampling. Data were collected using a modified four-point Likert-type questionnaire. Frequencies and percentages were used for descriptive analysis, while chi-square tests were employed to test the hypotheses at a significance level of 0.05. The findings indicated that adherence to educational laws significantly influenced principals' procurement processes, fund utilisation for national cohesion, and financial record-keeping practices in secondary schools.

A literature review was conducted on the subvariables of the main independent variables. This review was beneficial because it provided critical insights that informed the design of the research instrument and guided the selection of suitable statistical methods. Additionally, notable gaps exist in the existing body of research. Specifically, these reviewed studies though related to the present study were found to have different geographical coverage, scope, and methodological approaches. The majority of these studies were conducted outside the Yakurr local government area and cross-river state, with several situated in foreign contexts. Many studies have employed different variables, research designs, and instruments. Consequently, the current study was considered significant as it specifically sought to examine the management of educational resources and the realisation of

secondary school goals within the Yakurr LGA, Cross River State. This study fills a critical gap in the existing literature.

Statement of the problem

Among the key indicators of secondary school goal attainment are students' academic performance, discipline, active engagement in school programs, successful transition to higher education, and employability. These outcomes are widely recognised as reflective of the effectiveness of school leadership. However, the researcher has observed with concern that a significant number of public secondary schools in Yakurr Local Government Area of Cross River State are encountering challenges in realizing these educational objectives. Reports by some parents, students, and stakeholders highlight recurring issues, such as poor student performance in external examinations, rising levels of discipline, frequent teacher absenteeism, and inadequate infrastructure for both practical and extracurricular learning. These problems have resulted in increased dropout rates and the production of graduates without the requisite skills, thus leading to a surge in youth unemployment, insecurity, and social vices within local communities.

Various interventions have been initiated by school administrators and the Cross River State Government, including teacher capacity-building programs, distribution of instructional materials, and the implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems—limited success has been achieved. In view of this, the researcher suspects that effective resource management could contribute to this problem. This prompted the central research question: What is the relationship between the management of educational resources and the attainment of secondary school goals in the Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria? The desire to answer this question led to this study.

Purpose of the Study

This study investigates the management of educational resources and attainment of secondary school goals in the Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, this study examines the relationship between

1. Management of digital resources and attainment of secondary school goals
2. Management of financial resources and secondary school goal attainment.

Statement of hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide this study.

1. There is no significant relationship between management of digital resources and attainment of secondary school goals
2. There was no significant relationship between the management of financial resources and secondary school goal attainment.

Significance of Study

This study is anticipated to yield significant benefits to school administrators, policymakers, and researchers. For school administrators, the findings may provide valuable insights into effective strategies for the planning, allocation, and prudent utilisation of scarce educational resources which are critical in the attainment of institutional goals. Policymakers may find the study instrumental in formulating educational policies that will enhance efficient school management and prioritise continuous training opportunities for both administrators and teachers, thus contributing to the achievement of educational objectives within the local government and the state at large. Additionally, this study is expected to make a meaningful contribution to the existing body of literature on educational resource management and school goal attainment. This will offer a valuable reference point for future academic enquiry.

Research methodology

This study adopted a correlational research design. This design was deemed appropriate because the researcher examined the relationship between educational resource management and secondary school goal attainment. This study was conducted in the Yakurr Local Government Area (LGA) of the Cross River State, Nigeria. The study population comprised 99 principals (17 principals and 82 vice-principals) in the 17 public secondary schools in Yakurr Local Government Area of Cross River State (Planning Research and Statistics Department: Secondary Education Board, Calabar 2025). Principals are targeted because they are direct managers of educational resources. Census sampling was used in this study. A census is the study of every unit, everyone, or everything when the size of the population is small. Therefore, the researcher adopted a census approach because the population size was small and sampling bias was eliminated. Four teachers were purposively selected from each of the 17 secondary schools to provide an unbiased response to the instrument measuring resource management and school goal attainment.

The instrument used for data collection was a questionnaire designed by the researcher titled "Management of Educational Resources and Secondary School Goals Attainment Questionnaire (MERSSGAQ). A questionnaire letter preceded the main questionnaire. The letter explained the need for the study, its relevance to the respondents, clear their doubts, and promised that the study would not affect them in any way since it was mainly for academic purposes. The instrument has two sections: Section 'A' contained 12 items that measured management of digital and financial resources. Section 'B' consisted of 6-items designed to measure Secondary School Goals Attainment. The instrument has 18 items on a four-point Likert scale: Strongly

Agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Before administering the questionnaires to the respondents, the items were first submitted to three research experts in Educational Management, Measurement and Evaluation, Faculty of Educational Foundation Studies, and University of Calabar. All irrelevant items were either dropped or modified by experts. Finally, out of the 24 items designed for the study, six were discarded and 18 items were modified and retained for the study. To establish the reliability of the research instrument, a trial test was first conducted with 50 teachers selected outside the study area. The reliability was determined using the Cronbach's alpha technique, and the index ranges .79 from .82. Thus, the instrument was considered fit for use.

The questionnaires were administered to the respondents by the researcher and supported by research assistants. After a considerable amount of time, copies of the questionnaire were retrieved for analysis. The researcher first sorted out the collected questionnaires to ensure that all the items had been well responded to by the respondents. The researcher observed that the questionnaires were correctly filled, retrieved, and used for data analysis. The questionnaire was then organised in order of the variables that they were designed to measure. Positively worded items were scored as follows: Strongly Agree (SA) = 4point, Agree (A) = 3points, Disagree (D) = 2points and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1point. However, for all negatively worded items, this pattern was reversed. The scores of the respondents on the respective subscales were summed and transferred to appropriate statistical packages for analysis. Data analysis was performed based on the four null hypotheses that guided the study. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) analysis was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance.

Results and discussion

General description of the research variables

This study investigated the management of educational resources and secondary school goal attainment in the Yakurr Local Government Area of the Cross River State, Nigeria. The independent variable was educational resource management, while the dependent variable was secondary school goal attainment. The sub-independent variables of the study are the management of digital resources and the management of financial resources. All variables were measured using a four-point Likert scale. The means and standard deviations of the study variables are presented in Table 1. Table 1 indicates the respondents' various perceptions regarding the factors that measured the management of educational resources and secondary school

goal attainment. The highest mean value for the independent variables was 19.58, which was the mean value for the management of digital resources. This shows the extent of the respondents' agreement with the variable of digital resource management in the sampled schools in the study area. The least obtained mean value for the independent variable was 19.22 which was for the management of financial resources. This shows the extent of respondents' perception of the variable of management of financial resources in the sampled schools in the study area. The mean value obtained for the dependent variable was 20.96, which is the mean value for secondary school goal attainment. The standard deviations obtained for all subscales were moderate. This indicated that the respondents were moderately consistent in their response patterns to the questionnaire items.

Table 1

Summary of mean and standard deviation of the research variables

	N	n	Mea	Std. Deviation
Management of digital resources management	90	8	19.5	3.13
Management of financial of resources	90	2	19.2	3.05
School goals attainment	90	6	20.1	2.96
Valid N (listwise)	90			

Presentation of results

Hypothesis one

There is no significant relationship between the management of digital resources and secondary school goal attainment in the Yakurr Local Government area, Cross River State. The two variables in this hypothesis are the management of digital resources and attainment of secondary school goals. The Pearson product-moment correlation was used to test the hypothesis, and the results are presented in Table 2. Table 2 shows the correlation coefficients between the

management of digital resources and attainment of secondary school goals. The correlation coefficient was statistically significant for secondary school goal attainment ($r = .86, p < .05$). Since $p(.000)$ is less than $p(.05)$, hypothesis one is rejected in terms of secondary school goal attainment. The results of the analysis implied that there is a statistically significant relationship between the management of digital resources and secondary school goal attainment in public secondary schools in the Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Table 2

Summary of correlation between the management of digital resources and secondary school goal attainment in public

secondary schools in Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. (N=99).

Variables	\bar{X}	S.D	r	Sig.
Management of digital resources	19.58	3.13		
School goals attainment	20.16	2.96	.86*	.000

*Significant at $p < .05$ $df=97$

Hypothesis two

There is no significant relationship between management of financial resources and secondary school goals attainment in Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. The two variables in this hypothesis are management of financial resources and secondary school goals attainment. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to test the hypothesis, and the results of the analysis are presented in Table 3. Table 3 shows the correlation coefficients between management of financial resources and secondary school goal attainment. The correlation coefficient was statistically significant for secondary school goal

attainment ($r = .65$, $p < .05$). Since $p(.000)$ is less than $p(.05)$, hypothesis two is rejected in terms of secondary school goal attainment. The results of the analysis implied that there is a statistically significant relationship between the management of financial resources and secondary school goal attainment in public secondary schools in the Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State.

Table 3

Summary of the correlation between management of financial resources and secondary school goal attainment in public secondary schools in Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. (N=99).

Variables	\bar{X}	S.D	R	Sig.
Management of financial resources	19.22	3.05		
School goals attainment	20.16	2.96	.65*	.000

*Significant at $p < .05$ $df=97$

Discussion of findings

The findings of this study indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between the management of digital resources and secondary school goal attainment in the Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. This outcome was not unexpected, as well-managed digital resources serve as essential information tools for both students and teachers within the school system. Resources such as electronic books, academic journals, CD-ROMs, and local

databases offer access to up-to-date and relevant content across a wide range of subjects, thereby supporting the teaching and learning processes in the school system. Therefore, effective utilisation of these digital resources can significantly enhance students' academic performance which is an indicator of secondary school goals.

This finding is in agreement with Olofinkua et al. (2025), who concluded that the effective use of digital tools enhances academic performance, enabling lecturers to

improve teaching quality, contribute to research, and advance institutional goals. More so, it aligns with the study by Burk et al. (2013), which examined the influence of various digital learning tools on students' academic outcomes and found a positive correlation between the use of these resources and students' grades. Furthermore, Kipkosgei (2020) found a strong relationship between the use of digital resources, such as e-books, e-journals, and archived test papers, and the academic achievement of information technology undergraduates at Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. Similarly, Okorie et al. (2018) found that Higher National Diploma (HND) students at Federal Polytechnic, Nekede, Owerri frequently used digital resources for academic purposes such as assignments and seminar papers, positively affecting their academic performance.

The findings of this study indicate a statistically significant positive relationship between the management of financial resources and secondary school goal attainment in the Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. This result is unsurprising. This is because the efficient utilisation of financial resources plays a crucial role in maintaining and improving the school infrastructure, which includes classrooms, libraries, and sports facilities. It also helps support extracurricular activities that foster the holistic development of students. This finding is similar to that of Okon et al. (2020), who found a significant relationship between financial resource management and goal attainment in secondary schools. This finding is in agreement with that of Wanjala et al. (2020), who found a strong positive link between principals' financial management practices and students' academic achievement in public secondary schools in Bungoma East Sub-county. Additionally, the finding is in tandem with that of Obona et al. (2025), who

concluded that administrators' financial management strategies are significantly related to the effectiveness of the secondary school system in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Conclusion

This study investigated the management of educational resources and secondary school goal attainment in public secondary schools in Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross River State. This study specifically assesses the relationship between the management of digital resources, financial resources, and secondary goal attainment. The findings of the study revealed a statistically significant relationship between the management of digital resources, financial resources, and secondary school goal attainment in the Yakurr Local Government Area of the Cross River State. Based on these findings, the study concluded that the management of educational resources significantly relates to secondary school goal attainment in the Yakurr Local Government Area of the Cross River State, Nigeria. The implication is that effective management of these educational resources can enhance the successful realization of secondary education goals not just in Yakurr Local Government Area, but also Cross River State, and beyond.

Recommendations

The study recommends the following.

School principals should ensure prudent allocation of adequate resources for the provision and maintenance of digital facilities, which include internet connectivity, electronic libraries, and learning platforms. This is essential for improving students' and staff access to up-to-date information, as well as promoting the adoption of technology-driven teaching strategies.

Principles should be financially accountable by implementing transparent and efficient financial management practices. This approach will not only foster trust but

also contribute to enhancing staff welfare and supporting continuous professional development initiatives.

Limitations and suggestions for further research

A major limitation of this study is that it specifically focused only on public secondary schools in the Yakurr Local Government Area. This may limit the generalisation of the findings to other 18 Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Cross River State. Given this limitation, future studies should be conducted to expand the scope of this study to enhance its generalisability.

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**ROLE OF CIVIC EDUCATION IN PROMOTING CONFLICT MANAGEMENT SKILLS AMONG
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN NJIKOKA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, ANAMBRA
STATE, NIGERIA**

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The study was conducted to determine the role of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State. The study adopted a survey research design. Total number of 1,056 secondary school students constituted the population. A sample size of 399 students were using Research Advisors Sample Size Table. To carry out the study, three research questions were formulated. The instrument used in gathering data for this study was a structured questionnaire entitled "Role of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students" (QRCEPCMS). Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. The results of the findings revealed among others the roles of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among schools students. The study recommended among others that Civic Education teachers should use interactive teaching methods like role-playing, debates, and group discussions to help students understand, practice, and develop conflict resolution skills in a practical context.

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Introduction

An essential and unavoidable human phenomenon is conflict as human coexistence increases the possibility of conflict. Conflicts arise as a result of disagreements or misunderstandings among people or organisations in society. Conflicts can bring about positive or negative outcomes or changes in society depending on how such conflicts are managed. Like other human institutions, schools are likely to experience conflicts of some kind. As such, conflict management skills such as mediation, negotiation, avoidance, and collaboration are applied in conflict management. Conflict is sometimes a prerequisite for peace in society and other human organisations because of the diversity of individual and societal interests. Olufemi and Adealae (2017) noted that conflict is a

precondition for peace and harmony in the society. This suggests that conflicts between individuals and groups are unavoidable and necessary in society.

Conflict can be caused by many factors including fraud in the electoral system, failure of governance systems, economic resources, religious beliefs, artificial boundaries, land ownership, global repression, ethnicity and identity (Orhero, 2020). Schools often seem to be hot spots of conflict due to students' desire for self-actualisation, and as such can affect academic activities. In the secondary school system, conflicts had hindered teaching and learning activities on several occasions. Such conflict has been attributed to institutional and personal factors such as personal disagreements between students, competition for grades or popularity, bullying or

harassment and was often suppressed without serious explorations of modern means of conflict management strategies, which sometimes lead to escalation of conflicts and dysfunctional educational systems. Therefore, there is a need for further study.

The study was theoretically anchored to the Conflict Management Theory of Max Weber (1905). According to Weber, the society serves as a battlefield for class struggle over scarce resources. Marx stressed that conflict between the social classes is vital in any human society. This theory suggests that conflicts and struggles for power and resources bring about transformations in society. In the secondary school system, the struggle for academic relevance, positions and quest for dominance can trigger conflict situations among students if they are not properly managed through the inculcation of the right values.

Civic Education is a conscious education designed to inculcate civic skills, values, and democratic culture, satisfying the needs for socialisation in the interests of the individual, civic society and the rule of law. It prepares young people to fulfil their roles and take responsibility as members of a community. Civic Education serves as a channel through which young people can be inspired to aim for the common. Sele (2020) defines Civic Education as the teaching of core values for better citizenship. Civic Education more often than not may not come as a deliberate effort, as it could occur at every stage of life and be taught in venues other than the school environment. It is therefore worth noting that members of society, the family, governments, religions, and mass media are responsible for

disseminating information that may be beneficial or harmful to the child and society. Hence, Civic Education within the school consists of deliberate courses geared towards developing citizens who are well informed and responsible in order to achieve a civil society. The key objective of Civic Education curriculum is to inculcate students with civic skills and values that are necessary for adjustment in a democratic society.

The goal of Civic Education is to equip individuals with the necessary skills to become better citizens who can contribute to nation-building. Civic Education is designed to expose students to civic skills and ideas on the duties of citizens towards development processes (Kayode-Olawoyin, 2017). Civic Education facilitates an understanding of the functions of different government institutions, as well as the individual rights, duties and obligations of citizens (Muleya, 2019).

Civic education provides students with ideas on how to resolve conflict and make peace among themselves; and in the development of cognitive civic skills that are relevant in building political and civic life. Secondary school students are exposed early to problem-solving skills, that can be applied within the classroom and the society to ensure sustainable development. Building civic skills in the learners such as necessary to promote peace within the students, exposing them to unity and mediation skills, and how to peacefully collaborate for the development of society.

Hence, Civic Education curriculum is a veritable tool for citizenship training and an important instrument promoting peace and justice, freedom and equality. Thus, Civic

Education, if effectively taught in schools can contribute to nation building in Nigeria. Civic Education aims to educate individuals to become responsible citizens (Olayemi et al, 2011).

Curriculum is a planned academic content of a course program. Curriculum connotes specific learning moduls, programmes, activities, as well as the instructional aids used for teaching and learning. Accordingly, Sofadekan (2017) noted that the newly reviewed senior secondary school education curriculum which includes Civic Education and whose implementation commenced in September 2011 has placed a big challenge on educators, especially secondary school teachers. Civic Education teachers with knowledge of the subject and innovative teaching skills goes a long way to facilitate the realisation of their lofty goals. Notably, teachers are charged with the responsibility of implementing curriculums and as such, the importance of quality teachers can never be undervalued. Thus, Civic Education teachers must have adequate competence, content knowledge and pedagogical skills (Jibril and Abba 2011).

Secondary school civic education curriculum standards represent a set of expected learning outcomes and activities that can be achieved by applying teaching strategies such as class discussions, enquiry, role plays and the use of computer-assisted instruction. Civic Education curriculum exposes students to learning activities, which promote the acquisition of skills for conflict management.

Conflict emerges because of incompatible groups or individual interests.

This can be attributed to various factors, including competition for limited resources, differing values or beliefs, and conflicting goals or objectives. To achieve peaceful coexistence, conflict is inevitable in every human society (Egobueze, 2021). However, violent conflict is a product of the human mind and personal orientation, which can be transferred to entire community.

Scholars have defined conflict in various ways. Orhero (2020) defined conflict as a contentious struggle for interest and goal allocation in society. This is a disagreement between inequality and the unequal distribution of human needs. Conflict involves disagreements and struggles over divergent interests (Dimelu et al. 2017). Conflict is the product of divergent interests, class struggles and the pursuit of equity in redistributing limited resources. This implies that conflict arises from competition for resources, status, and recognition and can metamorphose to violent crises when conflicting parties fail to reach a conclusive and harmonious agreement (Egobueze, 2021). Conflicts occur because of the perceived need to protect or defend goals and interests. Conflict can be classified as direct or indirect. Direct conflicts are political and socioeconomic-motivated violence characterised by physical suffering and deprivation (Galtung, & Salvage, et al., 2012). The impact of direct conflict is seen in the destruction of lives, properties, and starvation associated with armed conflicts. Indirect conflict on the other hand is a form of protest against cultural values, norms, injustice, discrimination, and inequality (Atere, Ayandiji, & David, 2019).

Conflicts are natural part of human society and as such are inevitable even in educational institutions. Secondary schools may not be exempted from conflict because it is an environment in which students from different backgrounds interact. Conflict among students is inevitable and can affect teaching and learning in schools. Factors such as personal disagreement, competition, bullying, and social frustration can cause conflicts among students.

As conflicts are inevitable in any human organisation, it is crucial to know how conflicts can be managed. Conflict management is the practice or methods used to resolve or settle conflicts. The achievement of any organizational goals depends on the ability of such organization to manage conflicts. Accordingly, Dimelu, Salifu, Enwelu, and Igbokwe, (2017), viewed conflict management is an approach for resolving disputes. It is a planned process for identifying, resolving and averting future conflicts. Egobueze (2016) conceived conflict management as a strategy designed to achieve resolution to end conflicts. Conflict management is a deliberate strategy of resolving conflicts through resolution.

In other words, conflict management is an intermediary procedure of resolving conflicts. Conflict management deals with skills used to resolve conflict and devise appropriate skills for effective management and enhancing the effectiveness of conflict management in secondary schools by developing an effective strategy that requires the involvement of a corporate level of management which will stipulate skills to cope with any conflict situations in the school. This suggests that the goal of

developing conflict management skills among secondary school students is the joint responsibility of parents, teachers, and administrators.

Conflict management skills include the strategies or approaches applied in to address conflicts. Nevertheless, conflicts in school environments can be resolved through mediation, arbitration, competition, collaboration, compromise, accommodation and avoidance (Oboegbulem and Onwurah 2011). The application of these strategies is rewarding depending on the nature of the conflict. Therefore, this study sought to investigate the role of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in the Njikoka Local Government Area in Anambra State.

Statement of the Problem

Conflict in the school system in Nigeria especially among secondary school students can be attributed to institutional and personal factors such as personal disagreements between students, competition for grades or popularity, bullying or harassment and was often suppressed without serious explorations of modern means of conflict management strategies which sometimes lead to escalation of conflicts and dysfunctional educational systems. A pilot study carried out by the researcher and causal reports by some teachers and students in the Njikoka Local Government Area indicated unfriendly relationships among students arising from factors such as personal disagreements between students, competition for grades, and popularity. If not properly managed, these situations may impede the quality of the teaching-learning process in schools and may

affect students' academic performance. The dearth of literature on the role of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students is an important gap that this study seeks to fill. Therefore, this study focuses on investigating the role of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in the Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State, Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the role of civic education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State.

Specifically, this study seeks the following:

- Determine the role of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State.
- Identify the causes of conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State.
- Identify possible conflict management skills that may be used to resolve conflicts among secondary school students in the Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide the study:

- What are the roles of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills

among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State?

- What are the causes of conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State?
- What conflict management skills are used in resolving conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State?

Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey design. The study population consisted of 1,056 senior secondary school students from 11 public secondary schools in the Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State (PPSSC Anambra State, 2022). A sample size of 399 students was determined using Research Advisor's Sample Size Table at confidence level of 99.0%, while simple random sampling procedure was used to select four (4) public secondary schools in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State. Data for the study was gathered using a 30 items Questionnaire on the "Roles of Civic Education in Promoting Conflict Management Skills" (QRCEPCMS). Data analysis was performed using the mean and standard deviation. The three research questions were analysed using mean and standard deviation. Mean scores of 2.5 and above were accepted, whereas mean scores below 2.5 were rejected.

Results

Table 1: Mean response of Respondents on the roles of civic education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Civic Education enhances conflict management by the use of mediation skills.	3.25	0.69	Agree
2	Civic Education is an important ingredient of healthy relationship and interaction among the students.	3.41	0.73	Agree
3	Civic Education cannot be used to promote peace among the students.	2.37	0.17	Disagree
4	Civic Education inculcates in the students the accommodating skills for conflict management	3.24	1.10	Agree
5	Civic Education does not emphasize principle of reconciliation in everyday conduct	1.90	1.04	Disagree
6	Inculcates the right types of skills and values for interpersonal relationships	3.22	0.70	Agree
7	Civic Education promotes harmony among students.	3.36	0.45	Agree
8	Civic Education does not promote skills of peaceful co-existence among the students.	2.30	1.02	Disagree
	Grand Total	2.88	5.99	

The data presented in Table 1 shows the role of civic education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State. The results indicated that Items 1, 2, 4, 6, and 7 had mean ratings of 3.25, 3.41, 3.24, 3.22, and 3.36, respectively. Since the mean values of the items were above the 2.50 benchmark mean for decision taking, it indicates that the roles of Civic Education in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students were that Civic Education

enhances conflict management by the use of mediation skills, Civic Education is an important ingredient of healthy relationships and interactions among students. Civic Education inculcates in the students the accommodating skills for conflict management, inculcates the right types of skills and values for interpersonal relationships, and Civic Education promotes harmony among students. Meanwhile, the standard deviation scores of the items in Table 1 revealed a high variability from the mean scores.

Table 2: Mean response of Respondents on the causes of conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Personal disagreement	3.31	0.62	Agree
2.	Peace keeping	2.30	0.66	Disagree
3.	Competition for grades	3.18	0.80	Agree
4.	Harmony among the students	2.05	0.78	Disagree
5.	Bullying	3.20	0.69	Agree
6.	Differences in cultural beliefs	3.23	0.88	Agree
7.	Good cordial relationships among the students	2.18	0.76	Disagree
8.	Frustration over group assignment	3.25	0.70	Agree
9.	Harassment	3.36	0.80	Agree
10.	Disagreement over school functions	3.24	0.84	Agree
11.	Difference in religion	3.28	0.70	Agree
12.	Grand Total	2.96	7.59	

The data presented in Table 2 shows the causes of conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State. Results indicated that items 9, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 8, and 19 had mean ratings of 3.31, 3.18, 3.20, 3.23, 3.25, 3.36, 3.24 and 3.28. Since the mean values of the items were above the 2.50 benchmark mean for decision making, this indicates that the causes of conflict among

secondary school students in the Njikoka Local Government Area, include personal disagreement, competition for grades, bullying, differences in cultural beliefs, frustration over group assignment, harassment, disagreement over school functions, and difference in religion. However, the standard deviation scores of the items in Table 2 above revealed high variation in the data from the mean scores.

Table 3: Mean response of Respondents on the conflict management skills used in resolving conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Use of dialogue	3.12	0.70	Agree
2.	Use of fighting skills	1.36	0.45	Disagree
3.	Use of compromising skills	3.15	1.02	Agree
4.	Accommodating skills	3.33	0.79	Agree
5.	Quarrelling skills	2.27	0.70	Disagree
6.	Communication skills	3.11	0.88	Agree
7.	Being defensive	2.32	0.86	Disagree
8.	Use of mediation skills	3.21	0.70	Agree
9.	Overgeneralizing	2.17	0.80	Disagree
10.	Problem-solving skills	3.18	1.04	Agree
11.	Being right	2.23	0.70	Disagree
	Grand Total	3.04	0.78	

The data presented in Table 3 shows the conflict management skills used in resolving conflicts among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area, Anambra State. Results indicated that items 20, 22, 23, 25, 27, and 29 had mean ratings of 3.12, 3.15, 3.33, 3.11, 3.21, and 3.18. Since the mean values of the items were above the 2.50 benchmark mean for decision-making, this indicates that conflict management skills used in resolving conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area include the use of dialogue, fighting skills, compromising skills, accommodating skills, communication skills, mediation skills, and problem-solving skills. However, the standard deviation

scores of the items in Table 3 revealed less variation from the mean scores.

Discussion

The findings reveal that Civic Education plays important role in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students in the Njikoka Local Government Area by enhancing conflict management and mediation skills, promoting healthy relationships and interactions among students, inculcating accommodating skills and values for interpersonal relationships, and promoting harmony among students. This is in line with what Muleya, (2019) stated that the role of Civic Education in schools it exposes students to the process of

government and its institutions, and instills the skill of good citizenship. Civic Education helps students make informed decisions and adjust to the challenges and uncertainties of life by providing relevant education.

The findings indicate that the causes of conflict among Secondary School Students in Njikoka Local Government Area include personal disagreement, competition for grades, bullying, differences in cultural beliefs, frustration over group assignment, harassment, disagreement over school functions, and differences in religion. Thus, suggests that a conflict occurs when the conflicting parties fail to reach a conclusive and harmonious agreement. These findings corroborate the postulations of Max (1905) Conflict Management Theory, which states that conflicts and struggles for resources, power, and relevance is inevitable in any human organization.

The findings showed that the conflict management skills used in resolving conflict among secondary school students include the use of dialogue, compromising skills, accommodating skills, communication skills, mediation skills, and problem-solving skills. Conflict management skills encompass styles and techniques used to manage conflict between individuals or between groups. It involves skills as a process of reducing tension and the negative effects of conflict through the application of a number of measures aimed at fostering an understanding of the conflict situation by the parties involved.

Conclusion

Civic Education enhances conflict management through the use of mediation skills, serves as an important ingredient for healthy relationships and interactions among students, inculcates accommodating skills for conflict management, and values interpersonal skills, which helps in promoting conflict management skills among secondary school students. The causes of

conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area include personal disagreement, competition for grades, bullying, differences in cultural beliefs, frustration over group assignments, harassment, disagreement over school functions, and differences in religion. Use of dialogue, fighting skills, compromising skills, accommodating skills, communication skills, mediation skills, and problem-solving skills were the conflict management skills used to resolve conflict among secondary school students in Njikoka Local Government Area.

Recommendations

The study recommends that Civic Education teachers:

- Should use interactive teaching methods like role-playing, debates, and group discussions to help students understand, practice, and develop conflict resolution skills in a practical context.
- Encourage students become involved in community-based conflict resolution initiatives. This could include volunteering, participation in mediation programs, or peace workshops.
- Utilise technology to engage students in virtual conflict resolution simulations and online courses related to peace and conflict studies.
- Encourage open dialogue and create a safe space for students to express their opinions and concerns. This would help foster a culture of communication as a means of resolving conflict.
- Teach students about cultural diversity in Nigeria, such as cultural norms and practices related to conflict and resolution.

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IMPACT OF ASUU STRIKE ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
EDUCATION STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA, NSUKKA

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The study sought to determine the impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) strike on the academic performance of Political Science Education students in university of Nigeria Nsukka. The study was designed as a descriptive survey. A total of 216 Political Science Education students constituted the sample. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. A structured questionnaire titled the Impact of Academic Staff Union of Universities Strike on the Academic Performance of Political Science Education Students (IASUUSAPPSES) was used to collect data for the study. Data were analysed using mean and standard deviation. The results of the findings indicated among others that ASUU strikes significantly impact the academic performance of Political Science Education students at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

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Introduction

Universities are seen as the basis of knowledge, the source of intellectual growth, and a place to produce tomorrow leaders. In Nigeria, government-owned universities are known as public universities, which are founded to provide Nigerian access to post-secondary education (Ogunode, 2020). Public universities are typically created by the Parliamentary Act to serve the public interest. Such universities focus on providing students with access to research, education and community services at subsidised cost. The goals of university education include the development of the right value orientation for individual and societal benefits; and the enhancement of intellectual capacities to understand and appreciate societal values (FGN, 2014).

The contributions of university education to research, technical innovation, and the development of human capital cannot be overemphasised. Hence, investment in university education is a vital source of national development worldwide. As a result, many countries rely more on the knowledge, concepts, and ideas generated through

research. Ideally, university education promotes growth in society through its capacity to produce quality human capital for employment in different sectors of the economy (Ogunode, 2020).

However, much of the lofty importance of university education has been truncated in Nigeria because of frequent ASUU strikes. ASUU is a trade union affiliated with the Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC). A trade union is an association that seeks to advocate for improved welfare of members. Most trade unions are independent of the employer but strive to develop good relationships with employers. Pitan and Akindele (2016) noted that trade unions negotiate the terms and conditions of service with the employer, see to the well-being of members and protect their members from victimisations. The general objectives of ASUU include: regulation of human relations between academic staff and employers, encouragement of the members to actively participate in affairs of the university such as elections, membership of cooperative societies, university-wide conferences, lectures and training; protection of university

autonomy and advancement of the social, economic and cultural interests of the nation (Wahab, 2018, Ardo, Ubandawaki & Ardo, 2020).

Meanwhile, the frequent strike action by ASUU in Nigeria has become a recurring phenomenon. A strike is simply a protest organised by trade unions over members' poor welfare conditions. The constant withdrawal of services by ASUU members due to the failure of the government to implement, honour agreements signed with ASUU constitutes a great threat to university education in Nigeria (Adeyanju et al, 2018; Omeje, and Ogbu, 2019). Undoubtedly, what seemed to be the first ASUU strike in Nigeria was observed in 1988 with the major reason for pursuing fair wages and university autonomy. As a result, ASUU embarked on strike actions of different durations for the reasons that were not unconnected to adequate funding, provision of sufficient teaching and learning facilities and equipment, university autonomy and implementation of the provisions of the 2014 Pension Reform Act as well as the introduction of the University Transparency Accountability Solution (UTAS) as against the imposed Integrated Personnel Payroll Information System (IPPIS) by the Federal Government among others (Egbegi & Iheriohanma, 2018).

Educational institutions are established to equip students with the skills necessary to direct the affairs of society in the near future (Ogunode et al, 2021). Enueme, and Onyene (2010) stated that the development of any nation largely depends on youth and are the leaders of tomorrow. Therefore, when attention is not properly paid to political science education students in the course of studentship, society could be at risk of competent future leaders.

Political science education is concerned with teaching the theory, practice, and dynamics of politics and government.

The course content includes political theory, comparative politics, international relations, public administration, and public policy. Political science education curriculum is designed to equip students with critical thinking, analytical skills, and a deep understanding of political systems, processes, and institutions. In addition, this study helps students understand power dynamics, human rights, justice, and equality as indicators of democracy.

Political Science Education connotes the comparative study of the political systems, institutions, and political processes of different nations. This is achieved by examining the peculiarities of different political regimes, electoral systems, and policy outcomes, as well as their impact on historical, cultural, socio-economic, and political development. Hence, Lijphart (2012) argued that the study of political systems and regimes and; interactions between states, international organisations, and global actors are crucial for understanding global politics. It promotes understanding of the causes, consequences, and dynamics of international conflict, cooperation, and diplomacy. Waltz (2000) noted that knowledge of international relations provides individuals with an understanding of the complexities and challenges of global issues such as security, human rights, and climate change.

Through the study of Political Science Education, students learn about the principles of public administration, bureaucratic organisation, policy analysis, and evaluation. Such knowledge exposes students with the skills to evaluate public policies and to recommend changes in some policy objectives (Grossman & Hart, 2018). The objectives of Political Science Education vary depending on the specific programme or institution. However, some common objectives as noted by Grossman and Hart (2018) include helping students develop an

understanding of political systems; providing students with a comprehensive understanding of the political systems, structures, and processes that govern societies; equipping students with the skills and knowledge to analyse and evaluate political behaviour, such as voting patterns, public opinion, and political participation; evaluate political theories, arguments, and policies, and being able to gather and interpret political data and evidence and; aid the understanding of international relations and global politics.

From the above objectives, it is clear that the Political Science Education program was designed to inculcate the critical values of citizenship and leadership, ethical living, diversity, pluralism, inclusiveness, community service, and the idea that students can and must participate actively in societal growth and development. To buttress this, Yusuf (2017) stressed that all higher education program must promote independent, self-directed students' behaviour in cognizance of community values. This suggests that worthy citizenship and service to the community are important values to be promoted through higher education experience.

Conversely, the incessant strike of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has affected higher education programs in Nigerian universities, especially Political Science Education. ASUU strike, which has recently become a norm disrupts academic activities and in turn can affect students' academic performance (Wojuade, 2019). Thus, the academic performance of some Political Science Education students may have dropped due to the continuous strike actions in the universities. Academic performance refers to the grades of students in examinations or quizzes. This is simply the level of student performance in the course.

Higher scores indicate better academic performance, whereas lower scores indicated poorer academic performance.

Statement of the problem

ASUU is a union of intellectuals from government and state-owned universities in Nigeria with the mandate to advocate for the welfare of its members and as such has proven to be one of the strongest and most reliable trade unions in Nigeria. In 2022, ASUU embarked on an eight-month strike that disrupted the academic calendar of universities, leading to delayed or prolonged completion of academic programs. It also resulted in missed lectures, tutorials and seminars, which are essential for effective learning and understanding of political science education content that impacts students' Grade Point Average (GPA). Notably, deplorable working conditions, unpaid salaries/allowances and the inability of the government to reach an agreement with ASUU, and sometimes government delay in the enforcement of the agreements reached with ASUU are some of the contributory factors to the ASUU strike in Nigerian universities. Thus, ASUU has been synonymously linked to strike/struggles due to government insensitivity and irresponsibility.

However, despite the rationale for the ASUU strike, it has far-reaching consequences on academic programs and activities. Disruption in the academic calendar, suspension of teaching and learning, distraction of the normal learning process prolonging the study period and graduation of students have been argued to be some of the major effects of ASUU strikes which in turn can impact students' academic performance. Hence, this study focused on investigating the impact of ASUU strike on the academic performance of Political Science Education students.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to determine the impact of the ASUU strike on the academic performance of political science education students at the University of Nigerian Nsukka. The specific purposes were to:

1. find out the impact of ASUU strike on students' academic activities.
2. determine the impact of ASUU strike on Political Science Education students' Grade Point Average (GPA).
3. identify possible strategies for improving the academic performance of students in Political Science Education after a strike.

Research questions

1. What is the impact of ASUU strike on academic activities?
2. What is the impact of ASUU strike on Political Science Education students' GPA?
3. What are the possible strategies to improve the academic performance of Political Science Education students after strike?

Theoretical framework

The study was anchored on frustration-aggression theory of John Dollard, Neal Miller, Leonard Doob, Orval Mowrer, and Robert Sears in 1939. This theory states that aggression is the result of blocking, or frustrating, a person's efforts to attain a goal. While frustration prompts a behaviour that may or may not be aggressive, any aggressive behaviour is a product of frustration, making frustration insufficient, but a necessary condition for aggression. Thus, frustration causes aggression, but when the source of frustration cannot be challenged, aggression is transferred to the innocent target.

In the context of this study, the governments' inability to honour agreements

with ASUU leads to frustration among ASUU members, which causes strike and disruption in educational goals and expectations of academic programs in public universities. Political science education students may feel frustrated by the truncation of academic progress, as classes are cancelled, access to learning resources is denied, year of graduation is prolonged and quality contact with university lecturers is limited due to ASUU strikes.

Such frustration in academic activities can manifest as aggression, not necessarily in a violent manner, but in terms of negative emotions, stress and the erosion of students' motivation to learn. The stress and uncertainty caused by ASUU strikes may make it difficult for students to concentrate on their studies or to maintain a consistent study routine. In addition, the frustration and aggression induced by ASUU strikes can lead to a decline students' overall academic performance.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey. Two hundred and sixteen (216) political science education students in University of Nigeria, Nsukka selected through total enumeration sampling technique constituted the sample. A questionnaire titled Impact of ASUU Strike on Academic Performance of Political Science Education Students (IASUUSAPPSES) was used to collect data for this study. The questionnaire was subjected to face, content, and construct validity tests were certified to be suitable for the study. Descriptive statistics of the mean and standard deviation were used to analyse the data. Questionnaire items with a mean score of 2.50 and above was accepted and regarded as positive, whereas those below were rejected, and considered as negative.

Results

The results are presented below according to the research questions.

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation responses of respondents on the impact of the ASUU strike.

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1.	Disruption of university calendar.	3.16	1.109	Agree
2	Inadequate syllabus coverage.	3.32	1.085	Agree
3	Inadequate time to study course materials.	3.27	0.956	Agree
4	Engaging in business activities during ASUU strike.	1.86	0.620	Disagree
5	Inadequate access to classroom lecture activities..	2.03	0.657	Disagree
6	Compacted academic calendars.	3.17	1.110	Agree
7	Increase academic stress which affects Students' mental health.	3.34	1.095	Agree
8	Prolonged year of graduation.	3.12	1.106	Agree
9	Inability to write term papers assignments.	3.30	1.065	Agree
10	Struggle to answer questions in examinations.	3.37	0.966	Agree

Keywords: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation, N= Number of the Respondents

The data presented in Table 1 shows the impact of the ASUU strike on students' academic activities. Results indicated that items 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 had mean ratings of 3.16, 3.32, 3.27, 3.17, 3.34, 3.12, 3.30 and 3.37 with standard deviation of 1.109, 1.085, 0.956, 1.110, 1.095, 1.106, 1.065 and 0.966 respectively. Since the mean values of the items were above the 2.50 benchmark mean for decision making, it indicates that the impact of the ASUU strike

on students includes disruption of the university calendar, inadequate syllabus coverage, inadequate time to study course materials, compacted academic calendar, increased academic stress which affects students' mental health, prolonged years of graduation, forgot how to write term paper assignments, and struggle to answer questions in examinations. However, the standard deviation scores indicate less variability in the mean scores of the items.

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation responses of respondents on the influence of the ASUU strike on political science education students' GPA.

S/N	Item Statements	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Disruption of the University academic calendar affected my GPA	3.14	1.10	Agree
2	Lack of coverage of political science education syllabus affects GPA	3.42	1.09	Agree
3	Inadequate time to study course materials affects my GPA	3.27	0.95	Disagree
4	Compacted academic calendar made my GPA low	3.16	1.10	Agree
5	ASUU strike tends to increase mental health concern	2.63	0.68	Agree
6	Poor reading motivation for exams after strike affects student's GPA	2.16	0.64	Disagree
7	Prolonged graduation year diminishes the ability to make good GPA.	3.32	1.08	Agree
8	Inadequate time to writing term papers assignments after strike affects GRA	3.04	1.92	Disagree

Keywords: \bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The data presented in Table 2 above shows that ASUU strikes negatively impact Political Science Education students' GPA through disruption of the university

academic calendar, lack of coverage of political science education syllabus, inadequate time to study course materials influence the GPA of students in Political

Science Education, compacting university academic calendar to meet up with academic sessions, ASUU strike tends to increase mental health concerns among students which influences their GPA, prolonged years of graduation diminishes students ability to make a good GPA, and

inadequate time to write term paper assignments after strike affects GRA. This is because the mean values of identified items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 were above the 2.50 benchmark for acceptance. However, the standard deviation scores indicated less variation in the mean scores.

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation response of Respondents on the possible strategies to improve the academic performance of political science education students after strikes

S/N	Item Statement	\bar{X}	SD	Decision
1	Offering counseling support programmes.	3.28	0.957	Agree
2	Reviewing the university academic calendar to accommodate the students' learning interests.	2.86	0.820	Agree
3	Provisions of adequate resources to support the learning of political science education content.	2.63	0.687	Agree
4	Adjusting the course content to reduce the academic pressure on students.	3.33	1.086	Agree
5	Adopting collaborative learning techniques to boost student earnings.	3.76	1.112	Agree
6	Offering of scholarship to students to encourage motivation.	2.52	0.685	Agree
7	Encouraging/improved lecturer - students' mentorship.	3.27	0.956	Agree
8	Conducting online classes like zoom class to cover Political Science Education Syllabus.	3.16	1.109	Agree

\bar{X} = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation

The mean values of items 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 and 25 were above 2.50, thus indicating that the possible strategies to improve the academic performance of Political Science Education students after strikes include: offering counselling support programs, reviewing the university academic calendar to accommodate students' learning interests, provision of adequate resources to support learning of Political Science Education content, adjusting the course content to reduce academic pressure on students, adopting collaborative learning techniques to boost students' learning, offering scholarships to students to encourage motivation, encouraging / improved lecturer-student mentorship, conducting online classes, and zoom classes to cover Political Science Education Syllabus. Meanwhile, the standard deviation scores indicated less variation in the mean scores.

Discussions

The findings of the study indicated that ASUU strike impacts academic activities through disruption of the university calendar, inadequate syllabus coverage, inadequate time to study course materials, compacted academic calendar, increased academic stress which affects students mental health, prolonged years of graduation, inability to write term paper assignments, and struggles to answer questions in examinations. These findings were supported by Wajuade (2019) who found that ASUU strikes negatively impacts students' academic performance.

Based on research question two, the findings showed that ASUU strikes negatively impact the academic performance of Political Science Education students through disruption of the academic calendar, lack of coverage of Political Science Education syllabus, limiting study time for

course materials, compacting university academic calendar, increasing mental health concern among students, prolonging years of graduation, and inadequate writing time for term paper assignments which in turn impact. These findings are in agreement with Ardo et al (2020), who stated that the ASUU Strike had a negative impact on students' performance, leading to an increase in the failure rate.

The findings equally revealed the strategies for improving Political Science Education students' academic performance after the ASUU strike which include offering counselling support programmes, reviewing the university academic calendar to accommodate students' learning interest, provision of adequate resources to support the learning of Political Science Education contents, adjusting the course content to reduce academic pressure on students, adopting collaborative learning techniques to boost learning of the students, offering scholarships to students to encourage motivation, encouraging/improved lecturer-students mentorship, conducting online classes, and zoom classes to cover political science education syllabus and showing the possible strategies to improve the academic performance of political science education students.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings established that ASUU strikes greatly impact the academic activities and academic performance of Political Science Education students.

Recommendations

- Students should be encouraged to use strike periods to engage in self-study by accessing online resources, textbooks, and educational websites to continue learning independently.
- Students should explore online teaching platforms to supplement their knowledge and skills during strikes.

- Relevant stakeholders should organise virtual study groups to enable students to collaborate and study.
- Students should organize the study schedule and set academic goals to achieve at the end of strike, as having such a plan in place will help one get back on track quickly.

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THE "EDUCATION IS A SCAM" DEBATE IN NIGERIA: A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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Education is intrinsically a virtue and the educated are elites in virtually all societies. This is not just a claim; it is a fact. Likewise, Nigeria had a fine history of education which was once believed to be a necessity for material progress, human development, and social emancipation. However, the recent slogan in the Nigerian popular culture is: "education is a scam." This sounds like turning logic on its head and a distortion of history. How can education be a scam? If it is a scam, how and when did it become a scam? How can education be seen as a virtue that it has always been and reorient the youth not to see it as a scam? To answer these questions, this paper argues for the urgent need to restore education in Nigeria to its former hallowed position. Its findings reveal that the falling standard of education and the unrealized dream of gainful employment by graduates—after being educated—fuel the notion that "education is a scam". This paper concludes that education is not a scam but contextually seems so, due to government's disarticulated educational policies. It recommends that Nigerian governments at all levels should massively invest in education and reorient the youth on the virtues of education.

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Introduction

Education is highly valued in Nigeria as a treasure. Many people aspire to be educated and the educated ones are respected in every community. It is believed that education is not only an antidote to ignorance which is very obvious, it is also a route to escape from poverty. This explains why parents invest heavily in their wards' education at all costs. Before Nigerian independence and even after independence, there were many instances where families sold their farms and other inheritances just to get their wards educated. The prospect of prosperity which was woven around education—and the educated—was then the motivating force. However, in recent years, education that was hitherto synonymous with prosperity has become an antithesis to success to many Nigerian graduates due to unemployment. If this notion has been held and promoted by those who do not have the opportunity to go to school especially to the tertiary level, it could be interpreted as a display of envy by the uneducated towards the educated class. But

the (mis)characterization of education in Nigeria as a scam is not a case of an envious uneducated class against the envied educated class. Rather, "education is a scam" is an unpleasant song being sung by both those who did not go to school and those who actually went to school but felt education has made them jobless and hopeless.

This study investigates this ugly reality. It traces the history of education in Nigeria to its heydays when it was a sure way to success and to ascendancy to prominence. It acknowledges that things have gone wrong and identifies many wrongs in Nigerian educational system. But how did these things get wrong? When and how? How can we reverse the ugly reality? In other words, how do we correct the notion that education is a scam? How do we convince Nigerian youth that education is inherently good, beneficial, and a sure (if not the surest) way to success? Although, this is a herculean task but it can be accomplished. In what follows, this paper identifies the causes of failure of education in Nigeria and proffers solutions.

Theoretical Framework

This paper makes its critique from the perspective of Capability Theory which is often attributed to Amartya Sen, Martha Nussbaum, etc. The theory posits that education expands individuals' capabilities and freedoms which in turns leads to human development and individual well-being. On this premise, it is argued that education which makes individuals capable and free should enable them to participate fully and proficiently in their country's social and economic development. This capability is obviously lacking in many Nigerian graduates in recent time. Those who have the capability do not have the freedom. Those who have the freedom do not have the capability. It is rare to find capability and freedom as mutually complementing traits in individual graduate due to the state of the nation and the economy. This gives wings to the notion that "education is a scam" to which many Nigerian youth find too convincing to repudiate.

From the perspective of capability theory, education has the potential to improve a country's human development indices (HDI). This improvement should not only be seen in the reduction of poverty and unemployment but also in job security, sound healthcare, and overall standards of living. Though capability theory has been criticized for being subjective in defining capabilities; notwithstanding the criticism, it is employed in this study to explain how incapability to make sense of education and put it to productive uses has made it (education) to be seen as a scam.

Literature Review on Education in Nigeria: History, Trends and Patterns

There are various forms and processes of education in Nigeria right from history till the present time. Knowledge was/is acquired formally and informally and could be secular in form or religious. Prior to colonial era, traditional system of education existed with

focus on oral traditions, community based learning, and apprenticeship. As informal as education was in the traditional milieu where certificates were not awarded, its emphasis included social responsibility, political participation, moral values, and job creation through agricultural training, trades and crafts, weaving, and other vocational trainings (Fafunwa, 1974). Since education in the Nigerian traditional society focuses on job creation and actually created jobs, it was not seen as scam. So, which form of education is characterized or mischaracterized as scam? It is important to note that the education referred to in this paper is secular education which is often called Western education because it was introduced by missionary and colonialists from the West. It is the education that leads to the award of different categories of degree and diploma certificates as the case may be. Although certificates are awarded in religious studies in most of Nigerian higher institutions, yet the emphasis of the notion that education is a scam is not on any specific discipline but on the general process that leads to the award of certificates which usefulness is now in dispute.

Historically, the formal form of education (now characterized as a scam) was first introduced by Christian missionary. Its beginning in the modern sense was traced, in the work of Fafunwa (1974), to between 1882 and 1929. Then it was basic education which focuses on literacy (ability to read and write) with missionary aiming at converting the populace to the Christian faith. In the account of Ozigi and Ocho (1981, pp. 15) "Education, for many missionary bodies, was the most important tool for conversion and expansion of the faith." In addition to literacy which Fafunwa (1974, pp. 92) refers to as "book learning," vocational training was included in the educational program. Up to 1882, the field of education was entirely left to the missionary as the colonial government in

Nigeria paid little or no attention to it. Thereafter, in 1882, the colonial administration began to pay attention to education and the focus shifted to administrative literacy and English language as the colonialists needed helpful hands in the day to day running of colonial administration.

Not many were willing to go to school due to fear of conversion as stated above. This is not only limited to the Muslim North. Thus, the few who chose to attend school automatically secured teaching or administrative jobs after completion of their programs. These trends and patterns of schooling with the view of prospering and actual prosperity after completion of study continued till Nigeria's independence. Even after independence, there are still higher demands not only for graduates but also for holders of other lower certificates.

In the 1970s through some periods in the 1980s, it is very common for family members to sell family inherited property like lands and farms to sponsor their wards to school. Expectation of material prosperity was so high that there is no fear of disappointment after huge investments. In addition, then, standard of education was top notch—very commendable—as graduates were able to distinguish themselves because they were very capable. In addition, they possess freedom—they are free to choose due to array of job opportunities to choose from. In fact, one would be considered a sociopath to say education is a scam in those glorious days because it was evident that education is a pathway to success. Because education was valued and imbued with standards, it was not free for all. One must possess a certain threshold of knowledge and exhibit some degree of intelligence to gain admission into higher institution. It was a sort of “the survival of the fittest.” In other words, the admission bar was high such that many dreamt of going to higher institution but only few could make it. It takes serious commitment to learning and

dedication to study to pass qualifying exams since examination malpractice was not pronounced, if it ever existed, let alone a menace which it has now become. The implication of all of this is that the supply of graduates was lower than the demand for them. Joblessness was not an issue; the issue was having to choose among many job options.

After Nigeria gained independence in 1960, investment in education became a key focus of development. This trend continued in the 1970s after the Nigerian civil war as there was significant investment in education up to the 1980s. Due to the deserved focus given to education in this period, standards were not compromised and education was promising. However, education started to witness underfunding gradually in the 1990s largely due to neglect, corruption, and mismanagement. This pattern—funding challenge—continued up to the 2000s till the present time (Adetunji, 2016; Monday and Mallo, 2021). This led to brain drain as many Nigerian academics started leaving the country in droves. The Nigerian educational system was suddenly orphaned due to neglect; and this gradually impacted (negatively) on education standards as examination malpractice became a menace. This fall in standards resulted in lowering the entering bar to a ridiculous level not only into Nigerian tertiary institutions but also into the country's secondary schools (Salaudeen, 2024). Acute shortage of infrastructure, dilapidation of the existing ones, and lack of teaching and learning facilities in our various institution of learning led to incessant strike often embarked upon by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU). These frequent industrial actions that invariably put Nigerian universities constantly under lock and key contributed to the haphazard and uncoordinated rise of private universities. Private primary and secondary schools have long become the norm such that parents who send their wards to public schools are seen as unserious and irresponsible. This is

because public primary and secondary schools are more or less playgrounds where nothing or little is taught and learnt. Thus, private schools began to attract huge investments by individuals whose main motive is profit-making; not academic excellence. This, rather than compensate for the deficiencies in public schools, adds more to their falling standards

Gap in Literature

Although there is a recent debate on skill versus degree certificate (and it is ongoing), one can hardly find literature on education being discussed as a scam in Nigeria. Education is unthought-of as a scam. Thus, researchers in the field of education rather focus on the falling standard of education as evident in the review of literature above. Having come to this realization—dearth of academic writings on education as a scam—this paper sets to fill the gap.

Conceptual Clarifications

This paper concentrates on three major concepts viz. education, capability, and freedom. While education is the primary concept, it argues that the real fruits or outcomes of education are capability and freedom. It is observed, and the observation is indisputably obvious, that education in Nigeria has failed to bear both freedom and capability. The duo of freedom and capability is basic requirement for development. The failure of education in Nigeria, which results from the country's unfriendly socio-economic and political environment, has led many to say that education is a scam. In this paper, education is conceptualized from different traditions and schools of thought. To clarify the two other concepts (capability and freedom), this paper heavily relies on the works of Sen and Nussbaum.

Education as a Virtue

Education is intrinsically a virtue. Its direct product is knowledge which is the opposite of ignorance. Knowledge is indisputably a praiseworthy attribute unless it

is sought for some despicable ends. Even as such, knowledge and the process of acquiring it which is education might not be blamed but the one who abuses its acquisition for ignoble ends. Hence, education is defined, according to United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2024) as “a basic human right that works to raise men and women out of poverty, level inequalities and ensure sustainable development... Education is one of the most powerful tools in lifting excluded children and adults out of poverty and is a stepping stone to other fundamental human rights.” Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2024) centres its definition on functionality of education in the society. It defines education as “the foundation for better jobs and better lives and the cornerstone for more inclusive and resilient economies and societies.” Education is empowering. From empowerment perspective, Freire (1970) defines education as a political act, a means of empowering individuals to critically analyse and transform their social realities. Sen (1999) emphasizes capability and freedom, as explained in the theory above, as the essence of education. To him, education is a key capability that enhances individual freedom and agency.

From philosophical and moral perspectives, a renowned thinker, Al-Ghazali (2015), posits that education is a means of acquiring knowledge, wisdom, and virtue, leading to the perfection of the soul. To Ibn Khaldun (1958), education is a legacy. He views education as the transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next. A leading philosopher, Aristotle (1999), defines education as the process of training man to fulfil his aim, which is to achieve happiness and virtue. For Locke (1989), education should aim at fostering virtue, wisdom, and useful skills. In terse words but with profound meaning, Dewey (1966)

asserts that education is not preparation for life; education is life itself. Kant (1960) sees education as the process of developing the moral character.

What can be gathered from the above definitions is that education is the very antithesis of scam and every word that is allied to, synonymous with, or derived from scam. In a simple word, education is virtuous and liberating. The word “scam” as used in this study contextually connotes deception and fake promise. If with the comprehensive definitions of education given above, it is said to be a scam in Nigeria by those who are considerably enlightened, it means there is need to discuss education contextually. Our context in this study is Nigeria where education promises a better life but turns out to be a scam in the view of some supposedly educated Nigerians.

Capability as Control and Freedom

To start with a quote from Nussbaum (2000, pp. 73), a person’s capability “is what Marx called “truly human,” that is, worthy of a human being.” An incapable human is not worthy of being called a being. To be a being is to be capable. To ensure and advance man’s general capability, Sen identifies the following as requirements: political freedoms, social opportunity, economic facilities, social opportunities, protective security, and transparency guarantees. Furthermore, capability includes the ability to live long and live a good life while alive. Do the current crop of educated class in Nigeria enjoy the fruits of education which are freedom and capability? Apparently, they do not.

Nussbaum (2000, pp. 78-80) gives a list of what could be called ten central capabilities. According to her, to be capable, there must be:

- Guarantee of life—ability to live; not dying prematurely;
- Bodily health—being able to have good health and adequately nourished;

- Bodily Integrity—being able to move freely from place to place without threat or assault;
- Senses, imagination, and thought—being able to use one’s sense to imagine, think, and reason which include freedom of political, artistic, and religious expression;
- Emotions—being able to love those we are attached to and grieve at their absence;
- Practical reason. This is what Nussbaum refers to as protection for the liberty of conscience about the planning of one’s life.
- Affiliation—being able to live with and toward others and engage in various forms of social interaction without discrimination
- Other species—being able to live with and show concern for animals, plants, and the world of nature.
- Play—being able to laugh, to play, to enjoy recreational activities.
- Control over One’s Environment—being able to participate effectively in political choices that govern one’s life and being able to hold property (both land and movable goods) in terms of real opportunity.

One can conclude from Nussbaum’s list that capabilities are the ability to perform basic human functions such as living a life of truly human in good health and to freely and effectively participate in social and political activities. Sartre (1956) sees human capability as the freedom to choose and create one’s own projects. It is evident from the above that control over one’s environment is key to capability. Also, at the heart of human capability lies the concept of freedom, which assumes paramount importance in our clarification endeavours, underscoring its essential role in shaping human potential.

Freedom as Development

Freedom is inexorably linked to development. This is why Sen (1999) views development as freedom or the true measure of the freedom people enjoy. While growth of gross national product, per capita incomes, and advancement in technology and industrialization are means of expanding freedom, Sen (1999, pp. 1) argues that “freedoms depend also on other determinants, such as social and economic arrangements (for example, facilities for education and health care) as well as political and civil rights (for example, the liberty to participate in public discussion and scrutiny).” To this extent, are Nigerians free despite their education? If freedom has to do with the opportunity to choose and to express one’s capability or the ability to do what one is capable of doing, Nigerians could not be said to be free. On the other hand, unfreedom arises when there is violation of civil and other political rights like inability to freely elect representatives in a democratic system because the electoral system and process are fundamentally flawed. Sen (1999) adds that unfreedom can arise due to inadequate processes or inadequate opportunities which will prevent people from achieving what they ought to achieve with little efforts. Rather than freedom, unfreedom best describes many degree-certificate-carrying Nigerians today.

Methodology

This paper relies on secondary source of data by reviewing relevant literature—journals, books, newspaper reports, opinion articles etc. Its approach is multi-faced which makes it historical, descriptive, and analytical research. In its historical approach, it traces education in Nigeria to the epoch when demand for graduates was way higher than available graduates—supply of graduates. Employing descriptive methods, it seeks to accurately describe the state of education in Nigeria. It gives account of the admission

process into high schools and tertiary institutions to arrive at an in-depth understanding of the quality and psyche of students being admitted and graduated from schools, year in, year out. Rather than accept or repudiate (without serious thought) the notion that education is a scam, it critiques, through analytical lens, the present (mis)characterization of education in Nigeria as a scam to arrive at conclusion.

When and why did Education become a Scam in Nigeria?

After a historical excursion into the trends and patterns of education in Nigeria, this paper turns to the real issue—its real objective—which is addressing the question of (mis)characterization of education in Nigeria as a scam. It should be noted that a case has been made for the desirability of education which is said to be intrinsically virtuous as shown in concept clarifications above. Universally speaking, this is what education is. However, education and its connotations have begun to take exemption in Nigeria. When did that begin and why? While many known factors contributed to the “why,” it is challenging to pinpoint the “when.” Put differently, it is difficult to state exactly when the notion of “education is a scam” began to gain acceptance among Nigerian youth. Without being too time specific, it is safe to say it started less than a decade ago and it is becoming more pronounced as Nigerian graduates continue to roam the streets—haplessly and hopelessly—in the search for non-existing jobs like aimless wanderers.

Before discussing the actual reason why education is increasingly being perceived as a scam in Nigeria, this study highlights some of the general challenges that led to the falling standards of education in the country. They are as follows: a) acute shortage in government budgetary allocation, b) non adherence to quality assurance, c) lack of qualified teachers, d) poor welfare package

and low incentives for teachers, e) examination mal practice, f) poor and inadequate infrastructure, g) poor supervision, h) corruption, etc. (Victor, Shallah, and Ibrahim 2014; Nansak, 2019; Jacob and Josiah, 2021). The factors listed above are the untreated symptoms that later degenerated into the sickening and pathological characterization of education as a scam. Some of the factors that problematize education in Nigeria in the understanding of many of its youth are as follows:

1. **Unemployment:** As the rate of unemployment keeps rising in Nigeria while many graduates who had invested time and resources in acquiring degree certificates could not secure job even as under-employed, the notion that education leads to success comes under serious scrutiny and ceases to make any appeal to many Nigerian youth. Data from the National Bureau of Statistics (2024) shows that unemployment rate among the youth was 8.4% in the Q1 2024. The statistics for NEET (those not pursuing education, not engaged in employment or training) are scary. It stands at 14.4%.
2. **False Pride and Thought of Prosperity in University Certificates:** Many homes and families inordinately think acquiring university degree is the only means to material prosperity. More than a few parents go out of their way to compromise the system and get their wards into the university without the necessary requirements just for the sake of certificate and the pride that comes with it. Many of those who get to the university without any mental preparation for it but just to boost their egos, end up as graduates bereft of capability and freedom which are the twin outcomes of real education as discussed above. Confronted with disappointments after getting into the real world as graduates without the capabilities to justify the degree(s) they have acquired,

they end up with the thought that going to school is a scam.

Lowering the Admission Bar: This is a very dangerous trend. Policy makers in the education sector are to be blamed for this. It is always argued that mass failure in qualifying examination into various higher institutions of learning prompted the lowering of UTME scores. This is tantamount to assisting failure when it deserves to be punished. Lowering admission bar is not limited only to admission into higher institutions, the ugly and mediocre act of rewarding failure is also the practice at the entry point into post primary schools as Salaudeen (2024) establishes in his critique of admission process in Nigeria. Thus, many academically weak candidates who are incapable of going through the rigor which advance learning requires ended up in the system and messed it up. This category of candidates would graduate to become liabilities for lack of capabilities to eke out a living especially as the economy nosedives. Education becomes a scam to them.

Enrolment Explosion: It is ironical to note that the more Nigerian students perform woefully in the nation's qualifying exams (SSCE and UTME) into higher institutions, the more they gain admission. Salaudeen (2024) expresses this irony when he laments that the more Nigerians fail, the more universities are established. This development has a deleterious impact on the quality of education in these higher institutions of learning (Adetunji, 2016). The cause for this is that the philosophy behind university education has drastically changed. Generally speaking, post-secondary school education is not meant for all; it should be for those that display the aptitude for the rigor involves in higher learning. Secondary school education should ideally be the highest qualification for those who do not exhibit serious passion for learning or possess great capability for scholarship. As if

the enrolment explosion is not enough, the Federal Government, through its Nigerian Student Loan (Access to Higher Education) Act, has further widened access to tertiary education. While this should be applauded as a good policy, one of its major drawbacks is that it is being implemented without any discrimination to screen out those who really need it from those who do not. Thus, the loan scheme would be abused. In addition, no serious effort is made to create jobs for these future graduates to facilitate the repayment of the loans taken for their studies (Salaudeen and Muhammad, 2024). Injecting more graduates without jobs into the already saturated labor market will further give wings to “education is a scam” narrative by disappointed jobless graduates.

Nigerian policy makers on education in the 1960s recognized this reality. As far back as 1969, among the objectives of education in Nigeria is the acquisition of appropriate skills, abilities, and competencies of both mental and physical nature as an equipment for the individual to live in his society. Highlighting the objectives of secondary school for instance, one of the recommendations of the 1969 National Curriculum Conference is very instructive. It reads: “Secondary schools will play a dual role of preparing the majority of students for a terminal education that equips them for living in society while, for the minority group of well-motivated youngsters, the secondary school will provide facilities for them to go into higher education” (Fafunwa, 1974, pp. 234-235). Higher institutions, as can be seen from the above recommendation, are meant for young well-motivated youngsters which are minority group. The latest National Policy on Education (2013) also highlights the similar functions of secondary schools, expectations that our schools have unfortunately failed to meet

To corroborate the philosophy that advanced education is meant for the minority group, the serving Registrar of the Joint

Admissions and Matriculation Board, Professor Ishaq Oloyede, criticizes the emphasis Nigerians lay on university education at the expense of skills acquisition and talent development. Making a comparison between Nigeria and the UK and the US, he asks: how many percentage of their youth acquired university education? He laments that the entire youth population in Nigeria does not have to acquire university degree for the country to develop. He concludes that Nigerians are over educated (Abdulraheem, 2022, Salaudeen, 2022). Therefore, the shifting philosophy of university education whereby every Nigerian thinks it is a must to acquire degree certificate and the government perception that all admission seekers must gain admission is one of the reasons why education suddenly became a scam. The implication is that hoards of graduates who are in superfluous supply saturate the Nigerian labor market that only demands few graduates.

Japa and the Experience of Educated Nigerians in Diaspora: “Japa” is a Nigerian colloquial used to refer to “economic migration” or “running away” from Nigeria to seek greener pasture in other countries. Having concluded that degree certificates are worthless in Nigerians, many disappointed job seekers (graduates) left the country in search of greener pastures. Outside the shore of Nigeria, many of these graduates were circumstantially compelled to do menial jobs in their various countries of destination. On reaching these countries, it dawned on them that their certificates are useless both at home and abroad. This is especially the case for those who having acquired all the degrees in Nigeria ended up doing undignified jobs that do not require literacy. This class of Nigerians migrated to foreign countries only to realize that their degree certificates do not confer on them the needed capabilities and freedom to choose. This fuels the notion that education is a scam.

The Scourge of Yahoo-Yahoo Guys:

Yahoo-Yahoo is another Nigerian colloquialism, a term that is used to describe individuals that engage in various forms of cybercrime like money laundering, fake investment schemes, email scams, romance scam, identity scam, etc. It does not require any qualification. The ability to use the computer and browse the internet to defraud and scam people is the main qualification for Yahoo-Yahoo criminal activities. The rate at which the Yahoo guys flaunt wealth—filthy lucre—as if to make mockery of those who go to school but could not make both ends meet contributes to “education is a scam” narrative. The get rich quick syndrome associated with these criminal activities is temptingly alluring to the youth who now believe going to school is a waste of time. Suleiman (2019) claims that more than 40% undergraduates and up to 60% graduates without reasonable job are recruited into the Yahoo industry. Although Suleiman did not state how he arrived at that percentage, the reality is that Nigerian youth are entranced by these fraudulent activities. Consequently, they despise and relegate education.

Nigerian Political Factors: Many Nigerian graduates who had studied hard during their sojourn in the university in order to graduate with outstanding results and prepare for the challenge of labor market got disappointed—at the end—due to Nigerian political factors. Although only few jobs are available, yet they are given to those who have connection and not necessarily on merit. It is demoralizing to see graduates with fake or poor results being given jobs because of their relationship with some highly placed individuals in government while those that actually merit them are denied. Job racketeering is also a serious challenge. It is common to find job seekers being asked to pay huge sum of money to secure jobs despite having outstanding results. Are outstanding results and excellent academic performances still relevant anymore in Nigeria? These are

some of the reasons stated by one History and International Studies graduate of Ajayi Crowther University who burnt his university certificate in a viral video in 2023. After being fed up of searching for jobs without getting any, he said without any feeling of guilt: “I burnt the educational certificates that are useless in the country” (Hamid, 2023, para 3). Nigerian education does not give the educated ones the needed capability and freedom. In a situation where graduates are indeed capable, the labor market pays no attention to their capability as attention is shifted to the ability to pay or the ability to be connected. To get meaningful jobs in Nigeria after graduation, there is need for what, in local parlance, is referred to as godfathers. All the aforementioned explains why education is seen as a scam.

Mobile Phone-Based Mining: this is also known as mobile crypto mining or crypto tapping. It involves using smartphones to mine crypto currencies. This has gained a wide popularity among Nigerian youth due to some economic opportunities it allegedly provides (Babate, Abubakar, and Ishola, 2024). In addition, no serious education, which is now being ridiculed as a scam, is required to mine. The youth are so crazy about this coin-tapping-craze so much that it consumes most of their time. Hence, Olaoluwa (2024, para 1) aptly describes it as “money making scheme in town, which idle youths and quick money seekers have grabbed with such zeal as if their life depends on it.” This tap-to-earn crypto is demeaning the need for education by the youth who should be busy learning within the four walls of our schools. To this youth, education is a scam. The mined crypto currencies come in different categories such as Bitcoin, Bitcoin Cash, Ethereum, Litecoin, Memecoin, Notcoin, TapSwap etc.

Conclusion

This paper critiques the notion that education is a scam. It investigates if the characterization of education as a scam is

appropriate or it (education) is a victim of mischaracterization. It finds that over the ages, education has been a virtue and will always be a virtue because it is intrinsically virtuous. Education is conceptualized from pedagogical, moral, philosophical, and even developmental perspectives. There is uniformity of thoughts from all these perspectives that education is a cherished legacy that bears good fruits. Thus, in principle, it is mischaracterization to say education is a scam. However, when education could not bear good fruits in terms of capability and freedom (social emancipation) which should ideally come with it, it loses its value. Yet education is not to be blamed but its custodians who mismanaged it and disoriented people about its ideals. This is the situation in Nigeria. Are the disoriented youths to be blamed for thinking that education is a scam? In this critique, though we refute the notion that education is a scam, the youths are not to be blamed entirely for falling victims of such a belief. This is due to the lived reality of graduate unemployment and the existential failure of education in Nigeria to make life better and promising. These are the discomfoting factors that birthed the mischaracterization of education as a scam.

Therefore, this paper concludes that education is not a scam. However, within the Nigerian context, one will be arguing against reality to say education is not a scam due to government's disarticulated policies on education on the one hand and non-implementation of laudable educational policies on the other hand. This in turn makes education ridiculous and a ridiculed pathway to success.

Recommendations

There is no gainsaying the fact that education in Nigeria is critically ill; it needs life-sustaining treatment. The youth that are direct beneficiaries of education—and need it most—have now begun to mischaracterize it

as a scam. To disabuse the youth of this misconceived thought about education, all stakeholders—governments, school administrators, parents/guardians, religious and opinion leaders—must come together. All hands must be on deck. Government should work hard with determination to salvage this ugly trend. Below are some recommendations:

- Government at all levels should massively invest in education, standardize it, and modify it to fit into modern knowledge-driven economy. The country's investment in education is still far below UNESCO threshold (26% budgetary allocation) for developing countries.
- Teachers' welfare should be prioritized so that they will not be tempted to compromise standards by aiding and abetting examination mal-practice and other fraudulent practices that are rife in Nigerian educational system.
- There should be discipline and quality assurance at all levels of our educational system to ensure that students are taught what they ought to be taught and actually merit the credits and distinctions recorded in their results.
- The bar for admission requirements should be raised to screen out candidates who are not academically sound enough to be admitted into higher institutions. A situation whereby candidates score 140 out of 400 (which is F9) and still gain admission into our tertiary institutions further destroys the system.
- Students should be given orientation, right from the basic level of education, to know that tertiary education is not for all. It is for the few who display appreciable ability for scholarship.
- The concept of dignity of labor should be promoted. Every lawful job and profession should be dignified. Nigerians with practical and technical training and those whose jobs do not require any

training should be respected and their status in the society should be raised through a better wage structure. This will help in attitudinal change towards, and blur the difference between, the so-called white-collar and blue-collar jobs.

- To put enrollment explosion in our higher institution under check, technical, commercial and comprehensive school should, in co-operation with businesses, industries and government (as the case may be), tailor their curriculum in line with the available jobs in the labor markets. This will equip Nigerian secondary school-leavers with the necessary skills, values and understandings to sustain them on whichever job/career they ultimately choose.
- Job creation should be prioritized through massive industrialization and revitalization of moribund industries to absorb teeming graduates and restore the value education. If government is successful in creating jobs, merit and competency should be made the only criteria in job recruitment process.

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INFLUENCE OF ALLOWANCES ON TEACHERS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC POST BASIC SCHOOLS IN DALA EDUCATIONAL DIRECTORATE, KANO STATE, NIGERIA

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This research examined the Influence of providing allowances on teachers' job performance in public post basic schools of Dala Educational Directorate in Kano State. Teachers' performance was regarded as the dependent variable, while providing allowances was regarded as the independent variable. The population of the study is Vice Principals of Public Post Basic Schools of Dala Educational Zone with a total number of 54. Research Adviser (2006) was employed as a guide for the sample size of the study which is 43. The study adopted a Descriptive (Survey) research design with quantitative approach only. The Data Collection Instrument was a researcher developed questionnaire which was validated by the supervisor and an expert to develop content validity. Data was analyzed using Descriptive Statistics such as frequencies and percentages. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was employed to calculate manually the reliability coefficient $r=0.85$ of the instrument used. The findings of the study revealed that the provision of allowances for teachers in public post basic schools does not influence teachers' job performance. This is because the mean of the respondent that agreed with the construct of allowances is 5.75 which is far lower than the general mean of 14.3. Also the mean of agreed opinion on teachers' job performance is 28.8 which is greater than the general mean of 14.3. Hence provision of allowances doesn't influence teachers' job performance. The researcher recommended that education policy makers, implementers, school principals' should ensure that teachers are remunerated well to motivate them in their job. This can be achieved through offering incentives and rewarding the best teachers whose students perform better in their subjects. This will motivate them to improve on curriculum delivery. It is also recommended that principals, SMCs should pay teachers allowances for disciplinary committee work, guidance and counseling, staff meetings, lessons and marking tests. This will encourage Teachers to be more serious and attractive to the profession and also prepare them to remain on the profession till retirement without thinking of shifting to another profession.

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Introduction

This study is on the influence of providing allowances on job performance among Post Basic School teachers in public schools. Generally, in schools, the challenge for administrators is to develop highly motivated teachers who are actively engaged in teaching and learning, open to new ideas and approaches, committed to students, and change over the lifetime of their teaching careers. Providing allowances to teachers in public

schools may play an important role in motivating teaching and learning excellence.

It is presumed that motivated teachers are more likely to motivate students to learn in the classroom to ensure the implementation of educational reforms and feelings of satisfaction and fulfilment. While teacher motivation is fundamental to the teaching and learning process, several teachers in Nigeria are not highly motivated. Many challenges need to be addressed, especially the current naira

devaluation which gave rise to a high inflation rate in our commodities coupled with an increase in fuel price, all of which may lead teachers and other personnel to a terrible situation.

Providing allowances in teaching services makes teachers happy and more attractive in school settings. Providing allowances may have an effect on teachers' morale and motivation, and thus, their performance. The school environment is an interpretation of the allowances provided in this study. The key factors are allowances that commensurate with services, extra-curricular activities that attract allowances, and exams and other responsibility allowances that are paid promptly.

The observations given above should be taken seriously, and investigation is therefore necessary to achieve the educational goals of every learning institution in the Dala Education Directorate.

Methodology

Research design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The data collected aimed to determine the extent to which different conditions could be obtained among the subjects. The design is concerned more with 'What' rather than 'How' or 'Why' something has happened in statistical form. The general mean for comparison was 14.33. The mean was the average opinion of respondents who agreed, disagreed, or were undecided. A total of 43 respondents were divided into three (3) to obtain the general mean or comparison mean for the study.

Population of the study

The population for this study comprised all public post-basic school vice-principals in the Dala Educational Zone. The study included a target population of forty three (43) public post-basic schools with 54 respondents. The study recognises relevant demographics, including academic qualifications, years of teaching experience, and years spent in the present school.

Table 4.1 Summary of the population

Education Zone	No. of Senior Secondary School	No. of respondents
Dala	43	54

Source: *Department of Planning, Research and Statistics (2017), Kano State*

Sample size

The sample size of the population was obtained using the Research Advisor (2006) table for sample size determination. Forty

three (43) respondents were selected out Of the 54 respondents within the Dala Educational Zone, 43 were selected to represent the study population.

Table 4.2 Summary of the sample

Educational Zone	No. of respondents	Sample size
Dala	54	43

Source: *Department of Planning, Research and Statistics (2017), Kano State*

Sampling Technique

According to Wiersma (1995), a sample is a small target population selected systematically from the study. The sampling technique is a research procedure used to select a given member of the subjects from a

target population. In this research, vice principals were chosen from each school to give the number of sample size for the research. Purposive sampling was adopted. According to Bernard (2002), purposive sampling is a nonrandom technique that does not require

underlying theories or a set number of participants. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge and experience.

Data Collection Instrument

A questionnaire is a research instrument that collects data from a large sample (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Questionnaires were developed by the researcher with the help of an expert to gather information and data from respondents (vice principals) from various schools. Questionnaires are widely used in education to obtain information about current conditions and practices and to quickly and precisely enquire about attitudes and opinions. The scale for the scoring procedure was presented and scored as Agreed=3, Disagreed=2, and Undecided=1.

Content validity was used to check the representation of research questions in the questionnaire. The instrument was pilot-tested using the test-retest method. Pearson product-moment correlation was employed to calculate the r-value ($r=0.85$), implying that the instrument is reliable.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Answering Research Question

The research question of this study is as follows:

Research Question

- To what extent do providing allowances influence teachers' job performance in public post-basic schools?

To answer this question, a questionnaire with four sub-constructs was designed and administered. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent of each perceived factor of providing allowances under Teacher Motivation. A summary of the findings of this study is presented in the table below. The mean from each objective was compared with the general mean to answer the research questions. Any mean found above the general mean is regarded as high extent, the mean found below the general mean is regarded as low extent, and the mean equal to the general mean is regarded as average.

In this section, a questionnaire with four sub-constructs is designed and administered. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of each of the perceived factors of providing allowances under Teacher Motivation. A summary of the findings of this study is presented in the table below.

Table 4.6 Influence of providing Allowances on teachers' job Performance

Statement	A	%	D	%	U	%
i. Allowances that commensurate with services are provided	8	19	31	72	4	9
ii. Extra-curricular activities attract allowances	3	7	36	84	4	9
iii. Exams and other responsibility allowances are paid promptly	4	9	37	86	2	5
iv. Teachers are rewarded for their inputs	8	19	32	74	3	7
Mean	5.75	13.5	34	79	3.25	7.5

Source: *Researcher's field survey (2019)*

The above table reveals that 31/72% of the respondents disagreed with the first sub-construct which states allowances that

commensurate with services are provided, while 8/19% agreed. The majority of respondents were not in support of the first sub-

construct, implying that the majority of respondents believed that school management was not concerned about providing allowances that commensurate with services. Therefore, the status of the first subconstruct was unsatisfactory.

In the same table, 36/84% of the respondents disagreed that extra-curricular activities attract allowances, whereas 3/7% agreed. The majority of the respondents disagreed, implying that school management does not care to pay allowances for extra-curricular activities which could be a factor in demotivation towards job performance.

The third sub-construct revealed that 37/86% of the respondents disagreed, whereas 4/9% agreed. The majority of respondents disagreed that exams and other responsibility allowances are paid promptly, implying that the status of the third sub-construct is unsatisfactory.

The fourth sub-construct, that is, Teachers were rewarded for their inputs; 32/74% of the respondents disagreed, while 8/19% agreed. The majority of the respondents believed that school management did not compensate teachers or reward them for their input. From the findings recorded, provision of allowances could be rated to a low extent in public post basic schools of the Dala zone, since the mean of agreed 5.75 is much lower than the general mean of 14.3 even though the provision of allowances to teachers plays a vital role in motivating a teacher toward the efficient discharge of duties. Unfortunately, this is not the case for public schools in the Dala Zone. Therefore, poor provision of allowances may have a negative influence on teachers' job performance.

Summary of the Findings

The findings of the study revealed that poor provision of allowances for teachers in public post-basic schools may cause setbacks in teachers' job performance. This is because the mean of the respondents that agreed with the construct of allowances is 5.75 which is far

lower than the general mean of 14.3. In addition, the mean of disagreed opinion on the provision of allowances to teachers was 34 which is far greater than the general mean of 14.3. Hence, non-provision of allowances negatively influences teachers' job performance.

Discussions of Findings

The findings of the study show that there is a significant influence of non-provision of allowances on teachers' job performance in public post-basic schools in the Dala educational zone. This is evident from table 4.6. It was revealed that 72% of the respondents disagreed with the first sub-construct which states allowances that commensurate with services are provided, while 19% agreed. The majority of respondents are not in support of the first sub-construct above, implying that the majority of respondents believed that School management was not concerned about providing allowances that commensurate with services. Therefore the status of the first sub-construct is unsatisfactory.

As shown in Table 4.6, 84% of the respondents disagreed that extra-curricular activities attract allowances, whereas 7% agreed. The majority of respondents disagreed, implying that school management does not care to pay allowances for extra-curricular activities.

It was also revealed in Table 4.6, on the third sub-construct, that 86% of the respondents disagreed, while 9% agreed. The majority of respondents disagreed that exams and other responsibility allowances were paid promptly, implying that the status of the third sub-construct was unsatisfactory.

As regards the fourth sub-construct, i.e. Teachers were rewarded for their inputs; 74% of the respondents disagreed, while 19% agreed. The majority of the respondents believed that the school management doesn't compensate teachers, or reward them for their inputs. From the findings recorded, provision of allowances could be rated to a low extent in

public post basic schools in the Dala zone, since the mean of the respondents who agreed was 5.75 which is much lower than the general mean of 14.3 even though provision of allowances to teachers is believed to play a vital role in motivating teachers toward the efficient discharge of duties. Unfortunately, this was not the case for public schools in the Dala Zone. Therefore, poor allowance provision may negatively influence teachers' job performance. This finding contrasts with the findings of Mazaki (2017). He found that allowances had no statistically significant effect on teachers' performance in public primary schools in the Bugisu sub-region. This research finding is also in contrast with the study by Bello and Jakada (2017) on the relationship between monetary rewards and teachers' performance in selected public secondary schools in Kano. They concluded that monetary rewards (cash bonuses) do not affect employee performance. The findings are also in contrast with those of Uyanne, Badamas, and Balogun (2020) on the influence of motivation on teachers' effectiveness in Ilorin West local government, Kwara State. The findings revealed that teachers' effectiveness is low and there was no significant influence of motivation on teachers' effectiveness; therefore, according to the findings of the study, provision of allowances has little or no influence on teachers' job performance in public post-basic schools.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study analyzes and discusses the influence of providing allowances on teachers' job performance in public post-basic schools of the Dala Zonal Education Directorate, Kano State. From the findings of this study, it can be concluded that poor provision of allowances to teachers in public post-basic schools may have a negative effect on their performance. This is supported by the data presented above. In this regard, the researcher provides some recommendations.

Teachers should be remunerated to motivate them to work. This can be achieved by offering incentives and rewarding the best teachers, whose students perform better in their subjects. This motivated them to improve their curriculum delivery. It is also recommended that principals and SMCs pay teachers allowances for disciplinary committee work, guidance and counselling, staff meetings, lessons, marking tests, etc.

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SKILLS ACQUISITION AND ITS IMPACT ON EDUCATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION IN NIGERIA

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Education is not only the process of acquiring formal knowledge taught in schools, but also a process that is geared towards changing the behaviour, attitudes and abilities that will be transformed into positive change as well as social and economic transformation of individuals and the society. Skills Acquisition Training Programmes are the recent strategies used by most governments to serve the triple benefits of imparting formal education, entrepreneurial and technical skills that lead to the poverty reduction of the beneficiaries. This study is aimed at assessing the contributions of the different training programmes on improving the literacy level, self-sufficiency, self-reliance and the poverty reduction of the trainees. 195 questionnaires were the sample size used to collect data from the trainees of computer, tailoring, welding, carpentry, and interlocking while interview was conducted to the administrators of the training programmes in some selected SATC, in Borno state. Similarly, multivariate regression analysis with the help of AMOS was used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. The study revealed that SATP have significantly impacted on improving the literacy level and poverty reduction of the beneficiaries, hence recommended for the continuous sustenance of the Programme to reduce adult illiteracy, poverty level and enhance national development.

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Introduction

Education is the cumulative experience gained by people or groups of people to change their behaviour, attitudes, and capabilities for transformation into a positive contribution to themselves and their community. Generally, knowledge is disseminated through the social control of individuals and the transformation of societies. It is also a means of understanding that every society, community, or state needs to be relevant, functional, and fulfil its social obligations (Ajani, 2015). The origin and beginning of knowledge and education cannot be easily traced. However, from the

earliest of times, industrialised nations like Japan, Britain, America, Germany, and others used skill acquisition to reduce out-of-school children, drug addicts, destitutes, prostitutes, and unemployment and promote economic development (Nwanaka & Samuel, 2011). Due to the overwhelming importance of education for individual and national development, there have been a series of reforms in Nigeria's educational system over the years through the national policy on education to enable citizens to acquire formal, technical, vocational, and other forms of education (Subban, 2007). These reforms were geared towards ensuring that the

growing population of the country was prepared to manage individual and national development in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy. This is because an educated nation is a free and secure nation that produces competent, hardworking, productive, and self-reliant people who assist the nation in achieving socioeconomic and national development.

The earliest reforms refer to education as the possession of a knowledge-based certificate from the primary, secondary, and tertiary schools in formal institutions of learning, where a university graduate with the possession of a certificate in a professional field lacks the technical skill that will earn him/her the mastery of the field and ends up in government payroll without putting the certificate into meaningful practice (Street, 2016). That is why the recent reforms in the education of Nigeria introduced vocational and technical skills into the school curriculum to prepare teaming youths with a knowledge of skill and technical competence rights from primary to tertiary education so that they can match the certificate obtained and the skill acquired to productively contribute to the nation's economic development by increasing their income and consequently leading to poverty reduction (Majumda and Bismas, 2017).

In the last two decades, there has been an emphasis on entrepreneurship, skill acquisition, and vocational and technical education in public schools and government agencies in local, state, and federal governments to reduce extreme poverty, out-of-school children, unemployment, and increase individuals' income-earning capabilities to make them self-reliant. Babagana and Kaur (2022) noted that formal education taught in educational institutions alone does not prepare teaming youth to be self-reliant and actively engage in the nation's economic development. Furthermore, in the reports of the National Bureau of Statistics

NBS (2022), it is clear that poverty and unemployment are increasing, and adult illiteracy and out-of-school children are also increasing.

To address the scourge of these menaces and ensure self-sufficiency and self-reliance, governments across the states have shifted their policies towards embarking on entrepreneurship and skill acquisition, where both men and women are recruited in skill acquisition programs to learn specific skills such as carpentry, computers, welding, tailoring, embroidery, interlocking, block making, dying, hair fliriting fattening, and many other skills so that at the end of their training, they will become trained skilled workers and start their businesses to earn more income and reduce poverty. One good uniqueness of the skill acquisition programs, especially those in Borno state, is that they were designed to supplement the insufficient knowledge of formal education to the trainees apart from the practical skills they acquire. There are mostly class teaching sessions where basic education is taught to trainees with emphasis on subjects such as English language, Mathematics Basic Science, Introduction to Technology, and Civic Education. The overall priority is to make those adult men and women, school dropouts, and vulnerable people, especially those living with disabilities, learn basic communication skills, basic numerical and arithmetic skills, and educate them on their total way of life. United Nations Economic and Socio-cultural Organisations UNESCO (2023) estimates that the acquisition of basic reading skills, especially in low-income countries, could make people escape extreme poverty and consequently enable adults to complete secondary education to reduce global poverty. This can be supported by the view of Babagana (2022) that skills acquisition programs, if properly designed and implemented, are veritable tools that will supplement the insufficiency of education in

our societies and make citizens self-sufficient and self-reliant by contributing meaningfully to their individual and national development.

Several studies have been conducted on the impact of skill acquisition training programs on poverty alleviation (Abbas, 2013; Babagana & Kaur, 2022; Abadzi, 1994; Acharya & Chandra, 2019; Dapel, 2018). However, these studies have failed to critically examine the contributions of skills acquisition programs on the educational development and poverty alleviation of trainees, with emphasis on specific variables such as adult literacy, out-of-school children, and self-empowerment of the trainees of the different programs. Therefore, this study investigates the impact of skills acquisition programs on the education and poverty alleviation of trainees in Borno State, Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were achieved in this study.

- To assess the contributions of the different training programmes on improving the literacy level and poverty reduction of the beneficiaries in Borno State, Nigeria
- To examine the extent of literacy acquired by empowering beneficiaries to be self-sufficient and self-reliant in Borno State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses for the Study

This study was guided by the following null hypothesis:

- **H₀₁** there is no significant relationship between training programmes and improvement in literacy level and poverty reduction of beneficiaries in Borno State, Nigeria.
- **H₀₂** Literacy level acquired has no significant relationship with empowering the trainees to be self-sufficient and self-reliant in Nigeria

Literature Review

Marcus and Moore (2003) highlighted the significance of education in alleviating

poverty and stressed that a qualitative formal education guarantees employment opportunities, thereby reducing unemployment and ensuring socioeconomic development of both individuals and nations which will directly help in poverty alleviation of its citizens. Berg (2008), added that the probability of finding employment rises with higher levels of education. While Gundlach, Pablo and Weisert (2002), state that access to education positively affects income distribution, allowing the educated poor to grow and expand their livelihood. This means that focusing on policies that empower educational development directly or indirectly drastically reduces poverty and positively affects people in the development process. While contributing to the nexus between education and poverty alleviation, Sen (1999) added that the direct contribution of education to development is related to freedom and well-being of the people while the indirect contribution relates to social change, production, and economic prosperity consequently leading to poverty alleviation

Furthermore, education does not necessarily go to the formal institutions of government or private institutions where school activities occur. However, it refers to anything gained that will positively impact the individual and his community. The categorisation of whether education should be formal, non-formal, nomadic, or whatsoever, depends on the overall objective which is to impart knowledge of behavioural, attitudinal, and moral change to individuals so that they can contribute to social control and the development of their communities. The mobilisation of the uneducated, poor, and underdeveloped citizens, whose potentials are untapped to attain a sufficient level of education, became an inevitable aspect of preparing individuals to be self-reliant. In this situation, skill acquisition is the best alternative to provide citizens with the basic required education that will complement formal, non-formal, and other forms of education.

Thus, Acharya and Chandra (2019) maintained that most universities that offer education are positively affected by developing generic skills and attitudes among students, but not by equipping students with various skills that will make them self-sufficient. Most skills acquisition training centres are designed in such a way that lectures or formal education teaching and learning are taught in classes where trainees, especially the uneducated, out-of-school, and even those who have not received formal education are taught basic literacy education in addition to vocational and technical training at a different session. Abiodun (2019) reported that out-of-school (OOSC) in Nigeria is almost 37% which equals 9 million as of 2013 and further increased to 14 million in 2019.

Consequently, dropout children are engaged in one form of skill acquisition training or the other ending up in apprenticeships in some specific vocations. Although the report further indicated that the out-of-school children in Nigeria are divided into the southern part (especially Igbo speaking) with a prevalent problem of boy child dropout syndrome, the boys opted for businesses and were unserious about furthering their education. In the north, there is a girl child school dropout syndrome in which culture, exposure, religion, and other factors have prompted them to go out of school. In this situation, skill acquisition is designed to equip people with the relevant vocational and technical skills that will make them out of poverty and contribute meaningfully to national development.

The advantage of this training program is that the trainees, especially the uneducated ones, will have access to basic literacy education and, at the same time, learn vocational and technical training skills, which will eventually take them out of poverty. This reason, UNESCO (2007) concludes that most of the victims of out-of-

school children result from rural areas from families with low- or no-income earning opportunities caused by poor educational background and who cannot afford to escape poverty. UNESCO's (2007) report shows that lack of access to education is the cause and effect of poverty because poverty is mostly measured with a range of family background indicators such as households or parental education, which reflects the outcome of the next generation and consequently bonds them in the web of chronically induced poverty.

Another advantage of skill acquisition training programs is that they are designed to serve the triple purpose of imparting knowledge, training, and exposure to trainees. Here, a graduate in skills acquisition-related study may need more practical know-how of the course, so that he might gain more practical skill. There needs to be a combination of theory and practice, in which education is critical. In the end, if they become conversant with the skill, they will be exposed to the environment to exploit the skill acquired and transform it meaningfully into the development of themselves and the community. Street (2016) observed that countries invest in education because of individual and community development and conceive literacy as the basic skill that is fundamental to self-sufficiency because it goes beyond reading and writing as well as acquiring practical and theoretical knowledge.

Citing cases from the work of Mantra (2000) revealed that in South Africa, a wide inequality exists between the educated and the uneducated in terms of high earning capacity, where educated citizens or households have a higher chance of earning income than uneducated households or citizens. Similarly, educated households in Pakistan have far shifted towards a labour-induced source of income, from farming activities to non-labour income-earning

activities, to earn a living satisfactorily (Fafchamps & Quisumbing, 1999). The situation is also the same in China, where Goh, Luo, and Zhu (2009), observed that there is a wide difference and high level of income earning capacity within the segment of the societies that have a high level of education that households in those societies have increasingly wide income gaps than households with a low level of education in China. It further concurs with Shirazi's (1994) findings that, looking at the case of Pakistan, the proportion of households with high educational levels demonstrates higher income capacity and development than that of households with low or no formal education. While this is the same in India, as indicated by Datt and Ravallion (1998), there are differences in poverty trends in India, where places with a high level of education experienced better and improved yields of farm and agricultural products than places with a low level of education. This shows that education drives all development sectors because it allows the use of skills, knowledge, competence, and creativity to exploit new and existing ideas to improve one's situation. Geda et al. (2005) concurred with this statement and reported that in Kenya, families that lacked education have the highest chances of remaining poor and that the greatest tool for determining the poor in Kenya is the level of attainment of the education of the individual or his/her families.

This analysis showed that nations that prioritise their educational systems have far-reaching impacts on the poverty alleviation of their citizens than nations with less priority to education. Barro (1996), states that an increase in per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) results from an increase in education and high demand for school, which invariably leads to an increase in income and high purchasing power of the individuals. Nevertheless, the higher the policies and

programs targeted at uplifting education in a nation, the lower the level of poverty in that particular nation, and regardless of the vicious cycle of poverty, it can be broken down easily with the weapon of educational development in that particular nation.

Similarly, Happer, Marcus, and Moore (2003) suggested that countries need to have a higher percentage of their budgetary provisions in the educational sector of their country, while Verner (2004) and Self and Grabowski (2004) aligned with the same view and put forward that an increase in income goes a long way to ensure educational development rapidly. Subban (2007) stated that low-income people have a low chance of employment, sense of belonging, participation, and responsiveness in their community. Skill acquisition plays a vital role in educating people and ensuring affordable income by utilising the acquired skills to establish a business that will help generate income to cater to individual and community development.

Another variant of education is literacy and adult education. Under this system, those who cannot attend formal education are absorbed and given formal education to supplement the insufficiency of learned people in society. Furthermore, through Nigerian educational reform policies, several efforts have been made to provide affordable, accessible, and convenient education through literacy campaigns. Still, graduates have yet to be able to compete favourably in the quest for nation building. Abadzi (1994) once said that if the "illiterate poor learned to read, they have access to information that would improve their lives".

The necessity for a paradigm shift from conventional or formal Education for All skill acquisition can be seen from the reports of Education for All (EFA, 2020) that there are more than 64 million adults which represent (56.9%) that are illiterate adults in Nigeria, despite the numerous efforts made to

bridge the education gap in Nigeria. The report further suggested that Nigeria could only ensure sustainable growth and development if it massively invested in vocational education and skill acquisition. Adult literacy syndrome includes dropping out of school, and skill acquisition can be the best alternative to accommodate the dropped-out children and make them productive members of society. The International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED, 1997) considers Adult Education as an organised educational process with formal and other contents taught in educational institutions with an added apprenticeship in the curriculum, whereby persons above the age of 15 are enrolled to further their technical, vocational, and skills qualification to contribute to themselves and the nation at large. This means that it is the acquisition of experience and knowledge acquired by an individual or group during their lives that can be applied to pursue economic and social goals that will ensure educational attainment and a better adult life (Broucher & Laval, 1998).

Education relates to skill acquisition and poverty reduction by enabling individuals to learn and upgrade their learned skills through continuous training and retraining which will assist them in improving their socioeconomic well-being. While making more clarifications on the contributions of education to poverty reduction, Ozoemena and Patricia (2013) explained that education is designed in study programs such as art and crafts, economics, history, hygiene, and agriculture which brings individuals into planning programs so that they can acquire practical skills for individual improvement and societal development. Societies that depend on reading and writing without meaningfully translating the skill acquired into practice tend to have no meaningful development in that society. Hence, skill acquisition is

designed to supplement people with low levels of education, contribute to their personal and societal development, and reduce poverty reduction in their status.

Theoretical Framework

Social Learning Theory

This study adopts Bandura's (1977) social learning theory as its theoretical framework. The theory was based on the belief that direct experience is responsible for imparting knowledge, skills, and learning that will positively shape the behaviour of individuals to become useful members of society. The basic attributes of this theory include practical knowledge, skill acquisition, learning experience, and self-reliance. The theory is a behaviourist and practical approach to learning because it relies on the acquisition of skills as a direct positive consequence that will make the individual reduce poverty and self-sufficiency. The theory went further and emphasised that developing the intellectual capacity of individuals would go a long way in preparing them to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. This theory is relevant to this study in the sense that it links education to skill acquisition and skills acquired to living standards, such as access to food, health, housing, and income, which will reduce poverty. This is the bedrock behind the establishment of the skills acquisition training programs because once the individuals are properly educated, they will have the knowledge and skill that will enable them to utilise the skill acquired to earn meaningful income, which will make them have poverty reduction and self-reliance. The relevance of this theory to the study can further be justified by Roy's (2018) suggestion that in order to reduce poverty, make individuals independent of their income, and determine their future, there is a need to have a reliable mechanism through appropriate anti-poverty policies to support them with better education. In this case skill

acquisition training programmes are designed to equip individuals with a relevant knowledge and skill that will make the individuals to have a better future.

Methodology

This study was based on a survey research design that involved the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The quantitative data were sourced from the respondents, comprising the trainees of computer training, carpentry, welding, tailoring, and interlocking in the skill acquisition training programs (SATP) through administering questionnaires. The population for the quantitative data comprised the trainees of the training programs, as mentioned earlier from the period 2015-2023 which stood at (7,588). A multistage cluster sampling technique was used, and the population was divided into four clusters for easy determination of the sample size among the different training centres. Then, in each of the training centres, the beneficiaries of the different training programs were stratified in different strata according to their specialisations. Therefore, from the strata obtained in the different training centres identified within the population, a convenient random sampling technique was used to administer the questionnaire to the sample size of 195 respondents who arrived using the Yamani proportionate sampling formula. Hence, a closed-ended questionnaire was used to collect data from trainees in different training programs. The collected data were analysed using SPSS and AMOS. Consequently, a multivariate regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses formulated for this study.

Qualitative data were sourced from the training program administrators. This is in addition to the records utilised from the relevant ministry, National Bureau of Statistics, SATPs, previous works, and other relevant published materials in the subject area that were used as secondary data for the

study. The population of the administrators of the training programmes for the interview consist of thirty (10) administrators that cuts across two principals, six vice principals, six headteachers, twelve coaches, four cleaners and labourers in the selected training centers in order to determine the sample size for the interview based on the recommendations of Walker (2007), for the determination of qualitative data sample size. Furthermore, a structured interview guide was designed and administered to administrators, containing open-ended questions that allowed them to freely express their views, ideas, and opinions. The interview is intended to support or criticise the trainees' responses to ascertain whether the opinion they have given is worthwhile. The time taken to interview each question was no more than 7–10 minutes, and the interview guide captured all the objectives and research questions of the study. The collected data were analysed using a narrative qualitative data analysis technique.

Results Presentation and Analysis

The presentation of results in this section was based on the demographic profile of the respondents, the results obtained from the respondents, the test of hypotheses, and the discussion of the major findings obtained and merging of results of the quantitative, qualitative, and the outcome of the hypotheses test.

Data Presentation

The quantitative results obtained from this study were based on valid 181 questionnaires retrieved from beneficiaries of the different training programs that participated in the study. The response rate was adequate because it represented the highest percentage of respondents.

Demographic Data of the Beneficiaries

The responses of the respondents with the highest percentage in their demographic profile were considered for presentation in this study.

Table 4.2 Demographic Profile of the Respondents

SN	VARIABLE	RESPONSES (frequency)	PERCENT
1	Age	25 years to less than 35 years (85)	46 %
2	Gender	Male (130)	71 %
3	Occupation	Farmers (74)	40 %
4	Educational Qualification	Non-Formal Education (69)	38 %
5	Years of Experience	4 years to less than 8 years (140)	77 %
6	Skill acquired most	Computer training (74)	40 %

Responses that have the highest agreement score were chosen for the analysis

In Table 4.2, the age classification of the respondents shows that 85 respondents representing 46 % were within the age bracket of 25 years to less than 35 years, while majority of the respondents (130) were male, with 71% responses. The occupation of the majority of the respondents were farmers, with 74 representing 40 %, and the educational qualification of the respondents showed that most of the respondents were said to have non-formal education, with 69 representing 38.12 %. Meanwhile the results showed that the years of experience of the majority of the respondents were 4 years to less than 8 years, with 140 responses representing 77%, while the skill that has highly contributed to enhancing the education of the beneficiaries is computer training with 74 responses representing 40.88%.

Interview Results with the Administrators of the Training Programmes

How have the skill acquisition training programmes impacted on reducing the literacy level and poverty alleviation of the beneficiaries?

This interview question aligns with achieving the objective of the study, that is, to assess the impact of SATP on improving the literacy level and poverty alleviation of its trainees in Nigeria. In this interview, the administrators were asked to share their views on how the training programmes changed the educational status of the trainees, especially those who had never attended formal education, and to share their experiences on the

improvement that has been achieved in terms of imparting the knowledge of basic literacy education to the trainees enrolled without the background of formal education. In this interview, the participants' opinions were summed and are presented below:

It was revealed in this interview with the administrators of the training centres that most of the program's trainees did not have a good educational background, and some completely lacked formal education. However, as a result of their enrolment in the training centres, they could read, write, and count numbers compared to when they joined the training programs. Therefore, this improvement in their educational status has significantly assisted them in easily learning various skills which enable them to use the skills acquired to earn a living and, by extension, have poverty reduction in their status.

Has the improvement in the educational status of trainees empowered them to be self-sufficient and self-reliant?

In this interview with the administrators of the training centres, it was revealed that the adult education and basic literacy program of the SATP have assisted the trainees, especially the women, to have knowledge of formal education, supplement their lack of educational background, and enable them to acquire certificates after the completion of the program which will enable them to further their education. They further stressed that adult men and women enrolled in the SATP have become educated apart from the skills acquired, while some of them

are now working. In particular, those trained in computer literacy programs have now become computer literate, and they can perfectly operate computers and earn a living from the computer literacy they have earned. Some of these trainees started their own businesses after the completion of their training, while others were employed in both private and public organisations as

secretaries. This has helped them have a meaningful life after the completion of their programme.

Hypotheses Testing

In this section, fulfilling the entire regression analysis criterion, the results of the hypotheses test using multivariate regression analysis are presented.

Table 4.4.1 Hypotheses Testing

Endogenous Variable	Exogenous Variables	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P value	Decision
F1	F6	0.052	0.049	1.041	0.016	Significant
F2	F6	0.001	0.042	0.049	0.009	Significant

(Ho₁) Hypothesis one; there is no significant relationship between literacy level and poverty reduction of trainees in Skill Acquisition training programs in Nigeria. The results obtained from the hypothesis test show that this hypothesis is significant. This means that there is a significant relationship between literacy level and the poverty reduction of trainees in skill acquisition training programs, and the decision is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted that there is a significant relationship between the literacy level and poverty reduction of the trainees of Skill Acquisition Training Programmes in Nigeria.

(Ho₂) Hypotheses two; Literacy level acquired has no significant relationship with empowering beneficiaries to be self-sufficient and self-reliant; results obtained from the test of hypothesis showed that this hypothesis is significant. This means that the literacy level acquired by the trainees has empowered them to be self-sufficient and self-reliant, and the decision is significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected, and the alternate hypothesis accepted that the improvement in the literacy level of the trainees has a

significant relationship with empowering them to be self-sufficient and self-reliant.

Discussion of the Major Findings and Results Merging

From the demographic profile of the trainees, their educational qualifications showed that most of them did not have a formal education, with 92 of them representing (47.17%). This showed that the SATP had impacted the educational status of the trainees who did not attend formal education after graduating from the program. This is in line with the suggestions of Noor et al. (2017) that clear enrolment procedures that will allow unemployed, uneducated youths and women to participate in the adult and literacy programs of the SATP will help trainees alleviate poverty and access to better education.

It was found from the quantitative data that the trainees of the SATP had a significant impact on improving their literacy level as a result of their training. It can be seen from the results of the hypothesis test in table 4.4.1, which showed a significant improvement in the literacy level of the trainees as a result of the skill acquired. A similar result with interview participants revealed an improvement in the literacy level and

educational status of trainees who did not possess formal education. This means that the programme has significantly impacted on improving the trainee's educational status and earning them access to various skills, consequently reducing poverty in their status. Both findings agree with the viewpoint of Akani (2012), who stated that combining education with skill acquisition affects the educational status of trainees. Roy (2018) revealed a strong connection between poverty and education, where access to skill knowledge has a positive and significant relationship with access to education. Meanwhile, some scholars have shared experiences of countries that have significant improvement in education as a result of skill acquisition of trainees, such as Fafchamps and Quisumbing (1999) and Geda et al. (2005), Patricia and Ozoemena (2013) concluded that education and skill acquisition are integral parts of individual development, enabling them to integrate and contribute to society and improve their socioeconomic well-being.

Furthermore, the study revealed that the improvement in the literacy level of trainees had a significant impact on empowering them to be self-sufficient and self-reliant through adult education and basic literacy programs. This showed that the adult men and women who were enrolled in the training programs and did not possess any formal education were now able to have knowledge of formal education and technical skills such as computers, welding, carpentry, tailoring, and other skills that have made them self-sufficient and self-reliant after the completion of their program. This implies that as a result of the training they acquired, they were now able to have a reduction in their poverty status and have a meaningful life after the completion of their training. Some of them are now working on their own businesses, while others are working in both the private and public sectors. It can be seen

from the results of the hypotheses test obtained in Table 4.4.1, that the improvement in the literacy level of the trainees through the SATP adult education program has a significant relationship with empowering the trainees to be self-sufficient and self-reliant. Similarly, it was revealed in an interview with the administrators of the training programs that the adult education program of the SATP has assisted the trainees, especially the women, to have knowledge of formal education and supplement the lack of educational background they have and acquire certificates after the completion of the program which has enabled them to further their education and consequently lead to self-sufficiency and self-reliance. They further added that adult men and women enrolled in the SATP have become educated, which has helped them reduce poverty reduction in status by utilising the skill acquired meaningfully after the completion of the programme. These findings align with the works of ISCED (1997) that the Adult Education programme of the SATP prepares its trainees with the requisite skills and competence that makes them self-sufficient and self-reliant. Meanwhile, Ozoemena and Patricia (2013) added that once individuals possess knowledge of basic literacy, they have what will make them go out of poverty and become independent of their finances. Abadi (1994) stated that the poor illiterate will learn to read and write through special programs such as the SATP which will enable them to have access to information that would improve their lives. Broucher and Lavalley (1998) signify the importance of SATP as a way to impart knowledgeable experiences to individuals or groups that will reduce poverty and contribute to individual and national development.

Conclusion

The conclusions of this study were based on the major findings obtained in the study:

This study concludes that there is a significant and positive improvement in the educational status of trainees who successfully completed their training. ies and corroboratThis is evident from the data obtained from successful beneficiaries and corroborated by the experiences of the administrators of the training programs.

Second, it was concluded in the study that the adult education program of the SATP has significantly impacted on improving the literacy level and poverty alleviation of its trainees, especially the adult men and women who did not have formal education before their enrolment, and they are now able to read and write meaningfully, which has contributed to their individual and national development.

Third, the study concludes that the attainment of the trainees' educational development has significantly empowered them to be self-sufficient and self-reliant after they have obtained the training and, by extension, has led to their poverty alleviation.

Finally, the study concluded that the SATP has created a new means of employment opportunities, especially for those who have successfully completed their training and were engaged in either their personal, public, or private businesses. This is evident from the views of the administrators of the training programs when they stressed that there are successful trainees who are now operating their businesses while others are working in the public and private sectors.

Suggestions

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following suggestions are proposed.

There is a need to strengthen and uphold the continued existence of skills acquisition training programs, as it has proven to supplement the insufficiency of education and help in poverty reduction among its trainees.

There is the need to enroll more adult men and women whom have not attended formal education, so that it will bridge the gap in education and improve the literacy level among the citizens

Adult education and improvement in the literacy level of the trainees should be given adequate priority in the training programs because the knowledge and skills acquired by the trainees have proven to make them self-sufficient and self-reliant which in turn has a greater impact on ensuring poverty reduction and national development.

It is the view of the researcher that these suggestions should be taken care of, and that skills acquisition training programs will greatly help in ensuring educational development and poverty reduction in Nigeria.

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ADOPTION AND UTILIZATION SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS IN KNOWLEDGE SHARING AND COLLABORATION OF FEDERAL COLLEGE OF EDUCATION LIBRARY, ZARIA

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The study explores the adoption and utilization of social media platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration in the Federal College of Education library, Zaria. It aims to identify the types of social media platforms used, the extent of their usage, and the challenges faced. The research involved 63 participants, including librarians, students, and lecturers, and utilized a survey design with Questionnaires. The study finds Facebook, Twitter, Telegram, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn as the most adopted platforms used among the population. Nevertheless, inadequate ICT facilities, Poor internet access, lack of finance, unreliable power supply, lack of management support, poor staff cooperation, insufficient ICT skills, lack of awareness of social Media tools and poor maintenance of e-library facilities are among the challenges obstructing the adoption and utilization of the media. The study recommends that. Libraries should secure adequate funding for subscriptions and acquisition of necessary technology, employ qualified staff with ICT skills, and adopt additional social media platforms like YouTube, blogs, and wikis.

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Introduction

Information Correspondence Innovation has reformed how individuals impart and trade information, changing worldwide political, social, instructive, and practical scenes (Abok and Kwanya, 2016). The emergence of web-based entertainment stages has worked incredibly with information sharing within scholarly libraries. The broad reception of web-based entertainment stages has profoundly changed correspondence and information-sharing across different areas, whether in association, establishment, or business. Web-based entertainment emphatically affects libraries and their administrations in terms of wording or arranging, handling, putting away, and spreading information to clients. It is likewise an extraordinary device to assess the necessities and yearning of clients' information to fulfil the 21st-century need and contend with another library across the globe (Bhattacharya, 2023). Moreover, reception and use of web-

based entertainment stages assess how information is shared to help conveyance in libraries effectively. Social channels permit the sharing of library assets and administrations for association advancement, such as news, gathering flyers, digital books, e-diaries, proposition/paper, joins, stories/studies, revelations, and developments from various fields of information. With the appearance of intelligent and virtual entertainment, the examples, jobs, and effects of informal exchanges have advanced. As a result, new web-based networks are moulded because libraries focus on information division and joint effort among the information and clients to give the right information in the right and suitable habits through the assortment and assigned design, which gives direct criticism from customers to staff in other ways to develop its administrations, notoriety, and relationships with libraries. Scholastic libraries have likewise experienced tremendous changes

through web-based entertainment stages, for example, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, String, Wire, Web journals, YouTube, and WhatsApp that are pertinent to easy to understand and change the library clients' conduct, patterns, and correspondence administrations, which complete library and library staff to know and utilise online entertainment accessible to upgrade their administrations (Samuel, 2023).

Notwithstanding, the scholastic library can be viewed as the focal point of the learning local area, providing a space for understudies, employees, and the local area to investigate and advance their insights. The library staff offers various types of assistance to these clients, tending to their information on different necessities, attributes, and interests (Adewojo, and Mayowa-Adebara, 2016). Go on by stating that "scholastic libraries are fundamental supporters of the information age and serve a wide range of information searchers." Lately, the degrees to which scholarly libraries can offer assistance to address their supporters' issues are elements of accessibility of gifted workforce and utilisation of current innovations. Virtual entertainment goes with the fifth law that says "the library is a developing creature." Stylist (2011) believed that scholastic libraries are continuously changing their jobs through imagination to stay dynamic in the web climate. Libraries and staff ought to have the essential information on the working framework to empower them to download introduce, connection of outside gadgets like scanners; and fundamental information about investigating; information about MS-Office; information on electronic assets work and utilisation of the web (virtual entertainment) (Pawer and Kaur, 2014).

Virtual entertainment is a correspondence discussion that permits clients to impart information to one another electronically. The Australian Electoral Commission (2011) characterised virtual entertainment as "online apparatuses and sites

that work with many-to-numerous interchanges between clients. Explicit models incorporate Facebook and Twitter, yet may likewise incorporate more provincial or speciality administrations, and longstanding cooperative conditions, for example, online gatherings and ikis." In this light, Constantinides and Wellspring (2008) likewise declared that web-based entertainment is a framework that helps the formation of casual clients' organisations that work with the progression of information and information by permitting compelling age, scattering, sharing, and altering of educational substance. This implies that online entertainment is fundamentally used to impart, pass, or convey information to a large number of people through the assistance of a web network. These days, online entertainment applications have moved past private use. Libraries have progressively taken on them as devices for information sharing and correspondence through different means. Ahmed et al., 2019; Lam et al., 2016) For example, a few libraries, including unique, public, state-funded schools, are investigating the way that virtual entertainment can be utilised for information sharing, to enhance residents' mindfulness, and the activities peruse (Dekker and Bekkers, 2015). Others might involve the instrument to create information inside the organisation for business benefits and coordinate clients into a few areas of action (Busalim, 2016; Kormin and Baharun, 2016). With everything taken into account, the information-sharing utilisations of online entertainment have decisively changed how we live, work, learn, and cooperate. They take into consideration smooth and nonstop information sharing inside the virtual world. (Ahmed et al., 2019).

Statement of the Problem

Social media platforms are essential in promoting knowledge sharing and collaboration among lecturers, students, researchers, the public, and other libraries in higher learning institutions through one

umbrella. Libraries, be it school, public, national, or special, are increasingly focused on enhancing the adoption of social networking tools to increase knowledge-sharing practices and the success rate of organizations. Any organisation that is all about collaboration and growth sees the relevance of social media platforms as an avenue for promoting its services through social networks to reach its target users regarding knowledge sharing. Social media is a network that provides services to users 24/7, which creates a serious problem among the librarians: inadequate training, lack of dedicated handle, network problems, and lack of consortium with other libraries are among the challenges faced. This made the research examine the adoption and utilisation of social media platforms in knowledge sharing and collaboration of Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria.

Research Questions

1. What are the types of social media platforms that are adopted and used in Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria for knowledge sharing and collaboration?
2. What is the extent of usage of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and blogs in Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria, for knowledge sharing and collaboration?
3. What challenges are faced in adopting and utilizing social media platforms in knowledge sharing and collaboration of Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria?

Objectives of the study

1. To investigate the types of social media platforms adopted and used in Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria for knowledge sharing and collaboration.
2. To find out the extent of usage of social media tools like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, and Blog in Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria for knowledge sharing and collaboration.

3. To examine the challenges faced in the adoption and utilization of social media platforms in knowledge sharing and collaboration of Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria

Literature Review

Virtual entertainment collectively of the web put together applications that form concerning the philosophical and innovative groundworks of Web 2.0, and that permit the creation and trade of client-produced content (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010). To see all the more effectively, knowing the reason for the media first is fundamental. Media is one of the methods for correspondence, for instance, papers and radio. Consequently, virtual entertainment is a web-based medium. Clients can, without much of a stretch, convey in any way or through sites, wikis, gatherings, and interpersonal organisations like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Myspace, and the sky is the limit from there. Person-to-person communication is a strategy that individuals on the planet frequently utilize. Conventional media, for example, papers or TV, has constraints on the client because the client experiences issues to offer a perspective or an autonomous view on something distributed. Notwithstanding, with the presence of virtual entertainment, clients can undoubtedly toss their viewpoints and have the option to convey them to the world without obstructions.

Dickson and Holley (2010) view informal community apparatuses utilised in scholastic libraries as standard sites like web journals, wikis, online entertainment sites, and social bookmarking sites. This suggests that virtual entertainment incorporates the arrangement of information and empowers clients to cooperate. The utilisation of web-based entertainment is developing at a fast speed, and the 21st century could be portrayed as the "blast" period for interpersonal interaction. As indicated by reports given by Brilliant Bits of Knowledge, as of June 2023, there were over 4.594 billion virtual

entertainment clients. The Shrewd Understanding report shows that the number of online entertainment clients is increasing by 15% every year, and this pattern is predicted to proceed. Currently, virtual entertainment clients account for 55% of the global population (Barrett-Maitland and Lynch 2023). Propositions made scholastic libraries move into the train because the vast majority of the clients of libraries are youth, which we referred to as "computerized locals", who are brought into the world in the advanced period and get physically involved with different advances that propel libraries to involve virtual entertainment in dispersal and arrive at their objective client through web-based entertainment stages. In addition, these gatherings of clients use online entertainment stages for pretty much anything going from advertising, news securing, education, medical services, metro commitment, and politics to social commitment. There are various kinds of online entertainment utilised in library administrations, for example,

➤ **Facebook** is another device that the library can use to scatter information and give the library a worldwide facelift. According to Potter (2011), Facebook can be utilised for advertising libraries, and information focuses in more ways than one. Through the Facebook page/account, a library can cause clients to notice helpful secret fortunes of the library that they have neglected or do not know about, such as dark writing, current mindfulness assets, and save assets. If time is restricted, Facebook can be populated using different stages, such as Twitter input, library schedules, and library blogs. Likewise, an OPAC search can be installed on the Facebook page for the simplicity of library clients. Gallardo (2013) also recommends best practices for library staff's Facebook page: Remain directly, pin significant presents on the highest point of your page, be easygoing and conversational, use pictures, post reliably, post similar kinds

of content around the same time of the week, give fans admittance to select information or content, set aside your ideal opportunity to post, and make the most of experiences.

➤ **WhatsApp** is another virtual entertainment stage that permits association between library staff and their partners and elevates library administrations to clients. WhatsApp Courier is a 'crossstage informing application that permits clients to trade messages without paying for SMS.' The application is viable with an iPhone, BlackBerry, Android, Nokia, and different Windows cell phones. WhatsApp highlights remember one-for-one conversations, bunch visits, popup messages, and sending and obtaining both video and sound documents (Shambare, 2014). By September 2015, WhatsApp had more than 900 million month-to-month dynamic clients, increasing from more than 700 million in January 2015. Assistance is one of the most well-known portable applications in the world. (Statista, 2015)

➤ **Twitter:** This is one more stage for refreshing assortments, fresh debuts, current substance administrations of the library, and promoting library administration. Waddell and Barnes (2012) noted that the simplicity of posting and sharing information on Twitter makes it a fundamental device for libraries to arrive at their clients. Library staff can utilise this stage to give clients firsthand information on ongoing occasions. This means that clients send questions and receive criticism from the library staff. Twitter can be utilised to keep library staff and supporters refreshed in the library's day-to-day exercises; for instance, much of the time refreshed library assortments. Clients can use this stage to type short messages or announcements. In addition, Twitter can

cause caution in library administration (Ezeani & Igwesi, 2012).

- **LinkedIn:** The LinkedIn Learning library permits students to peruse learning methods, courses, recordings, assortments, and custom substances. You can utilise the learning library to track down the learning content in the space of your choice without looking for explicit watchwords. Platt (2008) presented that LinkedIn clients structure bunches inside the framework to share proficient exercises, such as examination introductions.
- **YouTube:** YouTube is currently one of the most famous social media instruments, and numerous clients buy numerous YouTube channels. Libraries can utilise their YouTube channels to upgrade their consideration and effort exercises (Desta et al., 2021).
- **Blog:** A blog is a significant web-based entertainment instrument that empowers library staff to showcase and advance their library exercises and administration. Ekoja (2011) communicated that websites are exceptionally useful in advancing library administrations, such as new acquisitions, opening times, library occasions and projects, online conversations, and so on. Dickson and Holley (2010) added that library staff can post news about the library, as well as occasions occurring in the library. This suggests that there is a requirement for a steady refreshing of websites to keep the library staff as well as clients side by side of accessible library administrations and assets.

Likewise, web-based entertainment use in the library is also pertinent because it works with the correspondence process among administrators and supporters, further develops showcasing of library administrations, makes the consciousness of library assets, improves cooperation among bookkeepers, and criticises the administration's proposed benefactors (Desta, T et al. 2021). PC Upheld Cooperative

Learning (CSCL) is an urgent part of successful discovery that encourages students to connect through web-based entertainment (Abok and Kwanya, 2016). In this advanced society, the simple notice of online entertainment jumps up fervour, particularly among people who have embraced innovation. The normal web-based entertainment instruments that curators can utilise to upgrade information sharing and administration conveyance include Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, LinkedIn, Message, Slide-Share, and Pinterest. Ezeani and Igwesi (2012) noticed that the utilisation of web-based entertainment for work purposes decidedly affects information sharing inside an association, which is impacted by the hierarchical culture towards its utilisation. Other information-sharing practices include verbal conversation, classes/studios, tutoring, staff gatherings, narrating, and local areas of training. Information-sharing practices imply that individuals share their knowledge. Information-sharing practices in associations are significant, because they achieve advancement and imagination. Information sharing is another concept that has not been completely coordinated in libraries. Today, libraries are becoming more familiar with the advantages of information-sharing practices and creating roads to present information in the library. In Malaysia, the case is similar to Chan (2011), whose discoveries showed that libraries have not completely carried out information sharing, except for a few government bodies that just utilise close and personal collaboration to share information. Challenges Faced when Using Social Media in Knowledge Sharing and Collaboration According to Abok & Kwanya (2016), libraries are faced with enormous challenges, but the most common ones are: inadequate ICT facilities in the library, poor internet access, lack of finance, epileptic poor supply, lack of management support, lack of corporation among staff, lack of ICT skills, lack of aware lack of social media tools, lack of

personal knowledge, and poor maintenance of the e-library

Methodology

A survey research design was employed to conduct this study. Mustapha and Labaran (2021) opined that survey research is a marshal of fact for unfolding and understanding existing conditions, prevailing practices, beliefs, attitudes, and ongoing processes. A quantitative research method is considered

adequate for this study. A total of 75 questionnaires were distributed and 63 copies were returned. This percentage of the questionnaire response rate was acceptable, at over 60%. The collected information was analysed using descriptive statistics.

Result and discussion of findings

A total of seventy five (75) questionnaires were distributed across and sixty three (63) were filled and used for data analysis

Table 1: Types of social media platforms are adopt and use in Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria for knowledge sharing and collaboration

S/No	Types of Social Media Platforms are Adopt and Use	Installed	Not Installed	Mean	Remark
1	Facebook	60	3	4.952	Installed
2	Twitter	58	5	4.921	Installed
3	YouTube	8	55	4.127	Uninstalled
4	Telegram	61	2	4.968	Installed
5	WhatsApp	59	4	4.937	Installed
6	Blog	13	50	4.206	Uninstalled
7	Wikis	15	48	4.159	Uninstalled
8	LinkedIn	60	3	4.952	Installed
Cumulative Mean				4.612	

Standard/Decision Mean = 4.500

Source: Field Survey 2023

Table 1 indicates the types of social media platforms adopted and used in the Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria for knowledge sharing and collaboration, in which library staff responses revealed that Telegram has the highest mean score of (4.968), while Facebook and LinkedIn have mean scores of (4.952) each, WhatsApp has stood at (4.937) and Twitter with mean scores of (4.921) all are installed and stand above the decision of means, which stood at (4.500). YouTube, with a mean score of (4.127) Blog, with (4.206); and Wikis, with 4.159) as the lowest as the decision means that represents not installed. This goes with the saying that in modern society, the mere mention of social media creates excitement, especially among individuals who have embraced technology. Among the common social media tools that

librarians can use to enhance knowledge sharing and service delivery are Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, YouTube, LinkedIn, Telegram, Slide-Share Pinterest, and so on (Zande 2013). He further noted that the use of social media for work purposes positively affects knowledge sharing within an organisation, which is influenced by the organisational culture towards its use. Usage for library service delivery is: WhatsApp (4.365), Twitter & Telegram (4.222 means scores each), Facebook (4.032 mean scores), and LinkedIn (means scores 4.079) all are above the positive, while, YouTube has the means scores of (3.302), Wikis (3.032), and Blog (2.714), respectively, all below the decision means and cumulative means. These results agree with Barrett-Maitland and Lynch (2023) that the use of social media is growing

rapidly, and the twenty-first century could be described as the "boom" period for social networking. According to reports provided by Smart Insights, as of June 2023, there were over 4.594 billion social media users. The Smart Insight report indicates that the number of social media users is increasing by 15% annually, which is estimated to continue. Currently, social media users represent 55% of

the global population. These made academic libraries move into the train because most of the users of libraries are youth whom we call "digital natives." They were born in the digital era and are intimate with various technologies that compel libraries to use social media in dissemination and reach their target users through social media platforms.

Table 2: What is the extent of utilisation of social media platforms in the Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria, for knowledge sharing and collaboration?

S/No	Extent of Utilization of Social Media Platforms	MF	F	LF	NF	Mean	Remark
1	Facebook	13	42	5	3	4.032	Frequent
2	Twitter	33	15	11	4	4.222	Frequent
3	YouTube	13	4	35	11	3.302	Not-Frequent
4	Telegram	24	29	7	3	4.222	Frequent
5	WhatsApp	35	20	4	4	4.365	Frequent
6	Blog	12	5	40	6	2.714	Not-Frequent
7	Wikis	5	5	40	13	3.032	Not-Frequent
8	LinkedIn	13	45	2	3	4.079	Frequent
Cumulative Mean						3.746	

Standard/Decision Mean = 3.500

Source: Field Survey 2023

Table 2 reveals that the extent of utilisation of social media platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration in the Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria, is frequently high. The cumulative mean of 3.746 was greater than the decision mean of 3.500. This is to say, the following were the extent of utilisation of social media platforms usage for library services delivery: WhatsApp (4.365), Twitter & Telegram (4.222 means scores each), Facebook (4.032 mean scores), and LinkedIn (means scores 4.079) all are above the positive, while, YouTube has the means scores of (3.302), Wikis (3.032), and Blog (2.714), respectively, all below the decision means and cumulative means. These results agree with Barrett-Maitland and Lynch (2023) that the use of social media is growing rapidly,

and the twenty-first century could be described as the "boom" period for social networking. According to reports provided by Smart Insights, as of June 2023, there were over 4.594 billion social media users. The Smart Insight report indicates that the number of social media users is growing by 15% annually, which is estimated to continue. Presently, social media users represent 55% of the global population. These made academic libraries move into the train because most of the users of libraries are youth, whom we call "digital natives." They are born in the digital era and are intimate with various technologies that compel libraries to use social media in dissemination and reach their target users through social media platforms.

Table 3: What are the challenges faced in the adoption and utilisation of social media platforms in the knowledge sharing and collaboration of the Federal College of Education libraries, Zaria?

S/No	Challenges Faced in Adoption and Utilization of Social Media Platforms	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	Remark
1	Inadequate ICT facilities in the library	40	12	6	6	4.413	Agree
2	Poor internet access	15	40	5	3	4.063	Agree
3	Inadequate Funds	17	39	4	3	4.111	Agree
4	Epileptic poor supply	16	41	3	3	4.111	Agree
5	Lack of corporation among staff	45	12	2	4	4.571	Agree
6	Lack of ICT skills	25	20	3	5	3.556	Agree
7	Lack of awareness of social media tools	24	22	10	7	4.000	Agree
8	Poor maintenance of e-library	26	29	3	5	4.206	Agree
9	Lack of personal knowledge	29	25	4	5	4.238	Agree
Cumulative Mean						4.141	

Standard/Decision Mean = 3.500

Source: Field Survey 2023

In Table 3, the general level of challenges in using social media platforms for knowledge sharing and collaboration of the Federal College of Education Libraries, Zaria, was not encouraging. The cumulative mean of 4.141 was greater than the decision mean of 3.500. These challenges were not limited to the following: inadequate ICT facilities in the library (4.413), poor internet access (4.063), inadequate funds (4.111), poor epileptic supply (4.111), lack of cooperation among staff (4.571), lack of ICT skills (3.556), lack of awareness of social media tools (4.000), poor maintenance of the e-library (4.206), and lack of personal knowledge (4.238). All the above challenges agree with Abok and Kwanya (2016), who opined that libraries are faced with enormous challenges, but the most common ones are inadequate ICT facilities in the library, poor Internet access, lack of finance, poor epileptic supply, lack of management support, lack of cooperation among staff, lack of ICT skills, lack of awareness of social media tools, lack of personal knowledge, and poor maintenance of the library.

Conclusion

This study investigates the adoption and utilisation of social media platforms in knowledge sharing and collaboration at the Federal College of Education Library, Zaria.

The objective of this study was to help find a solution to the problem of the adoption and utilisation of some social media platforms by students and lecturers in case study libraries. However, the researchers concluded that the findings of this study would add to the existing literature on social media platforms in academic libraries across Nigeria. However, the findings of this study revealed the social media platforms adopted in academic libraries, including Facebook, Twitter, Telegram, WhatsApp, and LinkedIn. The study also uncovered specific challenges obstructing the adoption and utilisation of social media platforms, including inadequate ICT facilities in the library, poor Internet access, lack of finance, epileptic supply, lack of management support, lack of cooperation among staff, lack of ICT skills, lack of awareness of social media tools, lack of personal knowledge, and poor maintenance of the e-library.

Recommendations

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

- Libraries should provide adequate funds for additional subscriptions to information and for the acquisition of laptops and palmtop computers.
- The library's management should employ adequate and qualified staff with ICT

skills to meet the 21st-century challenges related to social media platforms.

- Libraries should attempt to provide information on social media platforms such as YouTube and blog wikis.

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USING ANDROID PLATFORM FEATURES TO IMPROVE THE USE OF MOBILE DEVICES IN ASSISTED LEARNING FOR CHILDREN BELOW THE AGES OF TEN

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The traditional way of teaching is no longer sufficient for children in the 21st Century, with the rapid evolution of technology both technology we have on ground and emerging technologies that are upcoming, This study realize that there is need to embrace the change or risk being left behind with this study developed the "First teacher Educational application", an Android application meticulously designed to leverage mobile hardware and software to improve educational practices, particularly for children starting their educational journey. This application heavily emphasizes utilizing Near-Field Communication (NFC). NFC tags are employed to deliver educational content directly to the children. Moreover, the app incorporates the device's built-in capabilities: the camera and voice recorder are harnessed to enrich the learning environment. A key element, and one of paramount importance, is the application's focus on access control features. These features, using both software and hardware components, enable parents to supervise their child's device activities and keep them engaged within the learning application, thereby preventing them from navigating away during lessons.

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Introduction

The acquisition of knowledge, comprehension, and skills is termed learning and is achieved through study, instruction, and practical application (Wale & Bishaw, 2020; Munna & Kalam, 2021). E-learning is defined as the "delivery of educational activities pertinent to instructing, teaching, and learning via various electronic mediums, like mobile devices and computers" (Haleem et al., 2022). An E-learning platform constitutes a dedicated system software that facilitates both the construction and delivery of educational activities through electronic means. The creation of electronic pedagogical tools for children is not a novel global phenomenon; it is widely implemented in regions such as the United States, Europe, parts of Asia, and Africa. In addition to the proliferation of information technology, many other processes

have been digitised. Information technology has simplified and technologically enhanced daily activities, impacting everything from routines, facilitated by automated processes supported by information systems, educational methodologies in schools, and decision-making within major organisations (Spring et al., 2022; Rainer et al., 2020). Consequently, with the rapid advancement of information technology in Nigeria and worldwide, children are embracing these technologies. The younger generation widely utilises technological gadgets and tools, suggesting a future in which manual paper-based systems will be obsolete and their usage relegated to history (Shneiderman, 2020; Davenport & Miller, 2022). Today's children are digital natives born into the information age and are familiar with information systems from their earliest years (Davis, 2023; Wall, 2024). Aligning with the

habits of these digital natives, automating the learning process at an early age is reasonable.

Nigeria, the largest economy in Africa, has experienced a dramatic surge in information technology since the new millennium, resulting in over half of the population owning mobile devices and being aware of current technological trends (Enahoro & Olawade, 2021; Bolat, 2019). Children are becoming more capable of interacting with new information systems and integrating them into everyday routines. Mobile devices have evolved into personal identifiers (PIs). For instance, mobile phone numbers can uniquely identify individuals. Thanks to the wide range of mobile services, children are using mobile devices earlier, frequently coming into contact with them by the age of four. This trend necessitates safeguards against unauthorised content such as sensitive messages and inappropriate Internet material within mobile phone applications.

Many mobile application developers have capitalised on advancements in mobile information system technologies by creating innovative applications that enhance children's academic abilities. However, many of these applications fail to provide adequate access controls to protect children from unsolicited data. This deficiency was the focus of this study. In addition, several applications lack essential haptic effects, which leads to disinterest and, more importantly, neglect of the mobile device's hardware and software features that could amplify the learning experience.

The Android platform, which utilises JAVA and other programming languages, is an open source system for application development (Tewari & Singh, 2021; Sarkar et al., 2019). Google provides it, making it freely accessible to all developers. Utilising the Android platform for app development is beneficial because of its free and efficient nature. It promises "increased quality, greater stability, reduced costs, reliability, and rapid

bug fixes' (Krasner, 2021; Winter et al., 2022). Open-source systems comprise software with publicly accessible source codes that enable anyone to copy, modify, and redistribute them without financial charges or royalties and without legal implications based on their usage. In this study, we implemented an Android platform for the development of the proposed application. Its extensive user base stems from its cost-effectiveness, ease of use, mobile market availability, and open source nature for application development. The application was implemented using the JAVA programming language and developed within Android Studio IDE.

Problem Statement

The transition to electronic learning platforms within Nigeria's educational infrastructure is critical for fostering economic advancement, with the aim of becoming a top global economy by 2030. However, existing e-learning systems currently present specific deficiencies, which are outlined as follows

- **User Access Restrictions:** A major issue stems from unrestricted access to mobile phone functionalities. With children's increasing interactions with mobile devices, safeguarding them from accessing restricted areas is paramount. This includes preventing the unintended deletion of essential data on parents' phones, along with unauthorised browsing of unsuitable websites.
- **Enhancing Engagement through Haptic Feedback:** The lack of haptic features in most current educational applications contributes to decreased engagement and motivation. Incorporating tactile responses, such as vibrations, visual cues (light flashes), and auditory outputs, is essential to maintain children's attention and enthusiasm while using the app. Children's focus tended to wane quickly. Consequently, employing haptic effects is essential for constructing a more engaging and fun learning environment.

- Application Usage Control: The absence of time restrictions within many existing applications allows continuous operation. This extended usage presents challenges for both child welfare and the operational life cycle of the device. Implementing time limits is crucial to address possible detrimental impacts of screen exposure and other aspects linked to device usage.
- The inadequate leveraging of device hardware and software to optimise the learning experience often neglects the capabilities inherent in mobile devices.

Aim

The primary objective of this research is to design and implement a dynamic Android application that leverages both hardware and software features to generate a safe and engaging learning environment for children under the age of 10.

Objectives

This research endeavours to achieve the following objectives.

- Determine the typical age at which children in Nigeria begin using mobile devices.
- Explore parental perspectives regarding their children's mobile device usage, covering both positive and negative concerns.
- Identify the types of applications children typically use on their mobile devices.
- Investigating the efficacy of haptic effects in promoting children's involvement in mobile device applications.
- Investigate incorporating mobile device hardware and software capabilities to improve children's educational processes during their learning stages.
- Evaluate existing access control methods to safeguard children from accessing potentially inappropriate content on their devices (e.g. web browsers and messaging applications).

Related Works

Currently, reliance solely on manual teaching methods is becoming insufficient. The information age has spurred the advancement of intelligent information systems, where the Internet and elements such as big data are indispensable. Obsolete manual systems are not sustainable and developing nations cannot afford to persist with them. The ongoing progress in information technology demands that countries remain competitive; failing to do so will jeopardise their chances of being key players in current and future economies. Many e-learning systems that are pertinent to this research have been examined. Many publications concentrate on e-learning applications specifically tailored to business settings, while others explore open and accessible source systems, evaluation techniques for e-learning systems, and the theoretical frameworks of open-source systems relevant to the topic.

Ahmad et al. (2022) explored ontological approaches to classify various educational resources, thereby helping learners improve their learning outcomes within e-learning environments. This study describes the learning management process and the various ontologies employed, specifically those concerning the educational domain, electronic learning resources, learner profiles, and individual collections. Furthermore, it describes the reasoning rules and algorithms required to retrieve and combine distributed learning resources to establish personalised collections. This helps simplify the learning process, and the system can simultaneously manage both tutor and student activities.

Chatterjee et al. (2020) highlights the utilization of cloud computing in mobile e-educational systems to expand the availability of academic material. It also discusses hosting learning resources on the cloud, mitigating reliance on physical mobile storage, advocating for the adoption of e-learning across all

educational sectors, and increasing student access to e-services.

Alghazi et al. (2020) investigated the impact of mobile and wireless technologies on the education sector. Their findings showed positive outcomes, particularly emphasising mobile learning tools (MOBT) as a valuable technique for improving e-learning. This study outlines the key theoretical frameworks that are fundamental to mobile e-learning applications. Block Magic, a European research endeavour supported by the LLP-Comenius initiative, seeks to merge physical manipulation with technology (Volta, 2020; Cefai et al., 2022). The primary objective was to revive conventional psycho-pedagogical techniques that drew inspiration from the Montessori method, thereby fostering active learning to encourage full student involvement while harnessing modern technologies. The team built a functional prototype by leveraging the Logical Blocks Box, which is commonly found in various educational settings, such as kindergartens, primary schools, rehabilitation facilities, and private homes. The Block Magic research team created an active desk/board equipped to identify tangible blocks that featured RFID passive tags. An integrated RFID reader was embedded within the upgraded magic blocks. Each block was detected wirelessly by using a sensor. An active board, designed with a wireless RFID reader, facilitates the reading of RFID tags on a block and sends data to the Block Magic software engine. Figure 1 shows a sample application.

The distinguishing feature of this study, relative to the previous literature, is the development of an educational application which enables access control, going beyond the fundamental provision of educational content. Further, the increasing prevalence of mobile devices underscores the need for haptic feedback to improve user experience. This research intends to simplify this

complex subject of e-learning by focusing on the hardware and software capabilities of mobile devices. Most studies have focused on either hardware or software, whereas this study endeavours to integrate both to improve the delivery of education.

Methodology

This section outlines the research specifications, details the development and analysis methodologies employed, and justifies their selection. It also clarifies the scope and limitations of the project. Furthermore, this section provides a concise examination of existing systems, outlines data-gathering methods used to collect information, and presents relevant diagrams pertinent to system development. We also elaborate on the overall design process for the "First Teacher" 's mobile application, describing its operational workflows and behavioural patterns. UML diagrams are utilised to promote understanding and facilitate the gathering of requirements. Finally, it identifies how the system utilises both internal and external subcomponents to function effectively.

Agile Methodology: This offers a flexible structure for initiating programming and design tasks. As a lightweight approach, it minimises risks by organising the software development process within short time boxes or iterations, typically lasting one–four weeks. Each iteration, which is smaller than the traditional software development processes, incorporates all the tasks necessary to release a scaled-down version with new features. These tasks included planning, requirements analysis, design, coding, testing, and documentation. Even if an iteration does not completely release a new version, the agile process aims for readiness at the end of each cycle to release new programs. At the conclusion of each cycle, the development team re-convenes to re-evaluate customer needs (Sadowski & Zimmermann, 2019; Liu et al., 2023).

Object Reuse Methodology: This methodology focuses on repurposing pre-existing, similar

object functionalities during application development. It is cost-effective and saves both time and resources. This results in a decreased need for extensive programming, and accelerates the project timeline.

Methodology Choice

The development phase of this project integrates both agile and object-reuse methodologies.

- Time Constraints: Given the project's relatively short timeframe (maximum of eight months), the combination of Agile and Object Reuse methodologies is the most practical choice.
- Budgetary Limitations: Limited financial resources for comprehensive documentation and design make Object Reuse appealing, allowing for significantly reduced costs.
- Lack of flexibility in plan-driven methodology: The inherent rigidity of plan-driven methodologies is unsuitable given the client's potential need for frequent requirements and functionality adjustments.
- Enhanced Understanding of Client Needs: Direct communication with the client will aid in gathering clearer requirements compared to plan-driven methodologies, which often involve minimal client interaction.
- Increased Client Involvement: The emphasis will be on client participation rather than solely relying on extensive documentation.

Existing System Analysis

Since the development of mobile applications, developers have created numerous useful applications. Examples include WhatsApp, Telegram, Signal, and

BBM. These applications allow users to synchronise their daily tasks. Furthermore, educational applications such as Evernote Peek, Wolfram Alpha, and Studious have been developed.

Key Differentiators

The following distinctions set the application under development, apart from those mentioned earlier:

Access Restriction: The application's capability to restrict users from accessing unauthorised parts of the mobile device represents a significant advantage. Many educational apps are used on parents' phones, which frequently contain essential personal and valuable information. Children might inadvertently access and potentially alter or delete this data. Therefore, this key feature distinguishes the project from other alternatives.

Enhanced User Experience: The application will be developed to incorporate haptic and interactive effects. The aim is to improve usability and enhance user interaction, thereby promoting engagement. Most of the previously mentioned systems fulfil basic requirements, with limited consideration of other aspects of user experience. They do not fully utilise mobile hardware and software capabilities for enhancement.

Requirements

This will provide a detailed explanation of the "First Teacher" 's functional (Table 1) and non-functional requirements.

Functional Requirements

The functional requirements describe what the system must be capable of achieving its business objectives. Table 1 lists all the functional requirements of the application.

Table 1 showing the functional requirements of the application

Pseudo code	Requirements
FR001	The system should allow access to registered users.
FR002	The System should be able to restrict the user from accessing other Applications while using the application.
FR003	The System should have a time limit for how long the user can be on the system.
FR004	The system should be able to store information on the memory card.
FR005	The system should provide a means of authentication and verification on registration complete.
FR006	The system should implement text to speech.
FR007	The system should be able to access the phone camera.
FR008	The system should enable registered user to exit the application after they sign out.
FR009	The System should enable the user to deactivate the return button functionality.
FR010	The System should be enabling the user to read to an NFC tag
FR011	The system should be enabling the user to write to an NFC tag
FR012	The System should enable the user to record voice clips.
FR013	The system should enable the user to send feedback emails to the developer
FR014	The system should enable the user to change password.
FR015	The system should enable the user to delete his or her account.
FR016	The system should enable the user to access the mobile camera.
FR017	The system should provide quiz for the user.
FR018	The system should enable the user to use the touch functionalities.

This table presents the functional requirements of the system.

These functional requirements represent a collection of functionalities that the system must execute to achieve its objectives.

Non-functional Requirement

Non-functional requirements define the characteristics a system should possess to enhance the user experience; they are not strictly essential for core system operation. The non-functional aspects include

Performance Capacity, Maintainability, Reliability, and Security.

System Architecture

The system architecture of an application provides a visual representation of the application, outlining its workflow and operational behaviours. This architecture also depicts the structure of the system and the connections between its internal and external components. Figure 2 presents the

application architecture for the initial "first teacher" application.

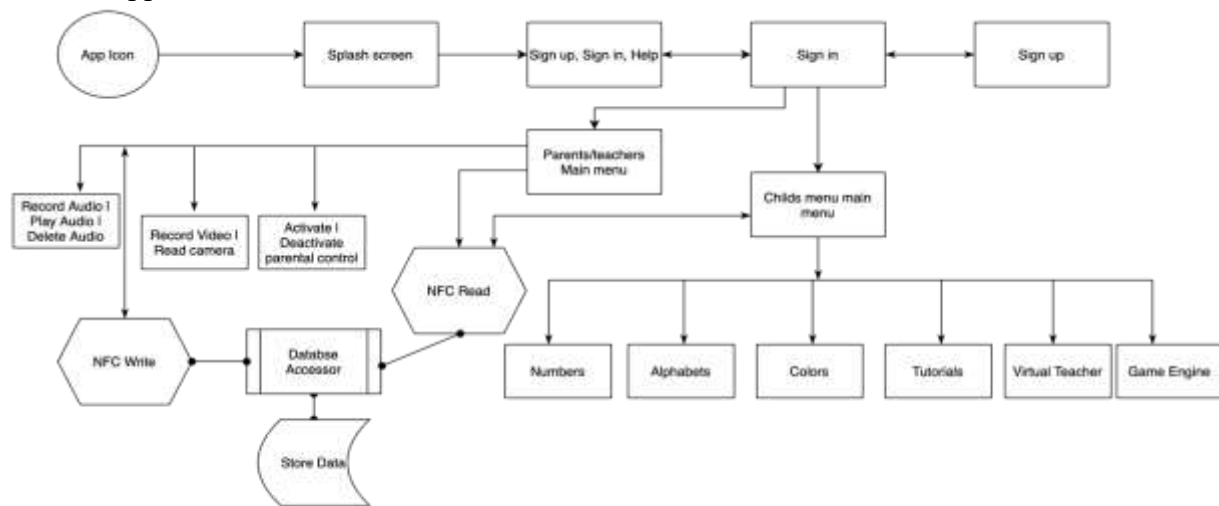


Figure 2 shows the system architecture

Figure 2 shows the system architecture designed for the application which shows the flow of activities within and outside the application and subprocess.

System use case

Use Case diagrams visually represent how users, also called actors, interact with a

system. These diagrams offer a user-centric perspective that illustrates the capabilities of a system. They depict the features and actions initiated by the user, assuming the role of the actor. For instance, Figure 3 demonstrates some concrete examples of use cases within the application, along with a visualisation of the user's interactions with specific scenarios.

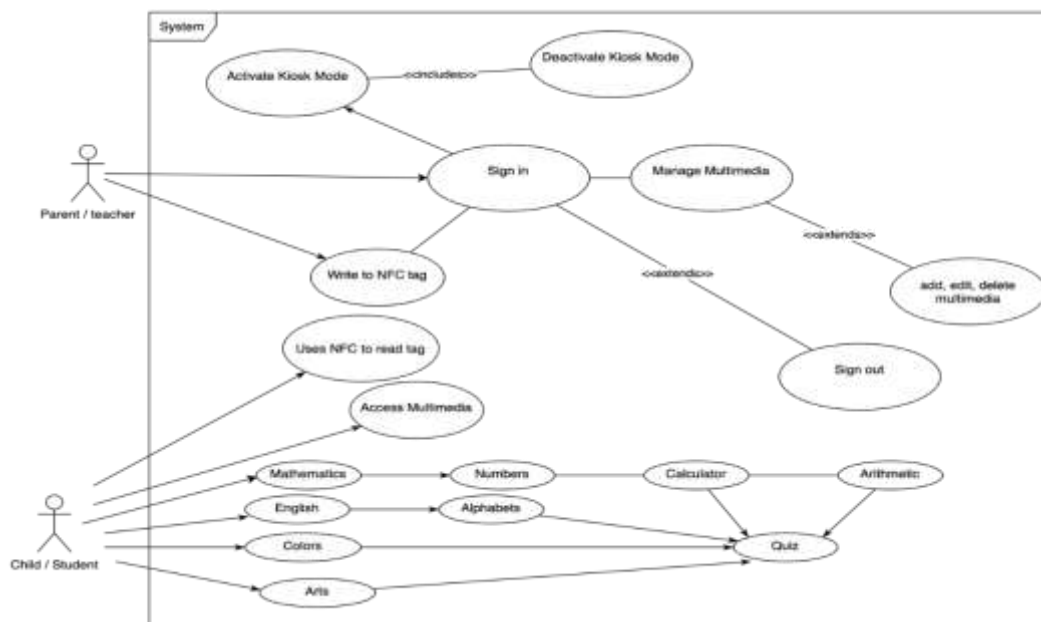


Figure 3 shows the system usecase

Depicted in Figure 3 is an overview of the system's interactive dynamics, specifically illustrating the engagement between a parent and their child.

The use case delineates a virtual embodiment of exchanges transpiring between the user and the system itself.

Sequence diagram

Sequence diagrams serve as visual tools that chart a series of tasks and processes that interact with the system, its subordinate processes, and various applications. Figure 4 presents a sequence diagram that specifically outlines the interactions involved when different users accessed the initial teacher application.

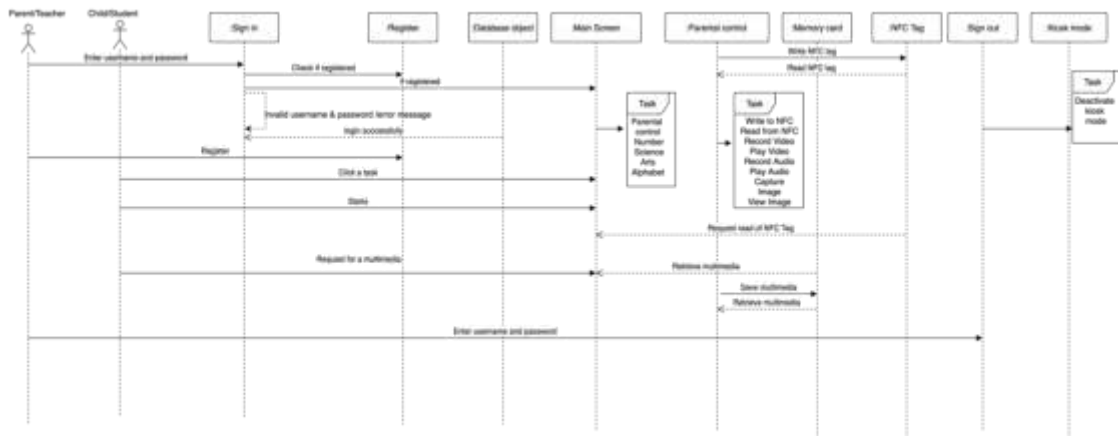


Figure 4 showing the series of tasks and actions of the parent's interaction with the system

Story board diagram

A storyboard, a sequence comprising sketches, typically represents the information flow within a system and serves to showcase the designed functionalities and operations of

the system. Figure 5 illustrates the entire storyboard, detailing all interactions within the application.

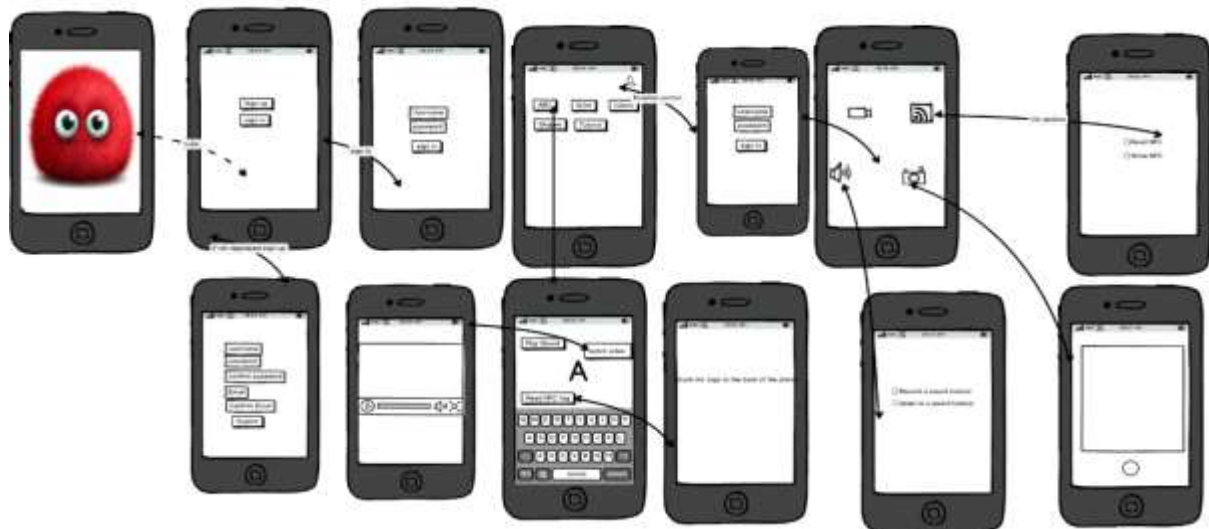


Figure 5 showing the series of process and actions involved in the application

User interface screen shot

The user interface design presents a virtual portrayal of the visual aspects and functionality of the application.

The user interface of the application is shown in Figures 6 and 7.

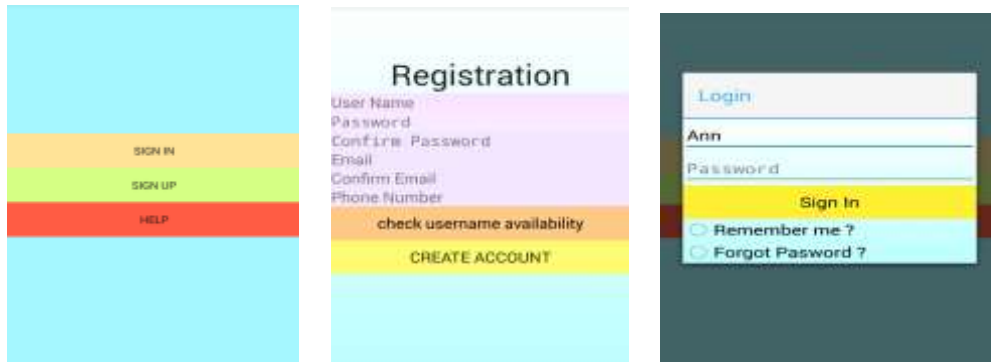


Figure 6 showing the sign up and sign in user interface

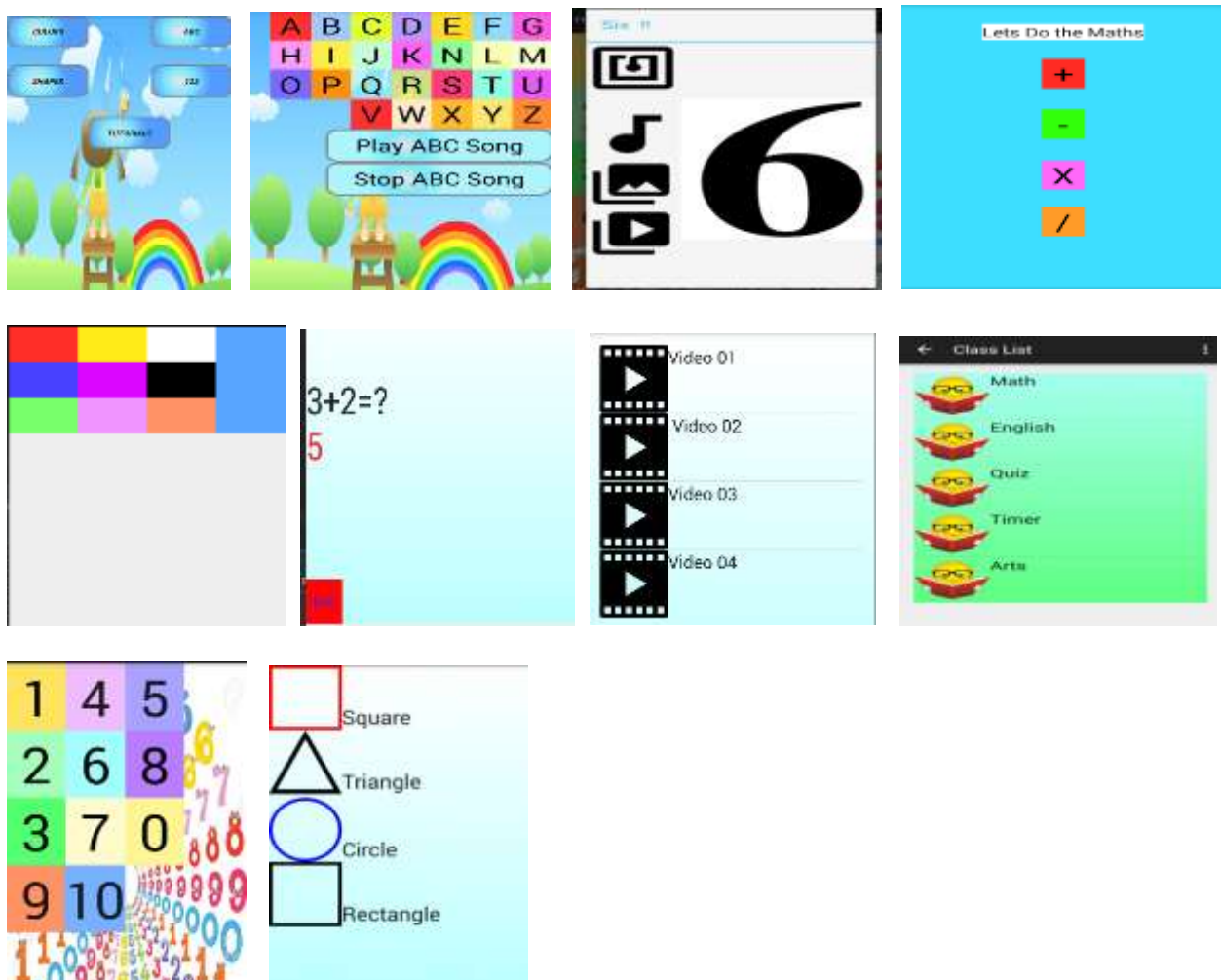


Figure 7 user interface of the application showing major functionality

Activity diagram

An activity diagram provides a model outlining the sequential display of tasks or actions derived from a specific use case. This is shown in Figs. 8 and 9.

Figure 8, an activity diagram, highlights the user's interaction with the virtual teacher function

Figure 8, an activity diagram, shows the user's interaction with the virtual teacher function.

As shown in Figure 8, this activity diagram depicts the process by which a logged-in user accesses the virtual teacher function. Upon login, the user clicks the action bar at the top and selects the virtual teacher function. This launches the virtual

teacher activity, allowing the user to input text and click the 'speak' button for the output.

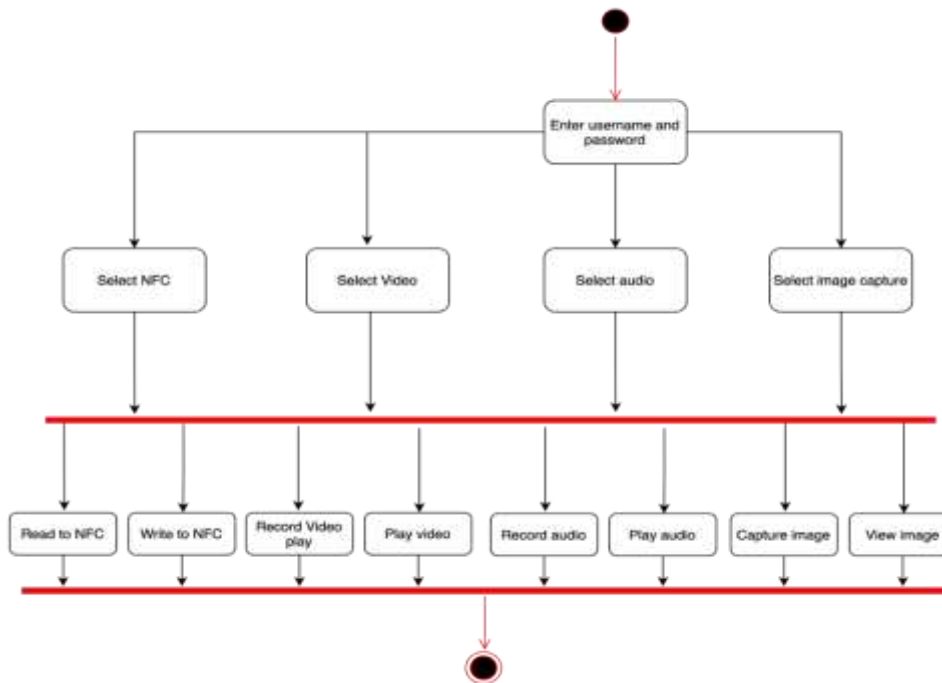
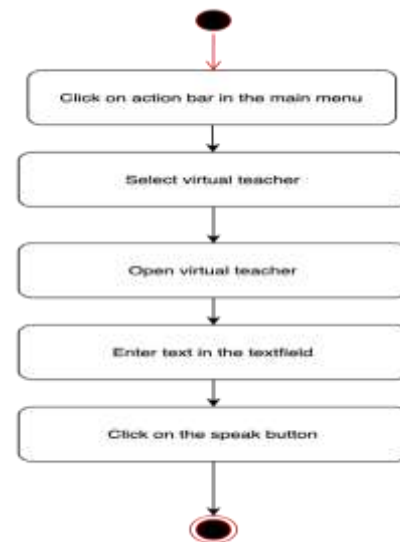


Figure 9 shows an activity diagram that maps the interactions with the combined hardware and software aimed at enhancing the educational procedure.

This activity diagram (Figure 9) portrays the actions that occur within the system when a parent is logged in by utilising parental functions. Upon logging in, the user clicks on

the action bar and selects the parental icon. Subsequently, the password prompt appears, and upon entering the correct password, the parental activity opens, presenting various options to the parent. The parent can perform multiple tasks, such as reading or writing, on an NFC tag.

Implementation And Testing

The system was put into effect directly following its design phase, which was created using the CASE tools. Initially, this stage focused on building the code for the Kiosk mode, starting with the teacher's section. The JAVA programming language on the Android framework was utilised for system implementation. The IDE requires the Android Software Development Kit (SDK) to be installed as a plugin to function correctly within the Android framework. Preliminary research was crucial before beginning the application development, and subsequently, the creation of the splash screen, followed by the sign-in and sign-up pages. After the sign-up and sign-in pages were designed and put into action, database development was carried out, followed by the menu pages for the parent and child areas. Subsequently, the Kiosk mode was designed and executed, with numerous investigations preceding the implementation to match the design standards. Next came the NFC capability, which also involved much research into the NFC functionality, making it possible for the device to read from and write to NFC tags. After the preceding stage was completed, the text-to-speech feature was studied and incorporated, contributing to the design of virtual teacher functionality. Finally, the design and implementation of a quiz area led to development. The testing phase included the debugging procedure during development, which was used to discover what aspects were functioning as intended and which ones did not, along with addressing debugging solutions. Testing involved debugging the program, fixing errors, and identifying faults in the system. Unit testing targets particular classes or methods to evaluate specific features. Integration testing assessed whether all classes operating together functioned harmoniously as a collective unit. The complete system was assessed during system testing to examine its functional and nonfunctional requirements. Testing was completed by designing several

test scenarios to check each feature of the application.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This paper has examined the creation, execution, and evaluation of an initial teacher-focused Android application, highlighting the essential features and requisites crucial for the success of the application. A substantial portion of the investigation focused on the development of educational applications encompassing both mobile and desktop platforms. Furthermore, near-field communication technologies and their potential integration into e-learning applications to improve learning methodologies have been extensively studied. The utilisation of mobile device hardware and software was investigated to improve children's learning journeys. Owing to time constraints in development and research, not all the intended functionalities were incorporated. One notable omission was a time management system, which would have helped regulate the child's usage duration to prevent excessive use which can cause physical complications such as eyestrain. This feature can be added later, along with further functional improvements. The application achieved its original objectives, and with further enhancements, it has potential for even more improved performance.

Recommendations

It is recommended that continuous research into new avenues for improving and refining digital educational experience, specifically leveraging evolving technologies such as machine learning and virtual reality, be carried out consistently. This approach is important because technology advances rapidly, presenting innovative opportunities for refining existing processes and enriching them to promote a better future for education.

Future Enhancements

In the future, improvements can be made to the user interface through visually appealing, interactive, and meaningful multimedia

content. Additional functionality, such as voice recognition and artificial intelligence, will be examined and integrated in future iterations. Moreover, expanding the compatibility of the application with other operating systems, such as Windows and iOS, presents further development opportunities. Currently, the application operates only on Android operating system.

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PERCEIVED DYNAMICS OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE GENERATION OF
CALQUING IN LANGUAGE PEDAGOGY: A STUDY OF SELECTED LANGUAGE EDUCATORS
IN FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, ZARIA

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The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) has fascinated transformation in various disciplines, linguistics inclusive. This study investigates the perceived dynamics of AI in generating calquing in language pedagogy. In this regard, this paper attempts to examine the significance of AI in language teaching and learning putting its challenges and prospects into consideration. The author gathered the relevant data through both primary (questionnaire) and secondary (books) sources. The findings of the research reveal that the adoption of AI technology in morphological processes has immensely paved way for facilitation, manipulation, creativity, 'connectivism', convenience, 'complementalization', comprehensiveness, linguistic assimilations and prejudices in the advancement of language teaching and learning. Through a detailed analysis of AI-driven linguistic tools and their impact on language evolution, this article demonstrates that AI is not just a tool for linguistic analysis but a catalyst for innovation in language formation. The implications of these findings are discussed in relation to the fast spreading waves of morphological theory and AI's future in linguistic evolution. In spite of its dynamic roles, the orientation about the usefulness of AI has not gained sufficient attention in the Nigerian educational system as obtainable in advanced nations. Ergo, the conclusion reflects that the adoption of AI in language teaching and learning in Nigeria will facilitate creativity, consistence, comprehensiveness among others for both teachers and the concerned learners in their quest for broader and deeper perspectives in generating morphological calques.

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Introduction

In many nations worldwide, education is ranked as the most profitable heritage for citizens. Nigeria has persistently pursued the realisation of this global goal from the pre-colonial era to the present with varying degrees of integrity, tenacity, and sincerity (Olorunmade, 2023). However, the reality portrays that Nigeria's educational system is still battling in order to find relevance in the international strategic plan for education and the pursuit of the digitalised and revolutionised pattern that characterizes the method through which knowledge is impacted across the globe. Hence, the use of technology to generate words using existing morphological parameters cannot be

trivialised. According to Mofereh (2019), cited in Olorunmade, 2023, learners have already considered the traditional methods of teaching language archaic. He added that findings showed that 60% to 80% of learners were grossly discontented with the traditional methods of learning language, while 75% to 95% of the learners were familiar with language learning through technology, and they achieved better than those who were in the traditional language learning classrooms.

There are several ways to use technological gadgets to teach languages or conduct online classes. Some of the popular applications and tools are social platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and Telegram; open learning management

systems such as Google Sites, Google Classroom, Moodle MS Team Classroom and Canvas and Virtual meeting platforms such as Google Meet, WeChat, Zoom, and Goto Meeting (Alsaleem, 2020; Huang et al., 2019 & 2020; Mofareh, 2019; Shyammlee, 2012; Simonson et al., 2011). Language method tools and applications are used for teaching communication and writing skills, carrying out research studies, and teaching content that requires less face-to-face interaction (Shyammlee, 2012). Learners explore the aforementioned technological platforms to optimise English language instructions and equip every teacher with methods to communicate with their learners efficiently, effectively, and amicably. Using modern technological appliances as part of teaching the English language is not only bound to be used as modern gadgets and devices but also targeted at procuring the introduction of innovative systems and methods that enable the fostering and facilitation of learning processes so that it can be easier and more comprehensive (Mofareh, 2019 cited in Olorunmade, 2023). Thus, teachers of languages, who use technology while teaching learners, can further consolidate the innovative tendencies that are embedded in engaging AI for quantitative generation, collection, and analysis of calqued words. To this end, the integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into language pedagogy has fascinated some cardinal transformations at every level of linguistic descriptions, specifically morphology, which studies the formation and internal structures of words. Thus, AI provides more elucidating versions of morphological processes in language teaching and learning which has exposed both teachers and learners to diverse research and discoveries which enhance the understanding of every concept taught in the grammar of words (morphology) (Olorunmade, 2023). In line with this, he further claims that the different scholarly contributions to the relevance of incorporating and leveraging ICT in every

aspect of language have paved the way for brighter, transformative, and enduring comprehension in classroom activities.

In connection with the above, it is true that the world, its people, their knowledge, and their languages are not static; hence, the quest for more advanced research is unquenchable. To consolidate this assertion, AI is a technological tool that has been invented and educationally engaged to minimise the existing intra- and inter-morphological barriers that constitute conspicuous misunderstandings of how languages evolved and adapted. The detribalised functions of AI in language teaching and learning do not exclude calquing, a morphological process that involves the direct translation of foreign words and structures to a target language. This shows the dynamics of language and its responsiveness to cultural and technological changes (Baker 2018). With the significant role of AI in language processing, the mechanisms of this morphological process can be comprehended and utilised by teachers, learners, and others who are interested in the astute application of morphological knowledge to solve linguistic problems without prejudice.

Statement of Research Problem

Numerous studies have been conducted on the significant roles of AI in the teaching and learning of language. For instance, Bakei (2018) examines morphological changes: a cognitive approach; Katan (2020) examines new words in the age of social media: the role of AI in neologism formation language; Barni (2019) works on language transformation through machine translation; Bayero (2021) analyzes technology-driven curricula in teaching English in primary schools; Olorunmade (2023) considers leveraging information and communication technology in English teaching and learning: a study of selected tertiary institutions in Zaria; Alkahlifa (2021) discusses the impact of AI on language translation: a review of calquing in context among others. Despite

these scholars' efforts, more attention needs to be given to AI technology in language teaching and learning. Therefore, this study aimed to address this gap.

Aim and Objectives

The principal aim of this study is to examine the perceived dynamics of AI in the generation of calqued words in language pedagogy. Specifically, the study was 'platformed' with the following objectives. i. To identify the role of AI in generating calqued words. ii. To examine the manner in which AI manipulates linguistic resources to form calqued words in language teaching and learning. iii. To unveil the prospective implications of AI-generated calqued words in relation to morphological theories of language teaching and learning. iv. To analyse the sociocultural impact of AI on language evolution through calquing in language teaching and learning.

Research Questions

The research was guided by the following questions. What are the roles of AI in generating calqued words in contemporary language teaching and learning? ii. How does AI manipulate linguistic resources to form calqued words in language teaching and learning? iii. What are the implications of AI-generated calqued words in relation to morphological theories for language teaching and learning? iv. What are the sociocultural impacts of AI on language evolution through calquing in language teaching and learning?

Methodology

The data for this study were sourced from hundred (100) respondents (language educators) from divergent linguistic backgrounds. The participants were from the Department of English and General Studies in Education, Federal University of Education, Zaria. The respondents were randomly selected and had a series of experiences in teaching and learning different courses in language. The research instrument was comprised of a structured questionnaire.

One hundred (100) copies of the questions were administered to randomly selected subjects to ascertain the dynamics of AI technology in the generation of calqued words in language pedagogy. The questions in the questionnaire were strictly guided by research questions.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1. Do you agree that the use of AI facilitates the generation of calqued words in language teaching and learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	75	75
No	15	15
None	10	10
Total	100	100

The above data shows that out of the hundred respondents, seventy-five constituting seventy-five percent (75%) affirmed that the use of AI facilitates the generation of calqued words in language teaching and learning; fifteen (15%) were on the negative side while ten (10%) were neutral. This implies that AI facilitates the generation of calqued words for language teaching and learning.

Table 2: Does AI provide a significant guide for language teachers and learners in the process of generating calqued words?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	71	71
No	19	19
None	10	10
Total	100	100

From the above table, it can be seen that of the 100 (100%) respondents, 71 (71%) stated that the use of AI provides a significant guide for both language teachers and learners in the process of generating calqued words; 19 (19%) remained negative, while 10 (10%) were neutral. This indicates that AI provides a significant guide for both teachers and learners in the process of generating calm words.

Table 3. Does AI display creativity in the process of forming calqued words in contemporary language teaching and learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	68	68
No	18	18
None	14	14
Total	100	100

The data above reveal that out of the 100 (100%) respondents, 65 (65%) agreed that AI displays creativity in the process of forming calqued words in contemporary language teaching and learning; 18 (18%) said no, while 14 (14%) were neutral. This implies that AI displays creativity in the process of forming calqued words in contemporary language teaching and learning.

Table 4: Can AI correctly manipulate accessible linguistic resources to form calqued words in contemporary language teaching and learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	76	76
No	19	19
None	5	5
Total	100	100

The above data reveal that, out of the 100 respondents (100%), 76 (76%) agreed that AI can correctly manipulate accessible linguistic resources to form calqued words in contemporary language teaching and learning; 19 (19%) responded negatively, while 5 (5%) were neutral. This reveals that AI can correctly manipulate accessible linguistic resources to form calqued words during contemporary language teaching and learning.

Table 5: Does AI display consistency in the process of generating calqued words in language teaching and learning, especially when globally recognised languages are engaged?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	87	87
No	2	2
None	11	11
Total	100	100

It is obvious from the above data that out of the 100 (100%) respondents, 87 (87%) affirmatively stated that the AI displays consistency in the process of generating calqued words in language teaching and learning, especially when globally recognised languages were engaged; 2 (2%) negatively responded, while 11 (11%) were neutral. This implies that AI displays consistency in the process of generating calqued words in language teaching and learning, especially when globally recognised languages are engaged.

Table 6: Does AI promote convenience among teachers and learners in the process of generating calqued words for language teaching and learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	89	89
No	7	7
None	4	4
Total	100	100

The table above apparently shows that out of the 100 respondents, 89 (89%) agreed that connectivity in technological gadgets is a great advantage in English language teaching and learning in tertiary institutions, seven (7%) gave negative responses, and four (4%) were neutral. This reveals that connectivity with technological gadgets is a great advantage in teaching and learning English in tertiary institutions.

Table 7: Does AI comply with the existing morphological tenets governing the formation of calqued words in language teaching and learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	73	73
No	15	15
None	12	12
Total	100	100

The above table reveals that out of the 100 respondents, 73 (73%) agreed that AI complied with the existing morphological tenets governing the formation of calqued

words in language teaching and learning; 15 (15%) gave negative responses, whereas 12 (12%) were neutral. This proves that AI complies with existing morphological tenets governing the formation of calqued words in language teaching and learning.

Table 8: Does AI promote collaboration among teachers and language learners in the process of generating calqued words?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	75	75
No	15	15
None	10	10
Total	100	100

The above table reveals that, out of the 100 respondents, 75 (75%) agreed that AI promotes collaboration among language teachers and learners in the process of generating calqued words; 15 (15%) gave negative responses, while 10 (10%) were neutral. This confirms that AI promotes collaboration between language teachers and learners in the process of generating calqued words.

Table 9: Does AI reflect the inter-language dynamism associated with the generation of calqued words in language teaching and learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	85	85
No	2	2
None	13	13
Total	100	100

From the above table, it is clear that out of the 100 respondents, 85 (85%) agreed that the adoption of AI in the generation of calqued words reflects the interlanguage dynamism associated with language teaching and learning; 2 (2%) reflected no in their responses, while 13 (13%) were neutral. This shows that the adoption of AI in the generation of calqued words reflects the interlanguage dynamism that is associated with language teaching and learning.

Table 10: Does AI-generated calqued words fascinate linguistic prejudice in language-teaching and learning enterprises?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	75	75
No	15	15
None	10	10
Total	100	100

It is clear from the above table that, out of the 100 respondents, 75 (75%) consented to the fact that the AI-generated calqued words fascinate linguistic prejudice in language teaching and learning; 15 (15%) answers were negative, while 10 (10%) were neutral. This confirms that AI-generated calqued words fascinate linguistic prejudice in language teaching and learning.

Table 11: Does AI-generated calqued words morphologically complement existing traditional patterns in language teaching and learning?

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Yes	91	91
No	1	1
None	8	8
Total	100	100

From the above table, it is clear that out of the 100 respondents, 91 (91%) overwhelmingly agreed that the AI-generated calqued words complement the existing traditional pattern morphologically in language teaching and learning; one (1%) reflected no in their responses, while eight (8%) were neutral. This reveals that AI-generated calqued words complement the existing traditional patterns morphologically in language teaching and learning.

Table 12: Does the AI-generated calqued words contain accurate intended semantic values in all languages?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	31	31
No	65	65
None	4	4
Total	100	100

The above table reveals that out of the 100 respondents, 31 (31%) agreed that the AI-generated calqued words contained accurate intended semantic values in the languages; 65 (65%) gave negative responses, while four (4%) were neutral. This proves that AI-generated calqued words do not contain the accurate intended semantic value in all languages except globalised ones, which the AI can easily access to draw its data.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of this research and its discussion are harmoniously organised in consonance with the principal research questions posed to guide the study.

- **AI and Calquing Manipulation:** The data analysis shows that AI's translation tools frequently facilitate, guide, and display creative tendencies while generating and manipulating morphological calques, which reflect a direct application of source language structures into target languages. This is exemplified by computing which is translated into French as an informatique en nuage, unveiling a literal translation process. However, it should be noted that as resourceful and manipulative as AI, it lacks the functional capacity to draw its data from languages that have not received sufficient attention at all levels of linguistic descriptions on the Internet. Logically, AI is independent of human intelligence in most of its technological operations. Of course, AI has the ability to generate a unique concept from data available on the Internet in line with the task that is posed to it.
- **Creativity:** This refers to the ability of someone to fashion out something new from junks or to transform existing objects, ideas, concepts, creeds, and credos to enhance its value. Thus, the engagement of AI technology in morphological processes paves the way

for creativity in classrooms. To this end, the data analysed in this study revealed that AI can correctly and consistently manipulate accessible linguistic resources to form calqued words in contemporary language teaching and learning. This is commonly realised, especially when globally recognised languages are engaged.

- **Connectivity:** AI has made knowledge of word generation more accessible. Authorities in language have published discoveries in all aspects of language studies for others (including both teachers and learners) to connect to and affirm any concept taught. In fact, neither learners nor teachers need to frequently patronise libraries for academic research. Similarly, it is possible for a teacher to generate millions of linguistic resources across the globe because of AI's connectivity and collaborative tendencies. Currently, word formation is no longer limited by space because of the engagement of AI which has immensely debilitated every linguistic impediment among languages.
- **Convenience:** The adoption of AI in language teaching and learning has enhanced ease of use in an unquantifiable manner. Before its advent, the adoption and spread of the waves of the use of technological gadgets in classroom exercises, language teaching, and learning processes were stressful for both teachers and learners. Technology has greatly reduced the rigors and risks once experienced by teachers, learners, parents, etc., in the process of language teaching and learning. Both teachers and learners have the choice to anchor and participate in classroom activities from anywhere. Learners decide where to learn and the desired postures for their choices.
- **Complementing Role:** Its quite glaring from The above analysis shows that integrating AI technology in language

teaching and learning does not eliminate traditional methods. Rather, it provides inexhaustible and viable opportunities for exploring language evolution and innovation. Collaboration between AI and Natural Intelligence (NI) enriches linguistic expressions in every facet of language teaching and learning. For instance, AI has no capacity to provide the meanings and the calqued forms of these Okun words in English or any other international language: Olounghunmade (God gave me a crown), Ojuetonu (eye cannot capture the inside or heart), Arokoyo (one that has pleasure in farm or farming), Osamika (the deity knows the wicked), Iraiyeonomo (people in the world own a child), Obajemito (if it allows me to last long), Arotile (a bracer of a house), among others, until linguistic data in this respect is made available on the Internet by human scholars.

- **Linguistic Diversity:** The data analysed indicated that AI has a significant impact on language evolution, with a majority expressing cautious optimism about AI's roles in fostering linguistic diversity. However, the findings also reveal that many language professionals maintain a prejudiced notion of the superficiality of AI-generated calques. This suggests that the current dialogue between linguists and technologists is critical for maintaining linguistic depth.
- **Cultural Impact:** The analysed data also revealed that AI-driven linguistic innovations sometimes occur. That is, it culminates in oversimplified language forms, raising questions about the depth and richness of emerging expressions. By contrast, AI involvement in morphological processes will trigger intellectual curiosity, which will enable more studies from scholars whose language cannot be promoted via AI activities in the calquing generation.

Challenges of using AI in language teaching and learning

There is no innovation (including the adoption of AI tools for language teaching and learning in tertiary institutions in Nigeria), which is void of its peculiar challenges (s). Some of the factors affecting the use of AI in classrooms include the following. Erecting substandard structures is challenging. Modern language laboratories and classrooms should be built in conducive, noise-free environments. This will enhance the effectiveness of language teaching and learning. Physiological and biological factors constitute another constraint. Thus, teachers and learners with body disabilities may not affect or learn maximally, as expected. Economically, the strength of each teacher and learner determines the type of technological gadgets (s) they will be able to buy and use to access language teaching and learning. Psychologically, some teachers and learners are unstable due to hunger, low social status, or life-threatening challenges. Therefore, they find it difficult to concentrate on language classes, culminating in poor performance in every aspect of language teaching and learning. Philosophically, the manner in which language teachers and learners view technological advancement differs in general. Some embrace it, while others are sceptical about its adoption, let alone its adoption. Politically, the government's failure to provide the necessary funds for the procurement of technological gadgets and to formulate, implement, and adjudicate policies in favour of the use of AI in language teaching and learning hampers the propagation of the use of AI in language classrooms.

Concluding Remarks

As AI continues to evolve, its dynamics in morphological processes such as calquing become increasingly apparent. This study emphasises the potential of integrating AI with traditional linguistic methodologies to

further enrich teachers' and learners' understandings of language formation, structure, and change. Future research should focus on the socio-linguistic implications of these changes as well as ethical considerations surrounding the role of AI in the evolution of language and its influence on language teaching and learning. The adoption of AI in the process of generating calqued words possesses numerous and rewarding benefits, as reflected in the convenience, creativity, collaboration, and consistency of teachers and learners. However, there have been no developments without peculiar challenges. To this end, the adoption of AI in generating calqued words has been confronted with a series of daunting limitations, as shown in physical (environmental), physiological (biological), economical, psychological, philosophical, and political in nature (Olorunmade, 2023). It should be noted that these challenges are not abnormal, because they are surmountable. Transformation begins when challenges are exposed and tackled. Therefore, all the identified hindering factors can be overcome if all the concerned stakeholders – government, management, teachers, learners, parents, and society—perform their designated roles as expected in every ramification.

Recommendations

This study recommends the following for consideration and implementation if language teaching and learning via AI are expected to be more effective, efficient, profitable, and beneficial.

- i. The government should create an enabling environment for viability that enhances the promotion of AI in language teaching and learning. This can be accomplished by funding building and equipping ICT centres with computers and other gadgets.
- ii. Government and non-government agencies should provide scholarships for both teachers and learners in Nigeria and

abroad. This will motivate them to make more profitable efforts to use AI technologies in teaching and learning enterprises.

- ii. Teachers should embrace the use of AI for classroom delivery and be ready to undergo more training and retraining in AI-compliant programs.
- iii. Teachers and learners should be oriented toward and compelled to comply with the use of AI technology in teaching and learning.
- iv. Parents should encourage their wards to provide the necessary motivation by providing for each learner's basic needs that will facilitate language teaching and learning of calqued words via AI.
- v. Society should create a peaceful atmosphere that encourages both teachers and learners to embrace and use AI in language teaching and learning.

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CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATIONS (WASSCE) SUMMARY PASSAGES (2020-2024)

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This research investigated how language in standardized examination texts contributes to ideological formation and social conditioning in educational contexts. The study critically examined the ideological and discursive patterns embedded in West African Senior Secondary Certificate Examinations (WASSCE) English Language summary passages administered between 2020 and 2024. Guided by the frameworks of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), Fairclough's three-dimensional model, van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory, and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), the research analysed how language within these high-stakes texts constructed power relations, social roles, and normative expectations. Five summary passages were purposively selected and subjected to multi-level textual, discursive, and social-practice analysis. Findings revealed that WASSCE passages, though framed as neutral tools for language assessment, operated as ideological instruments that promoted conformity, institutional authority, and dominant socio-cultural values. Institutional actors were consistently portrayed as moral or technical authorities, while groups such as youth, farmers, and male students were constructed as passive, deviant, or deficient. Recurring themes—urban alienation, governance, youth crime, personal health responsibility, and gender imbalance—were found to align closely with state narratives. Modality choices such as “must,” “should,” and “may result in” were strategically used to impose moral evaluation and behavioural expectations. The study concluded that WASSCE summary passages played a subtle but powerful role in shaping conceptions of ideal citizenship, reinforcing normative social hierarchies through discourse. It recommended the adoption of more balanced and inclusive texts, and pedagogical approaches that cultivate students' critical reading skills.

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Introduction

In recent years, the application of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine educational materials has gained prominence because of its capacity to uncover hidden ideologies and sociopolitical structures encoded in language (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1998). Language is not a neutral medium of communication; it is a site of power struggle where meanings are negotiated and ideologies perpetuated. Within the Nigerian context, the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) English Language paper—particularly the summary section—

serves as a significant discursive space that reflects the dominant ideologies and social relations subtly embedded in text. Given its mandatory status in secondary school graduation and university entry, the WASSCE summary passage is more than a test of comprehension; it is a tool through which values, worldviews, and sociocultural orientations are transmitted and reinforced.

The summary component in the WASSCE exams demands that candidates distil large amounts of information into concise expressions. However, the seemingly straightforward nature of this task lies in its deeper ideological process. As van Dijk

(2008) argues, every act of textual production and interpretation is imbued with ideological significance, because discourse inherently reflects group-based cognition and belief systems. Similarly, Fairclough (2003) emphasises that discursive practices, such as educational testing, cannot be divorced from the wider social structures that produce them. These practices play a role in constructing the 'ideal learner', often defined in alignment with the elite, middle-class values, and Eurocentric knowledge frames. Consequently, CDA enables researchers to identify the subtle processes of inclusion, exclusion, legitimation, and positioning that are characteristic of these high-stakes assessment texts. The WASSCE summary passages from 2020 to 2024, although intended for language evaluation, are ideological constructs that reflect socio-political concerns, cultural expectations, and epistemological biases. Studies by Abiola et al. (2023) and Edem (2024) highlighted the preponderance of socioeconomic and moralistic themes in such passages, revealing the underlying expectation that students should internalise dominant social norms, including attitudes toward youth behaviour, citizenship, and productivity. These narratives are not randomly selected; they are deliberately framed to reflect prevailing national discourses on unemployment, corruption, family values, and environmental degradation.

Furthermore, the summary writing process is prescriptive. Students are not merely expected to comprehend content, but must reproduce distilled versions that often privilege objectivity, neutrality, and conformity to fixed syntactic forms. This reflects Fairclough's (1992) observation that "surface neutrality" in institutional discourse often masks underlying ideological investments. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) also offers insight, as it posits that language choices are always

functional and tied to three meta-functions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual (Halliday 1994). Thus, linguistic patterns in summary passages may shape how students interpret their societal roles, hierarchies, and values. Although the WASSCE examination is designed for standardised assessment, its implications transcend pedagogy. As Ogungbe et al. (2023) contended, language in assessment texts can serve as a mechanism of epistemic control, shaping what is considered valid knowledge. This is particularly concerning when texts normalise marginalising representations of gender, ethnicity, or youth or when they fail to present a diversity of viewpoints. In doing so, such texts risk reinforcing hegemonic ideologies under the guise of an education.

Statement of the Problem

Despite widespread recognition of the importance of English language proficiency for academic success in Nigeria, persistent failure in the summary writing component of the WASSCE exams remains a major concern. WAEC chief examiners' reports from recent years have consistently pointed to students' poor performance in this section, citing challenges in identifying main ideas, expressing them concisely, and avoiding repetition or interpretation. While pedagogical factors such as inadequate instructional techniques and curriculum design are often blamed, insufficient attention has been paid to the ideological dimensions of exam texts themselves. What ideologies do these passages convey? How do they shape students' views on society and citizenship? Are certain groups privileged or marginalised through these texts?

Moreover, critical discourse scholars, such as van Dijk (1998) and Fairclough (2001), argue that educational discourse is never ideologically neutral; rather, it reflects broader power relations in society. However, few studies have systematically applied CDA to WASSCE texts. Existing research has

either focused on curriculum content (Abiola et al., 2023) or general comprehension levels (Ali, 2016), without a specific focus on how power, ideology, and discourse intersect in summary passages. This gap becomes especially problematic in light of the increasing politicization of education and the use of examinations as tools for social control and norm reproduction. This study addresses this lacuna by conducting a CDA of selected WASSCE English-language summary passages between 2020 and 2024.

Literature Review

The analysis of language use in educational settings has evolved from descriptive to critical paradigms that examine ideological underpinnings of discourse. Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) offers a powerful lens through which institutional texts such as national examination passages may be interrogated for their implicit reproduction of social structures, dominant ideologies, and power asymmetries (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1998). CDA scholars argue that language both reflects and constructs social reality; therefore, institutional texts, including those used in high-stakes assessments, such as the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), are ideologically charged and politically consequential.

CDA emerged from a convergence of applied linguistics and social theory, underpinned by the idea that texts are not autonomous but are tied to the social conditions of their production and interpretation (Wodak & Meyer, 2001). The foundational model of Fairclough (1992) posits that discourse operates in three dimensions: textual practice, discursive practice, and social practice. This model allows analysts to unpack how linguistic choices such as modality, transitivity, and intertextuality reflect ideologies and sustain power relations. Fairclough's approach is particularly apt for examining WASSCE

texts, which often adopt formal registers, hierarchical role assignments, and moral imperatives consistent with state-sanctioned norms

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL), developed by Halliday (1994), supports this endeavour by offering tools to decode how texts realise experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings. Transitivity analysis, a key component of ideational metafunction, enables the analyst to examine how agency is assigned in exam texts - who are represented as acting, affected, or responsible. In the WASSCE summary passages, recurrent patterns have shown that government or institutional actors are frequently constructed as problem-solvers, while youths or citizens are portrayed as subjects requiring correction or compliance. This reproduces what Althusser (1971) referred to as interpellation, wherein the state constructs ideal citizens through ideological apparatuses, such as education. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive model further complements this framework by asserting that ideologies reside in mental models shared by groups. He argues that educational texts are a key site for the transmission of such ideologies, because they shape the cognitive environments of students who repeatedly engage with institutional narratives (van Dijk, 1993). The discourses embedded in WASSCE texts are not arbitrary, but are aligned with dominant societal themes such as nationalism, morality, and productivity. CDA thus allows for the interrogation of how discourse in assessment materials constructs social identities and legitimizes particular worldviews while marginalizing others

Empirical studies within the Nigerian framework have reinforced these theoretical insights. Abiola et al. (2023) conducted a content analysis of WAEC comprehension passages over 24 years and found that over 33% of texts were socio-economic in nature, often addressing themes such as

unemployment, civic duty, and youth morality. These themes, while educational on the surface, also reflect macro-ideological concerns of the state and often prescribe behavioural norms. Moreover, 87.5% of the texts were “newly composed” rather than excerpted, indicating a high degree of institutional control over the ideological framing of the passages. Local-origin texts dominated (62.5%), suggesting a nationalistic preference; however, this localisation did not always reflect inclusive or progressive representations of marginalised groups.

Scholars such as Olagbaju (2019) and Aniga and Ellah (2010) have also drawn attention to pedagogical limitations and ideological biases in the WASSCE English Language curriculum. Their findings suggest that summary writing in WASSCE often emphasizes precision, conformity, and surface neutrality, which aligns with the disciplinary functions of language in institutional settings. While students are assessed for their ability to extract main ideas, the broader ideological dimension - what those ideas represent and how they frame the world - is seldom acknowledged in teaching or policy.

Wodak’s discourse – historical approach further enables an understanding of the contextual layers embedded in WASSCE text. This includes the institutional setting (WAEC as an authority), the socio-political context (post-colonial West Africa), and the ideological currents (moral nationalism, neoliberal development) that influence text construction and interpretation. For instance, during periods of political instability or public health crises, texts may feature themes such as civic duty, public hygiene, or national development, which position the reader as a responsible subject aligned with state objectives.

Interestingly, content analysis by Edem (2024) reveals a sharp decline in the use of

critical or evaluative comprehension questions in WASSCE exams—only 4.2%—compared to over 93% for literal and grammatical structure questions. This finding suggests an institutional preference for textual obedience rather than critical engagement, reinforcing Bourdieu’s notion of symbolic violence, wherein schooling reproduces social inequality through sanctioned knowledge and linguistic capital.

In addition, Leeuwen’s (1996) model of social actor representation, which includes inclusion/exclusion, activation/passivation, and genericisation/specification, is relevant in analysing how WASSCE texts represent individuals and groups. For example, the recurring representation of youth as problematic or morally lax reinforces stereotypical subject positions that align with the paternalistic ideologies of control and reform. Collectively, these frameworks and empirical studies reveal that WASSCE summary passages function not merely as assessment instruments but also as ideological artifacts that contribute to shaping national identity, citizenship, and morality. The ideological content of these texts is subtle and systematic, and often escapes notice because of their routine use in classroom settings. Therefore, this literature review justifies the need for a critical interrogation of WASSCE summary passages using CDA and SFL methods that uncover both micro-linguistic patterns and macro-social ideologies encoded in text.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach within the framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). CDA is particularly suited for interrogating institutional discourse, where language is used not only to convey information, but also to construct social relations, enforce ideological positions, and reproduce dominant power structures (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1993). As the WASSCE

English Language Summary Passages are centrally produced and administered to millions of students across West Africa, they represent a rich site for critical textual investigation, especially regarding how young learners are ideologically positioned through language.

The study draws theoretically from Norman Fairclough's three-dimensional model of discourse, which conceptualises language as simultaneously a text, discursive practice, and social practice. This model enables the researcher to move beyond surface linguistic features to examine the institutional and ideological implications of the discourse. Additionally, van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory emphasises the role of discourse in shaping social knowledge and group ideologies. According to van Dijk (1998), discourse is a strategic site for controlling shared mental models, particularly in institutional contexts, such as education. Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) further complements these frameworks, providing a toolkit for analysing how texts enact ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings through choices in grammar and lexis (Halliday, 1994). SFL facilitates the examination of transitivity, mood, modality, and thematic structures, which often encode social power and normative expectations.

The primary data for this study consist of five WASSCE summary passages selected from the examination years spanning 2020 to 2024. These texts were purposively sampled based on their availability in official WAEC publications and verified using educational archives. The selection was guided by thematic variety, representation of contemporary social issues, and the recurrence of ideologically dense narratives such as youth responsibility, moral instruction, governance, and civic behaviour. This timeframe is particularly significant given its alignment with socio-political shifts in the region, including the COVID-19

pandemic, economic downturns, and intensifying discourses on governance and national development.

Each selected text was subjected to a multilayered analysis based on Fairclough's model. At the textual level, close reading was conducted to identify recurring patterns in vocabulary, grammar, and coherence. Transitivity structures are especially important for revealing who is positioned as agentive or passive in social processes, a key indicator of ideological positioning. For instance, when government bodies are represented through material process verbs like "implemented" or "intervened", while youths are constructed through mental or behavioural processes like "should understand" or "need to learn", a discursive asymmetry emerges. Similarly, modality was analysed to assess how obligation, certainty, and authority are linguistically expressed, often in ways that encode moral imperative or sociopolitical normativity.

The discursive practice dimension involved interrogating the socio-institutional context of the WASSCE's text production and distribution. As a high-stakes examination body, the WAEC plays a powerful role in determining what kinds of knowledge and language practices are sanctioned within educational systems. Its texts, while presented as objective instruments of evaluation, are also tools of ideological socialisation. This analytical stage considered how WASSCE intertextually draws from public health campaigns, state development narratives, NGO programming, and civic education, all of which converge to reflect the dominant social ideologies. At the social practice level, this study examined how the selected texts reinforced or challenged broader hegemonic structures.

Data Analysis

Language used in institutional texts, such as public examinations, is never neutral.

As Norman Fairclough (1995) emphasizes, discourse is a form of social practice that both reflects and constitutes ideology and power relations. The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) functions as a powerful gatekeeper that evaluates linguistic competence and subtly transmits normative values through prescribed texts. This study employs Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to examine five WASSCE English Language summary passages administered between 2020 and 2024.

Analysis of 2020 WAEC Summary Passage

The 2020 summary passage recounts the personal experiences of a mother who travels to Lagos unannounced and faces unexpected challenges upon arrival. At the surface level, the narrative appears benign and anecdotal; however, Fairclough's three-dimensional model allows us to interrogate the deeper ideological structures embedded within the text.

Textual Analysis (Fairclough / Halliday)

Linguistically, the text is constructed in a conversational and anecdotal style using first-person narration ("My mother never thought it necessary..."). This personalisation fosters empathy but also invites the reader to internalise embedded moral lessons. The transitivity structures in the text subtly position the mother as a passive recipient of modern urban realities ("She met the cold unfriendly stare of a complete stranger"), while modernity itself—represented by the city, the watchman, and the taxi driver—is agentive and unyielding.

Modal verbs such as "*should*," "*must*," and "*could not*" are used sparingly but suggest norms of behaviour: "*She could not communicate effectively...*" foregrounds generational and linguistic barriers. The clause structures rely on material processes ("boarded", "called", "drove off") to illustrate movement and dislocation. There is also an implicit critique of urban alienation, conveyed through lexical choices like "cold," "unfriendly," and "stranger."

Discursive Practice

WAEC's choice of domestic, intergenerational narrative is ideologically significant. By placing moral failure at the centre of the story, the children's failure to anticipate the mother's needs, the text projects an ideal of familial obligation and social responsibility. The message to young readers is clear: modern lifestyles must not erode the traditional African values of kinship and hospitality. The intertextual echoes in the narrative also draw from common themes in civic education and Nollywood media, particularly the conflict between rural and urban complexity. Van Dijk (1998) would argue that this text reinforces shared "mental models" about aging, motherhood, and urban society, warning youth about the dangers of negligence and individualism.

Social Practice

At the social practice level, the 2020 passage reflects broader anxieties about cultural erosion and generational disconnects in postcolonial societies undergoing rapid urbanisation. It discursively privileges rural morality over urban modernity and aligns with state-endorsed campaigns on family cohesion and moral upbringing. The ideological implication is that youth must act as cultural bridges rather than rebels. This positions WAEC not only as a linguistic evaluator, but also as a moral instructor.

Analysis of 2021 WAEC Summary Passage

The 2021 Summary Passage explores the causes and consequences of tomato and food scarcity in Africa. At face value, the text is informational and structured as an exposition for agricultural challenges. However, a deeper discourse analysis reveals how institutional texts like this do more than inform; they construct relationships between citizens, the state, and socio-economic responsibility.

Textual Analysis (Fairclough / Halliday)

The passage employs a descriptive and formal tone heavily reliant on material processes and causative constructions. Verbs such as “identified”, “affected”, “destroyed”, “spoil”, “blame”, and “support” signal action and attribution. The use of agentive noun phrases such as “*experts identified*”, “*transporters blame*”, and “*government must support*” reveal how actors are assigned or denied responsibility. This aligns with Halliday’s concept of transitivity, in which language choices position social actors within power structures. A critical linguistic feature is the passive construction in statements such as: “*Farmers do not have access to storage facilities...*” and “*a lot of the farm produce is eventually trashed...*” These obscure specific agents of neglect while drawing attention to systemic failure. This linguistic pattern implies institutional accountability without naming names. Modality also plays a key role in ideology. Sentences like “*Governments must encourage...*” and “*Government should also educate...*” show high obligation modality, positioning the government as an authoritative but expected provider. The repetition of modal verbs with strong obligation values constructs a moral framework that holds the state accountable for food security.

Discursive Practice

WAEC’s decision to frame food insecurity through the lens of agricultural inefficiency and government intervention draws from broader discourses on national policy, media campaigns, and development rhetoric. An intertextual blend of developmentalist discourse and civic instruction exists. The problems are framed as known and solvable, *and the problems are not insurmountable, especially because they have been identified*—a strategy that legitimises state-centred solutions while encouraging student optimism about change.

From van Dijk’s perspective, the text operates to shape “context models” that reflect the reader’s expected social knowledge: governments are paternal figures, farmers are helpless agents, and transporters are intermediaries driven by self-interest. Students internalise these relational structures through repeated exposure to such narratives in examination settings.

Social Practice

The sociopolitical undertone of this passage cannot be ignored. Set in a post-pandemic context (2021), it responds implicitly to food crises exacerbated by COVID-19 and climate change. The representation of scarcity is naturalised through phrases such as “disease that affected”, “ravaging army worms”, and “high cost of fuel”, externalising the problem while implicitly demanding internal and national solutions. Furthermore, the text constructs a subtle call for agricultural reform that aligns with state campaigns promoting mechanised farming. The use of language like “*manual labour*”, “*support mechanized farming*”, and “*reduce waste to barest minimum*” reflects neoliberal ideologies embedded in policy texts. Thus, the WASSCE summary acts as a proxy for policy dissemination, projecting desired attitudes and behaviours to the youth who read and summarise these texts.

Analysis of 2022 WAEC Summary Passage

The 2022 summary passage provides a compelling narrative of armed robbery, drawing connections between youth unemployment, moral decay, social inequality, and institutional failure. While the passage appears didactic and condemnatory on the surface, it reveals deep-seated ideological framing of deviance, class tensions, and the state’s role in societal breakdown.

Textual Analysis (Fairclough/Halliday)

Lexically, the passage is constructed with highly evaluative and emotive language. Words like “*condemnable*”, “*maimed*”,

“inhumane”, and *“lawlessness”* immediately set the tone of moral urgency. The passage uses predominantly material and relational processes to depict robbers’ actions - *“grab money”*, *“kill”*, *“maim”* - which create a vivid portrayal of violence and social disorder. Victims are constructed in a passive voice, reinforcing their vulnerability (*“have been maimed or killed”*), while perpetrators are active and agentive. Halliday’s transitivity analysis also reveals an implicit hierarchy of responsibility. Young robbers are cast both as victims and villains: *“They blame society for their plight...”* indicates an internalized justification narrative, whereas *“indulging in acts of crime”* connotes moral failure. This passage constantly shifts between explaining and blaming, balancing social causation with individual responsibility. Modality was used to assign moral weight. Phrases like *“it is rather unfortunate”*, *“it is therefore not surprising”*, and *“must surrender their children to the right way”* suggest inevitability and the need for corrective parental action. Such epistemic and deontic modalities reinforce traditional authority that figures parents, the state, and the media as corrective forces in moral degeneration.

Discursive Practice

This text draws from a mix of media discourse, civic education, and public moral campaigns. Intertextual references include critiques of the media (*“celebrates criminal celebrities”*), portrayals of corrupt elites (*“those who acquire wealth through dubious means”*), and civic expectations of the police. These references suggest that the WAEC is echoing national concerns about growing youth disillusionment, performative wealth culture, and compromised law enforcement. Using van Dijk’s socio-cognitive model, we can argue that the text seeks to reshape shared mental models among youth, constructing criminality not just as a legal violation, but as a moral collapse that must be corrected

through parenting, education, and discipline. The passage reproduces an ideology of moral dualism as good citizens versus criminal deviants but fails to deeply interrogate systemic inequality. Furthermore, it presents poor youth as both perpetrators and the products of failed systems. This double positioning is ideologically charged and blames the media and corrupt elites but stops short of critiquing structural poverty or governance directly. Instead, it pushes an internal behavioural correction narrative that subtly absolves systemic failures by emphasising reform through family and security agencies.

Social Practice

Within the broader West African sociopolitical context, this passage reflects mounting concerns over youth unemployment, cybercrime, and moral crisis themes central to post-pandemic public discourse in Nigeria and Ghana. The passage also aligns with recent government attempts to counteract “Yahoo Yahoo” culture and glamorised criminality in media through policies like the Cybercrime Act and social reorientation programmes.

Gendered framing is also notable. While it speaks of “young people,” the examples (armed robbers, ex-convicts) are implicitly male, reinforcing stereotypes of masculinity linked with deviance. This absence of female narratives, despite the gendered realities of poverty, reflects a selective ideological framing that minimises intersectional analysis. Ultimately, WAEC constructs a moral imperative for young readers: reject crime, mistrust ill-gotten wealth, and conform to lawful, industrious behaviour. This is not merely a language evaluation; it is value indoctrination.

Analysis of 2023 WAEC Summary Passage

At first glance, the 2023 passage presents a neutral health education narrative regarding oral hygiene. However, when examined through the lens of Critical

Discourse Analysis, the text emerges as a strategic tool of social regulation, which subtly reinforces medical authority, normalises institutional knowledge, and positions individuals as morally responsible for their own health.

Textual Analysis (Fairclough / Halliday)

The narrative is delivered in the first person, giving it an autobiographical and experiential tone: *"I recently attended a program entitled Healthy Smile. This personalisation encourages emotional identification and engagement. The speaker's transformation from ignorance to awareness creates a redemptive arc that positions oral hygiene as personal moral achievement. From the Hallidayan perspective, the text is rich in material and relational processes. Examples include: "bacteria live," "teeth are lost," "plaque accumulates," "toxins travel." These material clauses depict oral decay as an inevitable biological process unless they are actively countered. Health knowledge is constructed as procedural and action-based: "must brush and floss regularly," "move the brush using a circular motion," "clean one tooth at a time."*

The use of modality was particularly instructive. Repeated expressions of obligation such as *"must", "should", "needed to be", and "recommended"* convey a strong normative stance. For instance, *"people must avoid sugary food"* and *"must visit the dentist at least once every six months"* encode moral obligations under the guise of expert advice. This aligns with what Fairclough (1995) terms the "technologization of discourse" where language is used to regulate behaviour through institutional authority.

Discursive Practice

This passage draws intertextually from public health campaigns, educational manuals, and biomedical discourse. References to *"medical research", "dental plaque", "gingivitis", and "endocarditis"*

situate the text within a Western, scientific medical framework. This reinforces the ideological authority of institutional medicine while marginalising traditional or indigenous understandings of health. There is a strong pedagogical element in the structure of the passage that first describes the problem (oral disease), then offers step-by-step solutions (brushing techniques, flossing, balanced diet), and finally provides institutional advice (dental sealants, checkups). This structure mirrors classroom instruction and highlights WAEC's discursive role of WAEC in promoting state-aligned health literacy among students. From van Dijk's viewpoint, the passage shapes the reader's mental model of health as a personal responsibility rather than a structural issue. The omission of barriers to dental care, such as poverty, lack of access, or cultural stigmas, constructs an ideal citizen with access, knowledge, and autonomy. Those who failed to act accordingly were implicitly marked as irresponsible.

Social Practice

This text reflects larger neoliberal ideologies of self-care and individual responsibility. In post-COVID Africa, where public health systems are strained and citizens are increasingly told to take charge of their own well-being, such narratives support the transfer of responsibility from the state to individuals. The passage reflects this shift: the individual is both the patient and manager, the risk, and the solution. Furthermore, the focus on scientific literacy and bodily regulation echoes global development discourse that equates hygiene with modernity and civility. The reference to oral hygiene during pregnancy introduces a gendered dimension that positions women's bodies as critical sites of public health intervention. However, this also reinforces the instrumentalisation of women's health for foetal outcomes rather than their own well-being. Through this passage, WAEC serves

not just as an examiner of comprehension but also as a surrogate health agency, broadcasting public health norms to young learners in ways that are compulsory and exam-assessed. This heightens the institutional power of the examination body in shaping future citizens' behaviour, not only their grammar.

Analysis of 2024 WAEC Summary Passage

This passage is arguably the most ideologically charged of the five, as it engages directly in debates on gender, social mobility, family dynamics, and policy. The text presents a new social reality, the rise of the educated woman, while framing it against the supposed decline of the male student. It blends data-based commentary with social anxieties, positioning the text as a site of discursive struggles over gender roles and societal balance.

Textual Analysis (Fairclough / Halliday)

The narrative structure of the passage is comparable. Expressions like *"many parents were once known to be indifferent..."* and *"it is boys who appear to have become less serious..."* set up a diachronic contrast, which constructs progress for girls and decline for boys. This thematic structuring allows the WAEC to comment on gender without explicitly sounding alarmist, yet the language choices betray the underlying concern.

Transitivity is essential for this construction. Girls are associated with material and behavioural processes such as *"proceed for higher degrees," "register," "stay to learn,"* and *"obtain first-class honours."* These verbs depict girls as the active agents of success. Boys, on the other hand, are linked to negative behavioural processes like *"absent themselves," "engage in nefarious activities,"* and *"attend parties."* The transitive contrast subtly encodes moral judgement: girls are virtuous, and boys are wayward.

Modality also reveals an evaluative perspective. The phrase *"this calls for a determined effort..."* constructs the decline in male education as an emergency. Obligatory modal verbs (*"must," "should," "may result in"*) are used to predict social consequences such as marital conflict and policy imbalance, thereby moralising the statistics. Halliday's thematic structure is visible in how each paragraph introduces a causal claim (e.g. boys lag behind → girls dominate top jobs → families suffer imbalances). This builds a teleological narrative as a cause-and-effect flow that naturalises a crisis and demands policy attention.

Discursive Practice

Intertextually, this passage engages with global development discourses on girl-child empowerment while simultaneously introducing a counter-discourse: the crisis of the boy-child. WAEC's decision to highlight this issue reflects the growing social concern in Nigeria and Ghana regarding gender reversals in education. Recent media headlines and governmental policy shifts increasingly speak to the need to "save the boy-child", mirroring the narrative structure of this passage. Van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory helps us interpret the ideological schemata being activated. The passage constructs a binary schema: educated girls = progress and power; uneducated boys = social dysfunction. This mental model is reinforced through repeated contrasts in performance, behaviour, and consequences. However, the text also feminises success and masculinises failure. While girls are portrayed as high achievers, this success is occasionally framed as a threat *"women will use their higher number... to dominate males."* Thus, progress is simultaneously celebrated and problematised, reflecting a broader cultural ambivalence toward women's advancement in male-dominated societies. The discursive function of the WAEC here is to warn, not just to inform. It

educates students about trends, but also transmits affect concern, pride, fear, and imbalance, making the reader not only a learner but also a moral agent expected to engage in gender restoration.

Social Practice

In broader terms, this passage mirrors the post-feminist anxiety that girls' empowerment may result in boys' marginalisation. While the passage begins by celebrating the gains of the girlchild campaign, it quickly pivots to emphasise the

potential disruption to traditional family structures and gender harmony. This reflects persistent heteropatriarchal ideologies, where women's education is accepted only insofar as it does not destabilise domestic balance. In addition, the text encodes a neoliberal, meritocratic ideology. Positions of power are linked directly to academic performance, and framing success as purely outcome-based. Structural issues such as poverty, causes of school dropout, and gendered socialisation are omitted, implying that failure is self-inflicted and solvable through effort alone.

Table 1.1 Critical Discourse Analysis Matrix of WASSCE Summary Passages (2020–2024)

Year	Topic	Agentive Actors	Passive Actors	Ideology Constructed	Modality Used
2020	<i>Hospitality & Urban Dislocation</i>	Taxi driver, urban infrastructure, narrator's family	Elderly rural mother, traditional family values	Urban modernity alienates traditional norms; neglect of elders is morally wrong	Assumptive and advisory modality ("should," "could not")
2021	<i>Food Insecurity & Governance</i>	Government, transporters, experts	Farmers, rural consumers	Food crisis caused by systemic inefficiency; state must intervene to restore agricultural security	High obligation modality ("must encourage," "should educate")
2022	<i>Youth Crime & Moral Decline</i>	Robbers, rich elites, media, corrupt officers	Victims, unemployed youth, society	Crime as a response to inequality; youth deviance is preventable with moral and parental guidance	Moral imperative and evaluative modality ("should," "must," "may")
2023	<i>Oral Health & Personal Responsibility</i>	Dentists, facilitators, individuals	General public, pregnant women	Health is a personal duty; scientific literacy and preventive habits are moral obligations	Directive and normative modality ("must brush," "should avoid")
2024	<i>Gender & Educational Inequality</i>	Girls, policymakers, employers	Boys, husbands, unqualified men	Female academic success contrasts with male decline; imbalance may disrupt homes and institutions	Deontic and predictive modality ("calls for," "may result in")

The critical discourse patterns evident across the five WASSCE summary passages revealed a consistent configuration of linguistic and ideological strategies aimed at shaping normative consciousness among students. Four key dimensions—agentive actors, passive actors, ideological construction, and modality—provide insight into how power, identity, and social values are discursively embedded in these texts.

Agentive Actors: Across all five texts, institutional entities or socially sanctioned

figures such as government officials, experts, transporters, dentists, and policymakers predominantly occupy agentive roles. This discursive positioning reinforces the notion that power and agency reside with authoritative bodies or model citizens endowed with the capacity to act, advise, or correct. These actors are portrayed as solution providers, moral exemplars, or technical authorities, thus elevating institutional competence, while subtly promoting conformity to hegemonic norms.

Passive Actors: Conversely, passive roles are consistently assigned to marginalised or failing social groups, including rural elders, smallholder farmers, unemployed youth, general members of the public, and underperforming male students. These figures are not only presented as recipients of institutional intervention, but are also often constructed as deficient, vulnerable, or misguided. This framing reflects deeper ideological undercurrents of systemic neglect, intergenerational disconnect, and gendered marginalisation, positioning these groups as needing regulation, guidance, or redemption through state or expert intervention.

Constructed Ideology: Each passage subtly encodes and reinforces a distinct ideological message under the guise of a neutral comprehension exercise. The 2020 text promotes the reversal of familial and traditional values in modern urban contexts. The 2021 passage advocates state-led agricultural reforms, framing the government as both responsible and redemptive. The 2022 piece constructs youth crime as a symptom of moral decay and socioeconomic injustice, while the 2023 text promotes neoliberal health ideologies that emphasise self-discipline, preventive care, and biomedical authority. Finally, the 2024 passage reproduces contemporary gender discourses, both celebrating female academic advancement and expressing anxiety about the social implications of male educational decline. Together, these ideologies serve as tools for social conditioning, shaping readers' perception of ideal citizenship, morality, and social roles.

Modality Patterns: The modal choices in the passages further reveal the evaluative stance of each text. Governance- and health-related narratives (2021 and 2023) employ high obligation modalities such as “must”, “should”, and “need to”, conveying strong normative expectations from both state actors and individuals. In contrast, texts dealing with crime (2022) and gender imbalance (2024)

feature predictive and deontic modality, signalling warning, consequence, and the urgency of social correction (“may result in”, “calls for”). The 2020 passage, while less modalized, still relies on subtle cues to suggest preferred attitudes, primarily through assumptive and cautionary tone. Thus, modality across these texts functions as a linguistic mechanism of soft power, guiding interpretation, and encouraging compliance without overt coercion.

Conclusion

This study critically examined five WASSCE English Language summary passages administered between 2020 and 2024, using the theoretical frameworks of Fairclough's three-dimensional model, van Dijk's socio-cognitive theory, and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics. The analysis reveals that these passages, far from neutral evaluation tools, are deeply ideological texts that construct social realities, reinforce institutional norms, and encode dominant value systems. WAEC, as an examination body with continental influence, subtly shapes student consciousness through language that prescribes behaviour, moral standards, and civic identity.

Across the texts, a recurring pattern emerges: institutional actors are portrayed as agents of authority and moral correction, while individuals, especially youth, farmers, the elderly, or underperforming males, are positioned as passive, failing, or morally vulnerable. This asymmetry reflects and reproduces broader hegemonic narratives of responsibility, modernity, and social order. Furthermore, modality is strategically deployed to assign obligations, express urgency, or signal moral evaluation, reinforcing compliance with institutional expectations.

Ideologically, each passage advances a distinct but complementary agenda, from promoting traditional family values to

advocating individual responsibility and signalling gender anxieties. Taken together, these texts serve as pedagogical instruments of ideological reproduction, inculcating desired behaviours under the guise of comprehension practice. The findings underscore the need for critical language awareness in educational policy and pedagogy, as institutional texts such as these play a silent yet powerful role in shaping societal norms. Ultimately, the CDA provides a necessary lens to uncover these layers of meaning and interrogate the subtle exercise of discursive power in educational settings.

Recommendations

Considering the critical discourse analysis conducted on the WASSCE summary passages from 2020 to 2024, the following recommendations are proposed to promote more inclusive, balanced, and critically engaging language practices in standardised educational texts:

WAEC and similar examination bodies should ensure ideological neutrality and pluralism in content selection. While it is inevitable that texts reflect certain values, care must be taken to avoid one-sided portrayals of social issues, particularly those involving gender, youth behaviour, or institutional responsibility. Passages should be curated to include diverse voices, experiences, and perspectives that reflect the complexities of contemporary West African societies.

Curriculum developers and educators should incorporate critical reading frameworks into the secondary school pedagogy. Students should be taught not only to comprehend texts, but also to question them to recognise who speaks, who is silenced, and what ideologies are subtly being reinforced. This would equip learners with tools for interpreting meaning beyond surface-level grammar and vocabulary.

Text selection should avoid reinforcing stereotypes about gender roles, youth crimes, or poverty. Instead, text can be used to stimulate critical thinking about social justice, inclusion, and equity.

Future examinations should strike a balance between promoting moral values and encouraging open dialogue. Rather than presenting issues in binary moral terms (right vs. wrong, success vs. failure), texts should invite interpretive reflection and dialogue among the learners.

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AN EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTS OF WIDOWHOOD ON CHILDREN'S TRAINING IN SABO TASHA CATHOLIC CHURCH, KADUNA STATE

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This research focuses on the challenges that widowhood presents, particularly in patriarchal societies like Nigeria. Widows are often left alone to grapple through the challenges of raising families with little or no financial or emotional support. Consequently, these challenges have often impacted the educational, emotional and social development of their children. The study investigates these challenges as they affect widows in the Catholic Community of Sabon Tasha in Kaduna State. The study examines the multifaceted hardships experienced by this vulnerable group, such as financial insecurity, social stigma, emotional stress, and the absence of a father figure in their homes. Using a descriptive survey design, the study sampled 186 respondents, including widows, their children, and church officials, using structured questionnaires. The findings reveal that widowhood significantly affects the academic performance, psychological well-being, and social behaviour of children in widowed homes. The research concludes that widows need to be supported to overcome financial and emotional challenges. In this regard, both the church and government need to form a synergy to support and alleviate the plight of widows.

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Introduction

Widowhood is a widespread social phenomenon that presents considerable emotional, financial, and social challenges, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, where cultural norms and limited institutional support exacerbate these difficulties. Adeyemi (2020) highlights that widowhood disproportionately affects women in patriarchal societies, where men are typically primary providers, leaving widows responsible for child-rearing and family sustenance under challenging conditions. In Nigeria, traditional practices often marginalise widows by denying them property rights, employment opportunities, and community support, as noted by Olaniyi (2019). This marginalisation adversely impacts the ability of widows to meet the educational and emotional needs of their children. The absence of a father figure is associated with behavioural problems, poor academic outcomes, and difficulties in social

integration among children, as emphasised by Nwosu and Okoro (2021). This study focuses on the effects of widowhood on child training within the Sabon Tasha Catholic Church community, aiming to elucidate the difficulties widows face and assess church-led interventions, thereby contributing to the understanding of widowhood's impact on child development and informing strategies to enhance support for widowed families.

Statement of the Problem

Widowhood in Sabo Tasha, Kaduna, is accompanied by overwhelming economic, social, and emotional problems for widows who struggle to cater for their children to a final state whereby the children become deprived in terms of upbringing, schooling and welfare. Widows are frequently affected by poverty, limited employment opportunities, and social stigma, resulting in insufficient support for their children. The study seeks to examine the effect of widowhood in child training as well as

the role of the Church in assisting widowed families.

Objectives

This research paper aims to explore the following objectives:

1. The main challenges widows face when trying to raise their children in Sabo Tasha, Kaduna.
2. How losing a husband affects kids' education, emotions and social development.
3. Examine the role of the Catholic Church in alleviating the plight of widows
4. Practical ideas on how the community can better support widowed families.

Research Questions

This research is guided by the following questions:

1. What are the challenges that widows encounter in training their children in the Sabo Tasha Community?
2. What are the challenges that widowhood has on the educational, emotional and social development of children?
3. What is the support provided by the Catholic Church to widowed homes?
4. What are the policies that can be put in place to improve the training of children in widowed homes?

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was employed to examine the effects of widowhood on childbearing. The descriptive method helps to understand the challenges of widowhood in the educational, emotional, and social development of children from such homes. In administering the structured questionnaires to widowed mothers at Sabo Tasha Catholic Church, the quantitative approach will be used. This research will also use a simple random sampling technique to select respondents from the population. In this way, every widow and child have an equal probability of being selected, thus

reducing prejudices and bias. In selecting Church officials, a purposive sampling technique will be used. This is because they play a significant role in support programmes for widows. Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula, which recommends a sample size of 186 for a population of 360, will determine the sample size.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Research Question One: Opinion of Respondents on the Challenges Widows Face

S/N	Statement	Mean Score	Decision
1	Financial hardship makes it difficult for widows to provide for their children.	3.61	Accepted
2	Lack of emotional support affects widows' child guidance.	3.42	Accepted
3	The absence of a father can lead to disciplinary issues in training children.	3.58	Accepted
4	Widowhood exposes children to peer influence due to a lack of guidance.	3.47	Accepted
5	Cultural and/or societal stigma affect child training.	3.35	Accepted

The data presented in Table 1 highlight key challenges faced by widows in raising their children. The highest mean score (3.61) was recorded for financial hardship. This indicates that financial insecurity negatively impacts the outcomes of widows in providing for their children. Emotional support, with a mean score of 3.42, was also a factor militating against the widows' ability to effectively provide the right atmosphere for the emotional growth of their children. Table 1 also reveals that the absence of a father, peer influence due to a lack of guidance, and stigmatisation of children from widowed homes tend to have a negative impact in the upbringing of children.

Table 2: Research Question Two: Opinion of respondents on the effect on Children's Development

S/N	Statement	Mean Score	Decision
1	Widowhood affects academic performance due to financial struggles.	3.56	Accepted
2	Children of widows often experience trauma and depression.	3.44	Accepted
3	The lack of parental guidance leads to social withdrawal or aggression.	3.51	Accepted
4	Children from widowed homes have self-esteem issues.	3.39	Accepted
5	The absence of a father can affect children's moral and social values.	3.45	Accepted

The view of respondents on the effects of widowhood on the development of children is what Table 2 indicates. This table reveals a major concern of widows across educational, emotional, and behavioural variables. As indicated above, this table also reveals that financial struggles, with a mean score of 3.56, affect the children of widows. The respondents also affirmed that children in widowed homes are frequently subjected to emotional distress, including trauma and depression.

Consequently, the above negatively impacts their social and behavioural development, causing them to withdraw due to the lack of self-esteem. The problem is exacerbated by the absence of a father figure to provide moral and social guidance.

Table 3: Research Question Three: Opinion of Respondents on the Church's Support for Widows

S/N	Statement	Mean Score	Decision
1	The church provides financial assistance to widows.	3.16	Accepted
2	Counselling services are available for widows and their children.	3.25	Accepted
3	The church organises skill acquisition programs.	3.35	Accepted
4	Special scholarships exist for children of widows.	3.01	Accepted
5	The church offers spiritual and emotional support.	3.45	Accepted

The responses of respondents under Table 3 reveal the support rendered by the church to widows in the community. The highest score of 3.45 was in spiritual and emotional support provided to widows and their children by the Catholic Church. Other areas of support include skill acquisition and counselling services. The least area of support is in the provision of scholarships for children of widows. Although this score is low, it is indicative of the church's commitment to the educational development of children in widowed homes.

Table 4: Research Question Four: Opinion of respondents on the strategies for Improvement

S/N	Statement	Mean Score	Decision
1	The government should provide social welfare for widows.	3.59	Accepted
2	Community programs should be created to support widowed families.	3.48	Accepted
3	The church should introduce mentorship	3.50	Accepted

	programs for the children of widows.		
4	Skill acquisition programs should be expanded to support widows.	3.56	Accepted
5	Special educational programs should target children of widowed mothers.	3.41	Accepted

The findings in Table 4 above show the respondents' responses to strategies for addressing the challenges faced by widows. Items 16-20 indicate that widows and children need to be supported to rise through the myriad of challenges that confront them. The respondents believe that social welfare is a top priority for this vulnerable group of individuals. They also suggest there should be community programs to support widows as well as their children. Other areas proposed for intervention include skills acquisition and support from the government, as well as increased support from the church.

Summary of Findings

The data revealed that widowhood has profound implications for children's academic, emotional, and social well-being. Responses indicated high agreement that children from widowed homes face academic decline (mean = 3.56), emotional trauma (mean = 3.44), and self-esteem issues (mean = 3.39). Social withdrawal or aggression and moral value deterioration were also common (means = 3.51 and 3.45). The role of the Catholic Church in offering assistance to widowed families through the provision of counselling services, financial aid, skill acquisition and emotional support was acknowledged by respondents. Nevertheless, the respondents also strongly advocated for a synergistic strategy of collaboration in government programs, community support systems, church mentorship initiatives and educational schemes that are targeted at vulnerable children of widows.

Discussion of Findings

The demographic characteristics of the respondents align with findings by Owolabi (2019), who reported that widowhood in Nigeria predominantly affects women within the productive age group (30–50 years), increasing their burden of care for children. Similarly, Chenube, O & Omumu (2011) noted that the majority of widows in urban communities possess at least secondary education, yet still face economic marginalisation due to limited employment opportunities. This corresponds with the high percentage of self-employed and unemployed widows in this study, confirming the link between educational attainment and underemployment in widowed households.

Regarding the challenges faced by widows in child training, this study aligns with Leinonen, Solantaus, & Punamäki (2002), who found that financial insecurity and emotional instability significantly hinder widows' ability to provide adequate parental guidance. In particular, Nwokoro (2016) emphasised the absence of a father figure as a critical factor leading to disciplinary lapses and peer pressure susceptibility among children in single-mother homes. These findings validate the high mean scores observed in this study on financial hardship, lack of emotional support, and cultural stigma, confirming that widowhood presents multiple layers of parenting challenges.

The effects of widowhood on children reported in this study resonate with Emorhievwunu & Emorhievwunu (2023), who emphasised that children from widowed homes often experience emotional trauma, low self-esteem, and poor academic performance. Likewise, Ismail, Murdiana, & Permadi (2024) affirmed that the absence of parental guidance, particularly from fathers, can lead to social withdrawal, aggression, and moral lapses in children. The findings here reflect these assertions, with high

agreement among respondents that widowhood affects educational, emotional, and social development, underscoring the psycho-social risks associated with growing up in a single-parent, widowed household.

Conclusion

This research has brought to light the significant economic burden and trauma that widows in urban and semi-urban settlements, such as Sabo Tasha, face in providing for their children, which hinders effective child upbringing. The research found that financial/economic insecurity is a significant challenge facing widows who are in dire straits due to an unstable income. In addition to this tremendous burden is the psychological and emotional trauma that accompanies grieving widows who find it challenging to cope with their situation, let alone provide a stable home amidst the disciplinary and developmental challenges such as poor academic performance, emotional instability, and social withdrawal that children and early adolescents encounter in the early years of human development.

This research has also highlighted the role the Catholic Church has played and continues to play. However, the church needs to do more to address the multidimensional needs of widows and mitigate the numerous challenges they face in society. The study recommends a synergistic approach between the church and governmental institutions to alleviate the burden faced by widows. This collaboration will provide a stronger social welfare system, skills acquisition, capacity building, and mentorship programmes. This will go a long way in helping and strengthening widows who have to grapple with so many challenges that they face every day to provide for their families. When the educational, economic, and psychological needs of widowed children are taken care of, society is rid of many societal miscreants who may be a nuisance to present and future generations. The well-being of children in

widowed homes is thus vital to broader societal stability and development.

Recommendations

1. The government should implement sustainable social welfare programs, including financial assistance and educational grants, specifically for widowed families.
2. Both the government and religious institutions should establish and expand professional counselling services for widows and their children to cope with emotional trauma.
3. Local communities should organise regular support forums and workshops to create a sense of belonging and empowerment for widows.
4. Stakeholders, including the church and NGOs, should provide scholarships and academic mentoring programs for children of widowed mothers to ensure their educational continuity.

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A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF ISLAMIC MORAL VALUES IN THE NIGERIAN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL CIVIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM

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Although it is commonly believed among educators and curriculum developers that moral values are infused into all subjects taught in the process of education, Civic Education in Nigeria stands out as one of the few subjects recognised specifically for its direct relevance to the moral development of secondary school students. Concerns about the increasing moral decay among youth have prompted questions about the effectiveness of morally based subjects in addressing immoral behaviour. This paper aims to critically analyse the content of the Civic Education curriculum, particularly examining the representation and emphasis given to the moral values and characters essential for morality from an Islamic perspective. To accomplish this, both digital copies obtained from the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) website and hard copies from secondary schools were thoroughly examined. Our analysis reveals a minimal inclusion of universal moral values, particularly those explicitly aligned with Islamic ethical principles, in the Civic Education curriculum. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive integration of moral values, including those rooted in Islamic ethics, to effectively address the moral development of secondary school students in Nigeria.

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Introduction

Morality holds a significant importance, the field of which is regarded as one of the most esteemed sciences. Many scholars emphasise its exceptional status when discussing its value in comparison to other sciences. Some see it as the noblest of all sciences as it deals with man, the noblest of all creatures (Alavi 2009), while others take it to the position of being the crown or essence of sciences, supporting their view by theorising that all other disciplines basically help the field of morality in revealing what is beneficial or harmful, good or evil—themes central to ethical considerations (Abu Iwad nd).

All the chaos and confusion recorded from previous societies were directly or indirectly attributed to the lack of adherence to the moral standards of that society. Since ancient times, various communities have been aware of the direct relationship that exists between morality and the well-being of

society as a whole. Consequently, it becomes a great concern for every nation to know how to uphold its moral system to help its citizens live the best possible ethical life (Hunter 2000, 4).

With the advent of literacy and schooling, parents expected that the schools would contribute positively to not only the skills of literacy but also to the moral education of children (McClellan 1992a, 12). Initially, religious texts e.g. Qur'an, and Catechism, were the major tools in teaching children elementary skills of literacy (Gada 2010, 81; McClellan 1992b, 9). Thus, children were expected to receive literacy hand in hand with morality embedded in the religious texts as it was a common belief that religion and morality were inextricably intertwined and moral education was taken as a means of maintaining religious orthodoxy as well as the primary responsibility of teachers (Gada 2010, 74-5; Ghazzali.2004, 8).

However, with the gradual influence of rationalisation and industrialization, moral education started to undergo modification across Western nations and beyond. Moral ideals were not only divorced from religion but also became relative and subjective (Himmelfarb 1994, 8; Norris, and Inglehart 2011, 1:1-3). Many Western educators advocated value-free schooling and proposed that teaching morality should be considered the province of home and religious places. The ironic result of secularization and indifference to moral education by schools and other agencies in the late twentieth century was a dramatic rise in disciplinary and behavioural problems, such as illegitimate children, especially among teenagers, alcoholism/drug addiction and violent crimes like homicide, rape, robbery, etc. (Assaqr nd, 56; Christie 1992, 5; Himmelfarb 1994, 223-234).

Although many agitations from different directions stressed the need for the revival of moral education in Western schools, a great number, however, are not advocating a reverse to the earlier religious approach due to the presupposition that it was “at best incomplete and at worst a threat to individual freedom” (McClellan 1992a, 79). Currently, some moral educational approaches like cognitive developmentalism, and value clarification have been introduced—a stand, as some critics postulated, which are not only failing currently but could hardly yield any positive change in the future (Hunter 2000, 76-78).

The history of Western-based schooling in Nigeria is intimately bound up with the history of Western education in Europe. Public and conventional private schools are extensions of Western education brought into the region during colonization. Researchers consistently established that Western education had not given enough attention to character and civic training in Nigeria. Despite this, the secondary school

curriculum includes various subjects that are believed to help curtail the concurrent prevalence of immoral acts among Nigerian youngsters.

Subjects like Civics Education, Social Studies, as well as Religious Studies, are believed to embody such content that will help students develop high moral values and hence become responsible members of society (Olaniyi and Oyelade 2018). According to the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council, the curriculum of Civic Education was designed with the view of helping students ‘to ‘acquire knowledge, attitude, values and basic skills that will help them to become responsible and disciplined members of their society’ (NERDC 2009). In the Senior Secondary Education Curriculum, Civic Education uniquely stands out as the sole morality-related subject among the compulsory subjects that all students, irrespective of their field of study, must undertake. In contrast, religious subjects like Islamic Studies and CRK are categorized under non-compulsory (elective) subjects.

However, due to the continuing rise of immoralities within and outside Nigerian educational institutions, many people raised the concern that either the present moral-based subjects are ineffectively implemented (Akinola 2011; Falade and Adeyemi 2015; Obiukwu and Chukwu 2019) or their contents do not incorporate other necessary components of moral ideals that will make it enough to bring about a good level of moral behaviour of people in the institutions and in the society at large (Sele 2021; Temitayo, Audu and Lukman 2014). This research seeks to examine whether the Civic Education curriculum (the only compulsory moral-related subject at the senior secondary level) encompasses the fundamental moral principles required to produce well-rounded individuals from an Islamic perspective.

Methodology

A qualitative and inductive approach was employed by incorporating both conceptual reflection and documentary analysis. The term Islamic moral values is used in this research to specifically refers to the virtues outlined in verse 90 of Surah al-Nahl. This verse, according to many Qur'anic exegetes—including Companions such as 'Abdullāh Ibn Mas'ud (RA) and 'Ali Ibn Abi Ṭalib (RA), and prominent Tabi'un like Ḥasan al-Baṣri and Qatada—is one of the most comprehensive Quranic verses addressing the concepts of good and evil (Fakhr al-Din al-Razi 1420AH, 20:259). In the first part of this verse, Allah (S.W.T.) enjoins three core values essential for achieving a morally upright society: Al-Adl (Justice), Al-Ihsan (goodness), and Ita' Dhil al-Qurba (Generosity towards relatives).

Conversely, the last part of the verse prohibits three major vices capable of ruining individuals and society as a whole: Al-Fahsha' (Unchastity), Al-Baghy (Arrogance) and Al-Munkar (Detestable). The term *Fahshā'* in this context is interpreted by scholars such as Ibn 'Abbas (RA), Imam al-Ṭabari, Fakhr al-Dīn al-Razi, and the authors of *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* as synonymous with *Zina* (adultery/fornication) (Ibn Kathīr 2003, Q.16:90). Al-Baghy has been described by Razi as a “devilish imaginative instinct” (*al-quwwah al-wahmiyyah al-shayṭaniyyah*) that incites one to feel superior to others (Fakhr al-Din al-Razi 1420AH, 20:261–262). Regarding Al-Munkar, Fakhr al-Din al-Razi explains it as extreme anger or violent rage (*al-quwwah al-ghaḍabiyyah al-ṣabiyyah*) that leads to harm, calling it Munkar (detestable) because such instincts are exceptionally harmful and morally repugnant (Fakhr al-Din al-Razi 1420AH, 20:261).

The third virtue enjoined in the verse, “Generosity towards relatives,” is considered a specification of benevolence; hence, it is integrated into the concept of Ihsan. Furthermore, the negative traits are transformed into their positive counterparts: Chastity (opposite of al-Fahsha), Humility and Modesty (absence of al-Baghy), and Forbearance (absence of al-Munkar). This transformation led to the identification of five key virtues to represent Islamic moral values: Al-Adl (Justice), Al-Ihsan (Goodness), Iffah (Chastity), Tawadu' (Humility and Modesty), and Hilm (Forbearance).

Simultaneously, a review of the Nigerian Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC) Civic Education Curriculum was undertaken in order to assess the extent to which the Islamic moral virtues are incorporated, with specific reference to the curriculum's coverage, depth, and instructional approach. Online Civic Education Materials/Lesson Notes from the Nigeria Federal Capital Territory (FCT) Education Management Information System (EMIS) were utilized for details about the Themes/Topics of the curriculum.

This study utilized ChatGPT, version March 2025, for language and structural improvement. However, the authors alone are responsible for all critical analyses, interpretations, and intellectual contributions presented in this work.

Results and Discussions

Table 1 outlines the themes and topics included in the Civic Education Curriculum for Senior Secondary School levels (SS1 to SS3). This breakdown highlights the specific topics intended to promote both moral and civic growth among students.

Table 1: SS1 to SS3 Civic Education Themes and Topics

SS1	SS2	SS3
Our Values i) Meaning and types of value e.g. Justice, selflessness, honesty. ii) Opportunity to defend oneself. iii) Involvement in community services.	Citizenship i) Importance of citizenship education.	Characteristics of Human Rights i) Characteristics and category of human rights
Emerging Issues i) HIV/Aids ii) Youth empowerment	Democracy and National Development i) Capitalist democracy	Dangers of Political Apathy i) Fighting the political apathy
Citizenship i) Goals of citizenship education	Dangers of Political Apathy i) Meaning and forms of apathy.	Public Service in Democracy
Representative Democracy i) Characteristics of democracy	Achieving Popular Participation in Politics i) Popular participation	Civil Society and Popular Participation i) Civil society ii) Popular participation
Pillars of Democracy i) The major pillars of democracy	Limitation of Human Rights i) Human Rights	Constitution of Democracy and the Rule of Law i) Democracy ii) Rule of law iii) Constitutional democracy
Human Rights i) Brief history background of UDHR ii) The seven core freedom of UDHR iii) Responsibility of individuals, groups and Government in UDHR	Drugs and Drug Abuse i) Drug Use and Abuse. ii) Effect of Drugs and Drug Abuse iii) Prevention of Drug Abuse iv) Drug Law, Enforcement and Administration	Human Trafficking
Cultism Law and Order i) Orderliness ii) Respect for constituted authority	Responsible Parenthood Traffic Regulations Relationships i) Interpersonal Relations ii) Inter-Communal Relationship	

Source: Nigerian Educational Research & Development Council (NERDC) website.

Keys: UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The most directly morality-related themes in the curriculum are "Our Values" and "Law and Order", taught only in SS1. In SS2, the themes of "Drugs and Drug Abuse" and "Relationships" cover some aspects of interpersonal and intercommunal relations, which can be indirectly linked to moral education. The themes taught in SS3 primarily focused on citizenship, human rights, democracy, and politics. The following section analyses morality-related topics in the Civic Education curriculum in light of the five key Islamic moral values.

The Concept of *Al-Adl* (Justice) in the Civic Education Curriculum

From the Islamic worldview, the term justice denotes placing things in their rightful place as opposed to tyranny (*zulm*). According to Ayoub, *Adl* refers to a balanced approach to all things, including life (Ayoub 1996, 22). It means putting things in their place, at their appointed times, for their purpose, in their proper ways, without excess or deficiency, advancing, or delaying. The Qur'an emphasises justice repeatedly,

commanding believers to uphold it, even in challenging situations.

O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm in justice, witnesses Allah, even if it is against yourselves or parents and relatives. (Qur'an 4:135).

This view of justice is not confined to legal fairness but extends to a balance in personal behaviour, equitable distribution of resources, impartiality in decision-making, and the protection of rights for all individuals, regardless of their race, gender, or social status. It is deeply tied to accountability to Allah (S.W.T.) and the moral responsibility to act with integrity and compassion.

Representation of *Al-Adl* (Justice) in the Curriculum

In all three years of Senior Secondary school, justice is only explicitly mentioned in the first-year Civic Education curriculum (SS One) as an example of positive values under general values. The curriculum theoretically identifies justice as a value associated with fairness, the absence of favouritism, and adherence to principles such as equality, equity, and ethics.

Gaps and Critique

Despite the importance of Justice (*Adl*) in developing an upright individual as well as the formation of a harmonious society, the Civic Education curriculum does not give justice an independent position but instead treats it as a subset of a broader topic of moral principles. This approach results in limited coverage and several missed opportunities to emphasise its significance. The key gaps include:

1. **Practical Implications:** The curriculum lacks a clear guide on how a student can develop and practice justice in everyday life, such as governance, legal systems, interpersonal relationships, and community building. This omission

hinders students' ability to inculcate justice as an actionable value.

2. **Societal Impact:** Justice plays a transformative role in addressing societal issues, such as corruption, inequality, and discrimination. However, its subordinate position in the curriculum undermines its potential to contribute to societal cohesion and development.
3. **Educational Priority:** By relegating justice to a sub-topic under general values, the curriculum lessens its importance as a fundamental principle of personal growth and societal harmony. Conversely, Justice deserves to be treated as a core moral value, with a distinct and independent position in the curriculum.
4. **Lack of Spiritual Grounding:** While the curriculum emphasises fairness and equality, it fails to explore deeper spiritual and ethical motivations for justice, as emphasised in Islamic teachings. In Islam, *Adl* is not only a procedural or legal concept but also a character trait deeply tied to being accountable to Allah (S.W.T.) and the moral obligation to maintain balance and fairness in all actions. Omitting this spiritual dimension would weaken the moral grounding of justice as a value, limiting its impact on students.

The Concept of *Al-Ihsan* (Kindness) in Civic Education Curriculum

The word *Ihsan*, derived from the Arabic root *h-s-n*, conveys meanings of beauty, goodness, and virtuousness. It is linguistically defined as "to do something beautifully or perfectly" and "to act with goodness and kindness" (Ibn Manzur 1414 A.H., 114-116). The review of Qur'anic verses, *Ahadith*, and several different views of Muslim scholars suggested that, Islamically, the term *Al-Ihsan* (Goodness) has two components:

- i) Striving for excellence in worship—for example, by worshipping Allah (S.W.T.) as if one sees Him. This understanding is based on the Prophet's (S.A.W.) own definition of *Ihsān*, in which he said: "*Al-Ihsan is to worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you cannot see Him, know that Allah surely sees you.*" (Al-Bukhari 1997, 6:300)
- ii) Being kind/good to his creatures by being compassionate, forgiving, generous, respectful, etc. Ibn Abbas (R.A.) in one of his narrations said:

Ihsan is to worship Allah as if you see Him and to love for people what you love for yourself; if he is a believer, you would love him to increase faith, and if he is an unbeliever, you would love him to become your brother in Islam. (Al-Shirbini 1285 A.H, 2:256)

Representation of *Al-Ihsan* (Kindness) in the Curriculum

The concept of *Ihsan* (goodness, and striving to do more than what is required) in the Senior Secondary School Civic Education curriculum is only identifiable by the context within the theme of 'Our Values' taught in SS1, specifically in the topics of 'Selflessness' and 'Involvement in Community Services.' These topics are mentioned as examples of positive values and are aligned with the various dimensions of *Ihsan*.

Selflessness is described as prioritising the happiness and welfare of others over personal interests, reflecting the altruistic essence of *Ihsan*. Likewise, the voluntary nature of community services relates to the core features of *Ihsan*, which emphasises exceeding obligations and performing good deeds selflessly for the benefit of others. Activities such as helping the elderly, organising educational programs, and providing relief materials embody the *Ihsan*-driven values of kindness, care, and compassion.

Gaps and Critique

1. **Lack of Explicit Emphasis:** The position given to *Ihsan* in the Civic Education curriculum is limited in the sense that it is only indirectly mentioned within the theme of 'Our Values' in SS1, specifically in the topics of 'Selflessness' and 'Involvement in Community Services.' This vague and contextual inclusion diminishes the significance of *Ihsan* as a foundational moral value, reducing its potential impact on fostering a deeper sense of excellence, altruism, and moral responsibility among the students.
2. **Lack of Spiritual Motivation:** While activities reflect positive social contributions, the description does not highlight the spiritual motivation behind such actions, which is central to *Ihsan*. In Islamic teachings, *Ihsan* involves performing good deeds out of love for Allah (S.W.T) and a sense of accountability to Him, not merely for societal recognition or obligation. This helps to ensure consistency and endurance.
3. **Absence of a Deeper Ethical Context:** The content does not emphasise the internal moral transformation that *Ihsan* entails. For example, *Ihsan* not only performs outwards acts of goodness but also cultivates inner sincerity (*ikhlas*), humility, and patience while serving others.
4. **No Mention of Excellence in Execution:** One of the core aspects of *Ihsan* is striving for excellence in everything one does. While the activities listed are commendable, there is no emphasis on the quality of service or the mindset of giving one's best to these tasks, as emphasised by *Ihsan*.

The Concept of *Al-Iffah* (Chastity) in Civic Education Curriculum

The concept of *Iffah* (chastity) here is restricted to one of its intrinsic dimensions:

abstaining from *Zina* (fornication and adultery). In Islam, *Zina* includes physical intimacy, a recurring gaze, and sexual or romantic relationships between members of the opposite sex outside the bounds of marriage. Thus, any kind of touch between non-*mahram* (opposite-sex) bodies, e.g. holding hands, cuddling, kissing, etc., is tantamount to fornication. It also involves any illicit speech or gaze (Muslim 2007, Hadith no. 6422). Islam strongly warns against not only committing but also approaching unlawful sexual relations, emphasizing that it is a grave immorality (*fahsha'*) and a destructive path that leads to social and moral corruption (Qur'an 17:32).

According to Qur'an 23:5-7, lawful sexual relations are strictly confined to marriage between a husband and wife, as the historically tolerated practice of concubinage in specific contexts is no longer applicable today. Believers are commanded to remain chaste if they cannot afford marriage:

And let those who do not find the means to marry keep themselves And let those who do not find the means to marry keep their chaste until Allah enriches them out of His bounty. (Qur'an 24:33)

This virtue serves as a preventive approach to safeguarding the chastity, responsibility, and well-being of society. It also helps one develop the habit of shyness, which is the head of all goodness.

Representation of *Al-Iffah* (Chastity) in the Curriculum

Despite the importance of *iffah* (chastity) as a moral principle, the Civic Education curriculum for senior secondary schools does not vividly address it. The only topic that appears somewhat related is the 'Emerging Issues' theme in SS1, which includes HIV/AIDS. However, this section does not focus on the prevention of fornication or on its moral and social consequences. Instead, it primarily educates students on the negative effects of HIV/AIDS and ways to protect themselves from

infection. One suggested preventive measure is condom use, which may implicitly convey an acceptance of fornication, provided it is done "safely."

Similarly, the 'Drugs and Drug Abuse' theme in SS2 could be indirectly linked to fornication, as substance abuse is often a contributing factor. However, the curriculum did not establish this connection. The stated objectives only required students to define drug abuse, identify different types of drugs, recognise symptoms, and learn prevention methods. No attempt has been made to correlate this with fornication or moral degradation.

Gaps and Critique

1. Lack of Practical Guidance on Chastity

2. The curriculum teaches abstinence from premarital sex and faithfulness within marriage, but does not provide an alternative guide for controlling sexual desires. Islamic teachings emphasise self-restraint, as follows:

- Encouraging early marriage when financially and physically capable (Al-Bukhari 1997; Hadith no. 1905 and 5066).
- Regular fasting for those unable to marry diminishes sexual urge (Al-Bukhari 1997, Hadith no. 1905 and 5066).
- Avoiding unnecessary loitering in public spaces (Al-Bukhari 1997; Hadith no. 2465)
- Lowering one's gaze (Qur'an 24:30-31) by refraining from looking at a *non-mahram* (someone of the opposite gender whom one can legally marry) or at whatever is feared to lead to *Fitnah* (fornication/adultery (Al-Qurtubi 1964, 12:223)).
- Avoiding seclusion with *non-mahram* individuals (Muslim 2007; Hadith no. 1341).
- Dressing modestly, especially for women (Qur'an 7:26).

- Keeping good company (Muslim 2007, Hadith no. 2628).
- The absence of these techniques may lead students to resort to alternative preventive measures, such as condom use, thereby normalizing fornication, which is prohibited in both Islam and Christianity, as well as in many Nigerian cultural traditions.

3. Narrow Focus on HIV/AIDS

Instead of presenting HIV/AIDS disease as a negative consequence of fornication, the curriculum treats it as an isolated topic. Islamic teachings warn that widespread fornication among people leads to the emergence of previously unknown diseases, as mentioned in a Hadith authenticated by Al-Albani in *Sahih al-Jami'*, (Hadith 6732):

Immorality never appears among a people to such an extent that they commit it openly, but plagues and diseases that were never known among their predecessors will spread among them. (Ibn Majah 2007, Hadith 4019).

Apart from HIV/AIDS, there are many other sexually transmitted infections arising from extramarital relationships. However, the curriculum does not bring these realities to the sight of the students so as to deter them from fornication. Instead, it shifts the focus from fearing the immoral act itself to fearing just one of its many negative consequences. This limited perspective weakens the moral deterrent effect, making the discussion narrow and less impactful.

To effectively promote chastity, the curriculum should incorporate comprehensive moral education that not only warns against the consequences of fornication but also equips students with ethical and practical tools to uphold chastity in their daily lives.

The Concept of *Hilm* (Forbearance) in the Civic Education Curriculum

The term *Hilm* in Islam refers to forbearance, wisdom, and self-restraint, particularly in the face of provocation or adversity. It simply represents the ability to control one's anger and respond with patience, understanding, and compassion, instead of reacting impulsively or harshly (Group of Authors, nd, 1:191).

Key Aspects of *Hilm* (Forbearance):

1. **Anger Management:** *Hilm* is about not getting angry easily and controlling one's emotions in difficult circumstances. It prevents harmful reactions like revenge or aggression.
2. **Wisdom and Patience:** It involves responding to situations with wisdom and patience, often forgiving others and showing gentleness.
3. **Divine Attribute:** One of Allah's names is "Al-Halim" (The Most Forbearing), which emphasizes that Allah (S.W.T.) is All-Forgiving and delays punishment in favour of Mercy.

Hilm (forbearance) cultivates emotional stability, wisdom, and respect for individuals while fostering social harmony, justice, and strong community bonds. It prevents conflicts, promotes ethical growth, and ensures a peaceful, morally upright society.

Representation of *Hilm* in the Curriculum

There is a trace of the concept of forbearance in SS1 civic education curriculum in the topic of "Orderliness", under the theme "Law and Order". This includes traits like listening skills, decorum, queuing culture, and training younger people. While these elements emphasize discipline and structured behaviour, they do not explicitly address emotional regulation in the face of provocation.

Similarly, in SS2, the theme "**Relationships**" portrays some traits such as **tolerance and patience** as crucial for

maintaining good interpersonal relationships. While these attributes are related to *hilm*, they are framed more as social skills rather than as essential virtues for managing anger and maintaining composure in difficult situations.

Gaps and Critique

1. Lack of Direct Anger Management Techniques

The curriculum remains silent on teaching students how to regulate anger or practice forbearance when faced with provocation. Though orderliness and patience are mentioned, they are not directly linked to emotional restraint or conflict resolution.

2. Absence of Teachings on Conflict Resolution and Emotional Regulation

The curriculum does not provide structured guidance on how students can manage strong emotions, de-escalate conflicts, or develop coping mechanisms for stress and frustration. Islamic teachings emphasise *hilm* as the ability to control one's temper, delay retaliation, and respond to provocation with wisdom—qualities that can be integrated into the curriculum through lessons on conflict resolution and emotional intelligence.

3. Narrow Scope of Self-Control Instruction

While patience and tolerance are mentioned, they are treated primarily as social virtues rather than essential components of moral character development. The curriculum places no emphasis on self-discipline approaches, such as mindfulness, self-reflection, or proactive anger management strategies, which are emphasised in Islamic teachings on *hilm*.

4. Overlooked Potential of Integrating Ethics and Religion

The moral framework of *hilm*, which is deeply rooted in both Islamic and broader ethical teachings, is not

explicitly linked to the development of personal virtues. Teaching students the spiritual and social benefits of forbearance, including its role in leadership, conflict resolution, and community building, enhances their moral and emotional intelligence.

The Concept of *Tawadu'* (Modesty+Humility) in Civic Education Curriculum

The trait *Tawadu'* is achieved by avoiding the belief that one is more intelligent or important than others, or that one's opinions, thoughts, or actions are superior. It stands in direct opposition to arrogance, which manifests by rejecting the truth and looking down on others. It is founded on the recognition that all worldly achievements and possessions are blessings from Allah (S.W.T.), not personal entitlements. Consequently, when encountering individuals who are less fortunate or of lower social standing, one should refrain from disdain and instead express gratitude to Allah (S.W.T.) for His preference and protection from the infliction (Group of Authors, nd, 1:157-8).

Having such traits fosters sincere submission to truth, freeing individuals from arrogance and self-deception. It nurtures harmony by eliminating resentment, vanity, and the burden of pride, thus allowing for genuine companionship and mutual respect. By promoting safety and understanding, humility dissolves grudges and hostility, uniting hearts and opening them to compassion. Ultimately, it elevates an individual's status, earning them both the love of others and a place of honor in society (Group of Authors nd, 1:153).

Representation of *Tawadu'* (Humility) in the Curriculum

The Civic Education curriculum does not include a specific theme or topic dedicated to *Tawadu'* (humility). However, elements of humility can be found indirectly in discussions on interpersonal relationships,

tolerance, and respect for authority. While students are taught leadership qualities and good citizenship, the focus is primarily on assertiveness, confidence, and individual success, often overlooking the balanced virtue of humility. The principle of *Tawadu'*—which encourages individuals to recognize the worth of others, avoid arrogance, and appreciate different perspectives—is not explicitly addressed.

Gaps and Critique

1. **Lack of Direct Emphasis on Humility**

The Civic Education curriculum does not explicitly highlight *Tawadu'* (humility) as a core virtue. While traits like respect and tolerance are mentioned, humility as a guiding principle is overlooked.

2. **Overemphasis on Assertiveness and Individual Success**

– The curriculum put priority in teaching students to be assertive, confident, and achieve personal worldly success, at the expense of teaching them to develop the habit of teamwork, good interpersonal relationship, and to be humble if placed in the position of leadership.

3. **Absence of Practical Application**

– Only few structured activities or discussions which encourage students to practice humility in real-life situations, such as appreciation of diverse opinions, are present in the curriculum.

4. **Relevance to Modern School Environments**

– In many schools today, a culture of competition, seeking for social status, and social comparison is prevalent, often leading to arrogance, bullying, and unhealthy rivalries. Without proper education on humility, students may struggle to develop mutual respect and genuine teamwork, which are essential for a cohesive society.

Conclusion

From the above discussion, the following conclusions can be drawn regarding the Civic

Education curriculum in Nigerian secondary schools:

1. **Limited Direct Integration:** While some aspects of Islamic moral values are present, they are indirectly addressed and dispersed across various topics rather than being explicitly emphasized.
2. **Focus on External Regulations:** Unlike Islamic approaches that emphasize inner moral development and sincerity (*Ikhlas*) in practicing virtues, the curriculum places greater emphasis on adherence to rules and laws rather than fostering deep moral and ethical development within students.
3. **Theoretical Approach without Practical Application:** Values are often presented in a simplified, theoretical manner without sufficient focus on practical strategies for implementation in real-life situations.
4. **Lack of Motivational and Ethical Foundation:** Islam ties moral values to divine reward and accountability before Allah (S.W.T.), encouraging consistent ethical behavior even in difficult situations where moral integrity may seem difficult and against one's self interest. Civic Education, however, lacks a strong motivational foundation beyond social expectations.
5. **Source of Moral Values:** Islamic morals are derived from the Quran, Hadith, and anecdotes from the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W.), providing a clear and unified source. Civic Education, on the other hand, is derived from Western culture, which is alien to Nigerian moral values, leading to a less cohesive understanding.

Recommendations

1. **Explicit Integration of Moral Values:** Key Islamic moral virtues, such as chastity, humility, and forbearance should be incorporated into the Civic Education curriculum, instead of teaching them indirectly under broader themes.
2. **Focus on Internal Moral Development:** Instead of focusing primarily on external

laws and rules, Civic Education should place greater emphasis on internal character formation. This can be achieved by incorporating certain topics which encourage reflective discussions on scenarios, such as ethical dilemmas, and the use of case studies which enable students to inculcate good character traits rather than focus on rote memorisation of rules and regulations.

3. **Practical Implementation Strategies:** Moral education should move beyond theoretical discussions by incorporating real-life applications, role models, and experiential learning through service projects, mentorship, and ethical decision-making exercises.
4. **Incorporation of Spiritual and Cultural Foundations:** Teaching moral values if performed within the context of other important motivational factors for the student, including religion and culture, is likely to be highly impactful. This approach is more likely to motivate the students to have a long-term commitment and resilience in practising ethical behaviour.
5. **Involvement of Community and Parents in the Curriculum Development:** It is very important that parents and community leaders should be involved in the development and implementation of the curriculum. This approach would ensure that the curriculum meets local expectations and reinforces community values.

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A STYLISTIC READING OF SELECTED PAST WEST AFRICAN SENIOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATE EXAMINATION COMPREHENSION PASSAGES (2011-2020)

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The study considered a stylistic reading of selected past West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) comprehension passages to unravel the linguistic peculiarity of the texts to guide students preparing for such examinations. Ten comprehension passages from 2011 to 2020 were sampled using both quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The two approaches became relevant for finding the statistics of the occurrence of linguistic variables and for textual explication. The study relied on Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistic theoretical framework. The findings showed that four linguistic elements were pervading and hold significant implications for candidates studying WASSCE: sentence types, grammatical names, figurative expressions, and replacing words/phrases with alternative words/phrases as used within context. Regarding sentence types, WASSCE passages deliberately featured simpler sentences (51.8%) to make the passages accessible to the students. However, other types of sentences were sparingly but randomly engaged to provide room for varying sentence types in comprehension passages. It was also found that questions on grammatical names featured a preponderance of clauses (80%) than phrases (20%). The adverbial clause tops the list of most featured grammatical names by 60% to underscore the utility purposes of the grammatical item in structures. In addition, metaphors and similes were the most persistent literary devices, with the former accounting for 60%. Lastly, on substituting words for other words within a context, adjectives were the most frequently featured (37 %). The study concluded that the pedagogical significance of stylistics in understanding examination texts cannot be overemphasised. Therefore, it is suggested that stylistics be incorporated into reading comprehension instruction to enhance learners' interpretive and analytical skills.

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Introduction

The West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE), administered by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC), includes comprehension passages as a significant component of English Language papers. WAEC underscores the importance of these passages in evaluating students' readiness for higher education and their overall language proficiency. The examination framework is designed to test a range of skills, including comprehension, vocabulary, and critical analysis, which are crucial for academic and professional success (Onuka & Akinyemi 2012:35).

Despite the importance of comprehension passages for assessing students' reading and critical thinking skills, there is a lack of in-depth stylistic analysis of these passages used by WASSCE and similar examinations to explore their linguistic characteristics in order to adequately equip the candidates. The gap created by a comprehensive understanding of the linguistic features employed in these passages in relation to students' ability to effectively engage with and interpret the texts has implications for education. Therefore, there is a need to conduct a stylistic analysis of selected past WASSCE comprehension

passages to uncover the underlying patterns to enhance both educators' and students' insights into the texts, thereby facilitating more effective reading comprehension strategies in the examination context. This study aims to identify the stylistic devices used by WASSCE in selected comprehension passages, explore how these stylistic devices contribute to the overall purpose of the passages, and examine the effectiveness of the stylistic choices made by writers in conveying their messages.

By analysing the stylistic elements used in past WASSCE comprehension passages, students can improve their understanding of texts. It can also help readers grasp intended and embedded meanings more effectively. Studying stylistic analysis used in the passages will encourage students to think critically about the choices made by writers in conveying their messages. Furthermore, understanding the styles employed in these comprehension passages will be of tremendous benefit to the students preparing for WASSCE and similar examinations. By familiarizing themselves with common stylistic devices and structures found in comprehension passages, students can approach examination questions with greater confidence and proficiency.

The educational benefits of stylistic analysis in language teaching have been well-documented. Widdowson (1975: 63) advocates for the inclusion of stylistic analysis in the language curriculum, arguing that it helps students appreciate the richness of language and develop critical thinking skills. Jeffries and McIntyre (2010:250) have also shown that stylistic analysis can significantly enhance students' interpretive abilities and their overall engagement with texts. Moreover, Short (1996:98) has considered the benefits of stylistics in developing students' writing skills, arguing that its understanding will enhance effective writing on the part of the students thereby

improving their writing by consciously employing similar technique. In the same vein, Adegbite (2005:50) highlights how stylistic analysis can be used to teach examination strategies. Crystal (2003:45) and Carter (2012:87) emphasize the importance of stylistic analysis in understanding language use in educational contexts. While Crystal (2003) highlights how stylistic features such as register, tone, and rhetorical devices can affect comprehension and interpretation, Carter (2012) discusses the pedagogical implications of stylistics, advocating for its inclusion in language education to enhance students' analytical skills and language awareness.

However, there remains a gap in the stylistic interrogation of WASSCE past comprehension passages to underpin the examination body's peculiarity. This research therefore considers a stylistic analysis of selected past WASSCE comprehension passages between 2011 and 2020 to identify recurrent linguistic trends for helping students in subsequent WASSCE and similar examinations.

Literature Review

The concept 'style' from which 'stylistics' stemmed from is an amorphous terminology. Its meaning depends on different factors dictated by individuals, situations, periods, and forms. This is the reason Leech and Short (2007) describe style as "the way in which language is used in a given context, by a given person, for a given purpose" (p. 11). Widdowson (1975:3) defines stylistics as "the study of literary discourse from a linguistic orientation". From the definitions offered by the two scholars, it becomes obvious that what the former refers to as 'language' is what the later means by 'linguistic orientation'. Lawal (1997) supports this argument by describing style as an aspect of language that deals with choices of diction, phrases, sentences, and

linguistic materials that are consistent and harmonious with the subject matter.

The above background has definitely situated the discipline of stylistics within linguistics. It can be described as a scientific study which focuses on the analysis and interpretation of texts through the linguistic resources inherent in the texts. Adepoju (2016) asserts that stylistics delves into linguistics – the scientific study of language – and abstract linguistics techniques appropriate for the description and explication of the text. According to Crystal (2003:460), “stylistics is a branch of linguistics which studies the features of situationally distinctive uses of language”. Although stylistics can have both linguistic and literary applications, the tools of operations have actually identified their emphases. Adepoju (2016) claims that while linguistic stylistics works with tools such as grammar, syntactic and phonological components of language, literary stylistics operates on values and aesthetics. Leech and Short (2007) assert that stylistics involves the study of styles used in literary and non-literary texts, focusing on the linguistic choices made by the author and their effects on the reader.

Leech & Short (1981) have tried to categorize the scope of stylistics into four, and these are the lexical, grammatical, figures of speech, context and cohesion. Isidore (2010) in trying to determine the ambits of each category postulates that the lexical categories will include noun, adjective, verbs and adverbs. This aspect combines two elements together, lexis and meaning otherwise known as lexico-semantic. Lyons (1971:45) buttresses that this level deals with the meaning of words and phrases, including how words are chosen and combined to convey specific meanings. The lexico-semantic level in linguistic analysis focuses on the meanings of words and phrases, examining how they are selected and combined to convey specific ideas. It includes exploring semantic relationships between words, their denotations, and connotations, which influence

the overall interpretation of a text or discourse. This level is crucial in understanding how language constructs meaning through lexical choices and semantic nuances.

The grammatical categories include general types of grammatical contractions such as phrases and clauses and their types. Chomsky (1957:76) opines that this level involves the study of sentence structure and grammar, including how sentences are formed and how different syntactic structures impact meaning and readability. The syntactic level, as explained by Chomsky, examines sentence structure and grammar, focusing on how sentences are constructed. It explores how different syntactic arrangements influence the meaning and readability of text. This level is essential for understanding the rules and patterns that govern sentence formation in a language. Variations in sentence structure, including length, complexity, and grammatical patterns, can affect the rhythm and emphasis of a text (Leech, 1969:45). For example, short, terse sentences may create a sense of urgency or tension, while long, flowing sentences can evoke a more contemplative or descriptive mood. Stylistic analysis looks at how these structural choices contribute to the overall stylistic effect of a piece of writing or speech.

Figures of speech examine all figures of grammatical and lexical constructions, phonological schemes and tropes. Stylistics analyzes the use of figures of speech such as metaphors, similes, and personification to convey meaning beyond the literal interpretation of words (Simpson, 2004:67). It refers to the use of words or expressions with a meaning that is different from the literal interpretation. Examples include metaphors, similes, personification, and hyperbole. These devices add layers of meaning and imagery to a text, making it more vivid and engaging for the reader or listener. Stylistic analysis examines how figurative language enhances the aesthetic appeal and communicative

effectiveness of language, allowing for varied interpretations and emotional responses.

Context and Cohesion consider ways in which one part of a text is linked to another (cohesion) and whether the writer addresses the reader directly or through the words or thought of some other character. Other area which is of significant linguistic consideration in stylistics is the graphological. Halliday & Hassan (1976:36) affirm that this level pertains to the visual presentation of text, including aspects such as typography, layout, and use of visuals like graphs or diagrams. For instance, in literary analysis, it might involve examining how a text's layout influences its meaning or impact on the reader. It explores how these visual aspects contribute to the overall meaning and reader's perception of the text.

However, for the purpose of this research, effort shall be concentrated on four aspects of stylistic features in the selected past WASSCE comprehension passages. These aspects are the sentence patterns, grammatical names of clauses/phrases, figurative expressions and lexical classes. By so doing, it is expected that the outcome will be of tremendous importance to the students preparing for WASSCE, and the teachers preparing them.

Comprehension passages are integral components of language examinations, designed to assess students' ability to understand and interpret written texts. According to Grabe (2009:15), reading comprehension is a multifaceted process that involves decoding, inferencing, and critical thinking. These passages test students' proficiency in understanding the literal and implied meanings, identifying the main ideas, and analyzing the text structure and language use. The purpose of comprehension passages in examinations like WASSCE is to evaluate students' reading skills, which are crucial for academic success and lifelong learning. They aim to measure various cognitive skills, including the ability to summarize, draw

inferences, and evaluate arguments (Snow 2002:23). Moreover, comprehension passages can help educators gauge the effectiveness of language instruction and curriculum design. Effective comprehension passages possess certain characteristics that enhance students' ability to comprehensively test their reading skills. According to Kintsch (1998:45), a well-crafted comprehension passage should be coherent, engaging, and appropriate for its intended audience. The text should present a clear and logical flow of ideas, facilitating readers' understanding and retention of information.

Additionally, comprehension passages should be varied in genre and content to expose students to different writing styles and subject matter. Duke (2000) emphasised the importance of including both narrative and expository texts in comprehension assessments, as they develop different reading skills and strategies (p. 68). This variety also helps create a more balanced and equitable assessment, catering to diverse student interests and backgrounds. A stylistic analysis of comprehension passages involves examining various linguistic elements that contribute to a text's meaning and effect.

The West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) comprehension passage is designed to test students' understanding and interpretation of written texts. The comprehension passages in WASSCE were carefully selected to reflect a wide range of linguistic and stylistic features. These passages often include excerpts from literature, articles, essays, and informational texts. Each passage was followed by a series of questions designed to test different aspects of comprehension, such as identifying main ideas, understanding vocabulary in context, making inferences, and analysing the author's purpose and tone. WASSCE comprehension passages were designed to assess various levels of reading comprehension skills. This involves basic comprehension of the text, where

students are required to identify the main ideas and supporting details explicitly stated in the passage (Anderson & Pearson 1984:25). Students must make inferences based on the provided information. This means interpreting meanings that are not directly stated but are implied within the text (Kintsch 1998:10).

Students are encouraged to analyse, evaluate, and critique the text. This involves distinguishing facts from opinions, recognising biases, and assessing the validity of arguments presented in the passage (Ennis 1993:179). Comprehension passages also test students' understanding and use of language. This includes determining the meaning of unfamiliar words and phrases based on the context in which they appear, which is a crucial skill. This requires students to use the surrounding text to infer meaning (Nagy & Scott 2000:73). Students are often asked to identify words with similar or opposite meanings, which helps enhance their vocabulary (Miller & Gildea 1987:98).

Identifying and understanding metaphors, similes, personification, and other figures of speech enriches students' interpretation of the text (Lakoff & Johnson 1980:2). Students must discern the author's tone (e.g. sarcastic, serious, humorous) and the mood of the passage (e.g. somber, joyful), which adds depth to their comprehension (Pennebaker, Booth, & Francis 2007:67). Applying themes or ideas from the passage to real-world situations or personal experiences makes learning more relevant and meaningful (Beck, McKeown, & Kucan 2002:57). Comparing and contrasting passages with other texts or contexts enhances critical thinking and comprehension (Smith 1989:23). Skimming and scanning techniques help students quickly grasp their main ideas and important details (Grabe & Stoller 2002:9). Prioritising questions based on difficulty and the time required to answer them is essential for maximising exam performance (Paris et al., 1991:2).

Adegbite and Olajide (2007) conducted research on WASSCE comprehension passages, and they confirmed that these texts are chosen to represent a variety of themes and styles, challenging students to apply their reading skills in different contexts (p. 101). A stylistic analysis of these passages can reveal insights into the linguistic choices made by the authors and how these choices affect comprehension and interpretation. The present study is an attempt to espouse the stylistic strategies inherent in selected WASSCE comprehension passages to expose the students to a deeper understanding of the passages. Drawing upon the foundational theories of stylistics explained above, this study employs a mixed-methods approach to dissect the linguistic intricacies of WASSCE comprehension passages.

Theoretical Framework

The Theoretical Framework adopted in this study is Halliday's (1994) Systemic Functional Grammar (SFG), which views language as a social semiotic system. It emphasises the functional aspects of language by considering how linguistic choices serve different purposes in communication. Halliday (1978) posits that language functions in three metafunctions: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. Ideational metafunction relates to the representation of reality, interpersonal to social interactions, and textual to the organisation of discourse (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004:29).

Ideational metafunction is concerned with the expression of content and the representation of experience. It involves the use of transitivity structures which include processes (verbs), participants (nouns), and circumstances (adverbials). For example, in comprehension passages, the choice of processes can reveal the writer's perspective and thematic focus of the text (Eggins, 2004:206). The interpersonal meta-function deals with social roles and relationships enacted through language. This involves mood and modality, which encompass the speaker's

attitude, certainty, and commitment. Analysing these features in comprehension passages can provide insights into the writer's stance and intended reader response (Thompson, 2014:54). Textual metafunction relates to the organisation of information within a text. It includes thematic structures, information flow, and cohesion. Understanding these elements in comprehension passages can help identify how the text guides the reader's interpretation and engagement (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004:64).

Research Methodology

Ten WASSCE comprehension passages were purposively selected from past English-language questions from 2011 to 2020. The passages which reflected diversity in terms of thematic preoccupations, styles, and communicative intentions were sourced from a collection of past WASSCE question papers, section one for those years. In the past, until 2013, the WAEC would set two comprehension passages as questions 6 and 7. Therefore, in each of 2011, 2012, and 2013, only one comprehension passage was selected: questions 7, 6, and 6, respectively. However, from 2014 to 2020, only one comprehension passage was selected each year. After the passages had been thoroughly read, four major linguistic choices; sentence types, word classes, grammatical names and figurative expressions, which were deployed by the writers of the passages, and used as questions, were noted. These linguistic elements constitute the data used in this study. The identified stylistic resources were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively using Halliday's (1979) Systemic Functional Grammar. The quantitative approach was used to determine the frequency of different linguistic choices through frequency tables and charts, whereas the qualitative method interrogated textual explication. The findings were interpreted in line with the resourcefulness of stylistics in enhancing comprehension.

Data Analysis

Sentence Types

The structure of the different sentences contained in a passage cannot be underestimated in determining the readability and comprehensibility of the comprehension passage. It is expected that a passage dominated by complex and hypotactic structures will prove somewhat inaccessible to students more than the one with simpler and clearer structures. Sentence structure refers to the way sentences are constructed, in terms of their components and relationships. It also refers to the way sentences are organised and constructed, using words and phrases to convey meaning. This involves the arrangement of elements within a sentence and how these elements function together to create coherent and grammatically correct statements. Sentences can be classified into two categories. These are the functional and structural sentence types. Functional types of sentences are determined by the use of which sentence can be put. This can be declarative, imperative, or interrogative. Meanwhile, structural types depend on the clause compositions of the sentence. This can be simple when it contains one main clause and complex when it contains at least one dependent and one independent clause. It can also be compound when a sentence comprises at least two main clauses. A sentence can be called a multiple sentence if there are three or more main clauses. Likewise, a sentence can be compound complex when it contains at least two main clauses and two or more dependent clauses. In the selected past WASSCE comprehension passages, sentence structures were of various types. The Pie Chart shown below illustrates the frequency of the sentence types in the selected WASSCE comprehension passages. This implication of the distribution is later on explained.

Table 1: Frequency of Sentence Structure in the Selected Passages

Passages	Simple	Compound	Complex	Compound-complex	Multiple	Total
2011	20	1	5	-	-	26
2012	19	3	7	1	-	30
2013	16	6	7	1	-	30
2014	10	3	4	-	-	21
2015	24	4	4	-	2	34
2016	12	15	4	1	1	33
2017	7	3	9	-	1	20
2018	15	7	3	-	2	27
2019	18	1	5	1	3	28
2020	7	9	5	-	1	22
Total	129	49	57	4	10	249
%	51.8%	19.7%	22.9%	1.6%	4%	100%

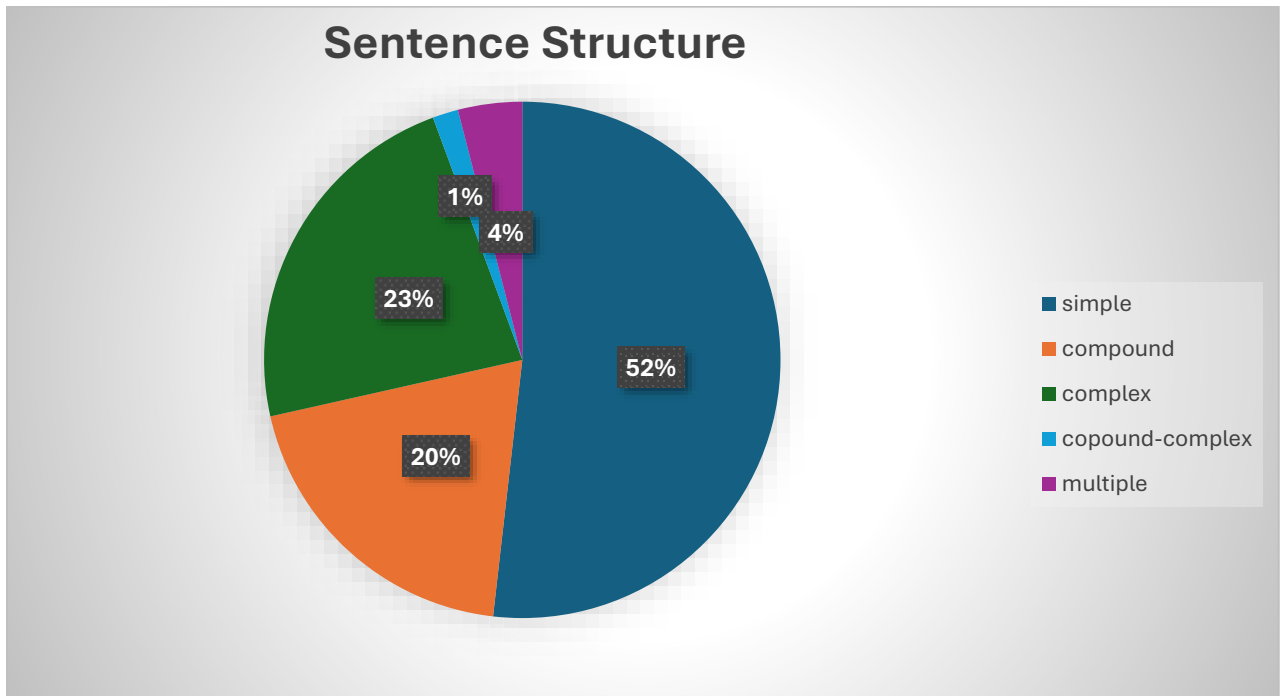
**Fig. 1: Frequency of Sentence Structure in the Selected Passages**

Fig. 1 above summarises the frequencies of the structural types of sentences in the comprehension passage from 2011 to 2020. Out of an aggregate number of 249 sentences, 129 (51.8%) were simple sentences, while 49 (19.7

%) were compound sentences. The number of complex sentences was 57 (22.9 %). Compound complex sentences were 4, which translates to 1.6%, while multiple sentences were 10, accounting for 4% of the total.

Table 2 Showing Frequencies of Questions on Grammatical Names

Grammatical Names		Years	Number of Times	%	Total
Phrases	Noun	2016	1	10%	20%
	Adjective	-	-	0%	
	Adverbial	2015	1	10%	
Clauses	Noun	2013, 2019	2	20%	80%
	Adjective	2018, 2020	2	20%	
	Adverbial	2011, 2012, 2014, 2017	4	40%	
Total			10	100%	100%

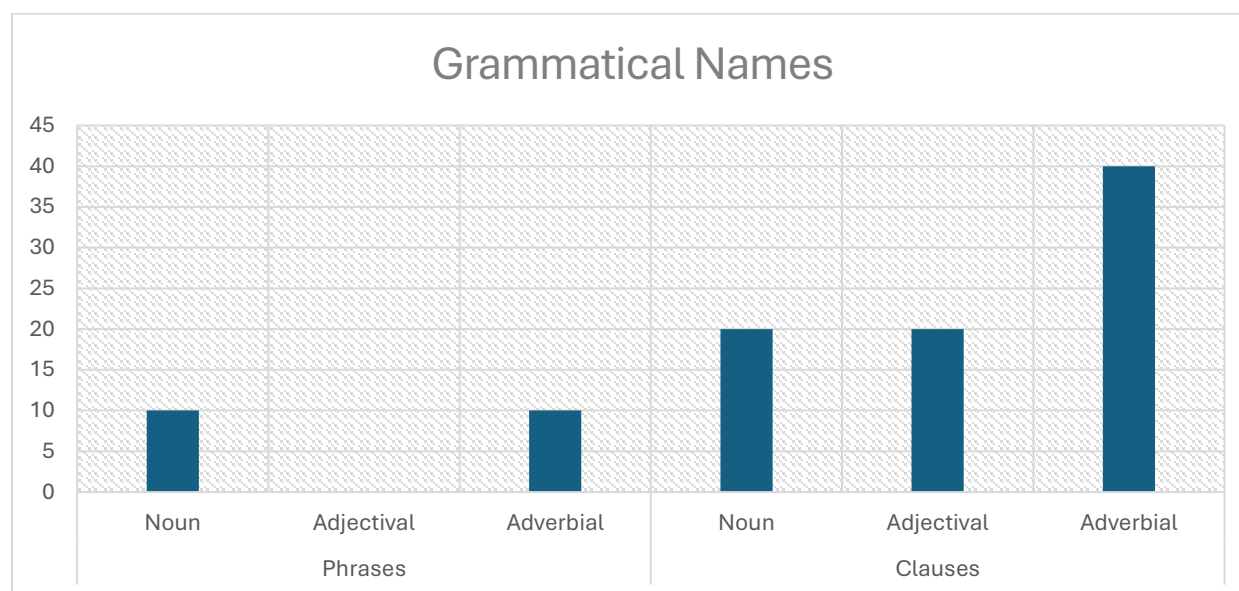


Fig. 2: Frequencies of Questions on Grammatical Names

The above charts are a display of the statistics of the questions asked about grammatical names between 2011 and 2020 in the WASSCE comprehension passages. Out of 10 questions, only one question, appearing in 2016, is a noun phrase (10 %); no question has been asked about the adjectival phrase in any year (0 %); and one

question has been asked about the adverbial phrase (2015) (10 %). Likewise, two questions were asked on noun clauses (2013, 2019), taking 20%; two questions on adjectival clauses (2018 and 2020), taking 20%; and four questions on adverbial clauses (2011, 2012, 2014, and 2017), taking 40%.

Table 3 Showing Frequencies of Questions on Figurative Expressions

Figurative Expressions	Year	Number of Times	%
Simile	2015, 2016, 2019, 2020	4	40%
Metaphor	2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2017, 2018	6	60%
Total		10	100%

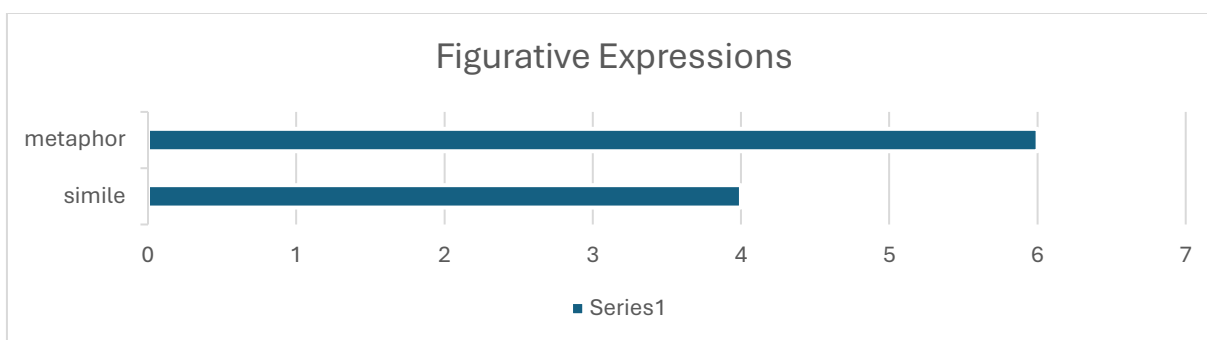


Fig. 3: Frequencies of Questions on Figurative Expressions

The above is a display of the statistics of questions asked on figures of speech over ten years. The finding reveals that out of several figurative expressions, only two, simile and

metaphor have frequent attraction year out of year. Questions on simile were asked four times (40%), as shown in the graph, whereas those on metaphors appeared six times (60%).

Table 4: Showing Statistics of Words to be Replaced with another Words

Year	Noun	Adjective	Adverb	Verb	Total
2011	-	3	2	-	5
2012	4	-	-	1	5
2013	-	-	3	2	5
2014	2	1	1	1	5
2015	1	4	-	-	5
2016	-	3	2	1	6
2017	-	1	-	4	5
2018	2	3	-	1	6
2019	1	1	1	3	6
2020	-	4	2	-	6
Total	10	20	11	13	54
%	18.5%	37%	20.4%	24.1%	100%

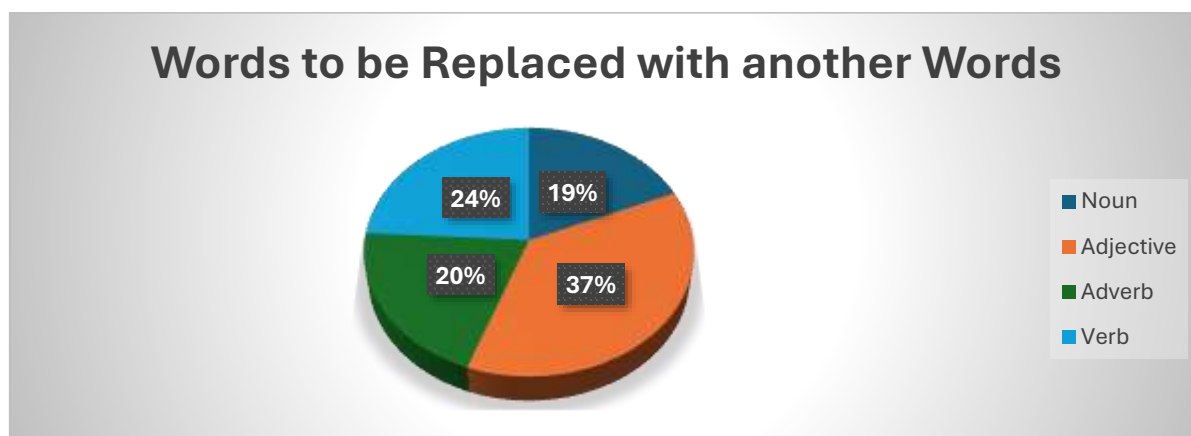


Fig. 4: Statistics of Words to be Replaced with other Words

The interpretation of the above illustrations on replacing words/phrases with other words/phrases indicates that there were 10 noun words translated to 18.5%, 20 adjectives (37%), 11 adverbs (20.4%), and 13 verbs (24.1%). Apart from adjectives which had a high percentage, others had relatively similar percentages.

Discussion of Findings

On the statistics of sentence types displayed in Fig. 1, it becomes obvious that the passages set by WASSCE are of moderate sizes, ranging between 21 and 33 sentences. This is deliberate considering the short time frame of 50 minutes allotted to the treatment of the passage which includes reading, understanding, and answering some questions on the texts. Thus, students are expected to read quickly and comprehend what they read at the same time. As a result, the most preponderantly used type of sentence structure is the simple sentence. Considering the level of the students for which the passages are set, this is not only deliberate but also expected. Simple sentences offer a clear and direct way to convey information. Since they typically contain a single independent clause, it allows for easy comprehension on the part of the reader and an avenue for stating facts in a straightforward manner. This clarity is crucial in comprehension passages, where the primary goal is to ensure that the reader can grasp essential points without ambiguity. There are instances of simple sentences containing as low as three to five words long. Examples can be found in the following structures: "They moved to the city" (WAEC, 2011), "He immediately accepted" (WAEC, 2012), "I was amazed" (2014), "The crowd was massive" (WAEC, 2018), and "How wrong she was!" (WAEC, 2020).

A critical look at the simple sentences displayed in the extracted samples reveals a situation in which writers can emphasise key information without unnecessary elaboration.

This focus is particularly useful in WASSCE comprehension passages, where the emphasis is on conveying specific details or facts clearly and concisely for students to be able to respond to specific questions on the passage. By using simple sentences, writers can minimise the risk of ambiguity. Simple sentences reduce the chance of misinterpretation by presenting one idea at a time. In the context of examinations such as the WASSCE, comprehension passages often aim to test students' ability to understand and interpret straightforward information. Simple sentences align with this objective by ensuring that the focus remains on fundamental comprehension of the text rather than on the complexities of the sentence structure. Educational texts, especially those used in standardised tests, often prioritise clear communication over stylistic complexity. Simple sentences are preferred, as they align with the educational goal of assessing students' basic reading and understanding skills without introducing the additional challenge of parsing complex sentence structures.

Although there are instances of the use of complex, compound, and other types of sentences, the intention is not to create confusion which such sentence types can generate, but to allow for stylistic purposes of varying sentence types in the passages. Complex sentences were the second most used type in selected WASSCE comprehension passages (57 %). In most cases, sentences are used to introduce cause and effect or cause and reason. Examples can be found in the following excerpted structures: "When she discovered my absence, she gave a heart-rending cry which at last brought my father out" (WAEC, 2016); "As he dragged it to the surface, we screamed in sudden terror" (WAEC, 2017), "I only vaguely remember my mother because I was too young when she passed on" (WAEC, 2019). With these examples, it

becomes obvious that most of the complex sentences are those which introduce adverbial clauses of different kinds, with the main clause introducing the sentence, while the subordinate clause follows or vice versa. In the first and second examples, the adverbial clause of time has been placed in the initial position, while in the third example; two adverbial clauses of reason and time have been placed at the final position of the sentence systematically. This has been observed to be a varying style in the structure of the complex sentences used in the selected past WASSCE questions.

The compound sentences comprised 49% of the total aggregate number of sentence types. They are mostly deployed to provide double or alternative points using either a syndetic or asyndetic. A syndetic uses coordinating conjunctions (and, or and but) while an asyndetic coordinates clauses without a connective. Examples are: "Then, he endured all the jokes cheerfully and indeed referred to himself as 'Mr. Why Hurry'" (WAEC, 2014); "I had resisted vehemently; I even ran away to hibernate with my maternal grandmother" (WAEC, 2013), "This softened him but did not prevent him from giving my cousins the spanking of their lives" (WAEC, 2016). The three extracted examples were compound sentences, each having two main clauses. The first was coordinated by 'and', the second by semi-colon (;) which is functioning as an asyndetic, and the third by another coordinating conjunction 'but'. The sentences still appear simple if each clause that constitutes the structure is read independently.

Both multiple and compound-complex sentences have been sparingly used by WASSCE examiners, accounting for 4% and 1.6%, respectively. This is deliberate, considering the level of the students being examined and the purpose of the examination. For example, "Before we left

the classroom for recess, for games or for home, I dutifully kept the materials safe, and as soon as we returned, I produced them" (WAEC, 2013), "But this much I know: that governor is still around; and so is the driver" (WAEC, 2015). These two structures are examples of compound complex and multiple sentences extracted from the corpus. The first is a compound-complex sentence with two main clauses and two dependent clauses which are adverbial clauses of time, while the second is a multiple sentence with three independent clauses, all joined by colon and semi-colon which function asyndetically in the structure. By implication, compound-complex sentences and multiple sentences are used to present events in climactic or anticlimactic order, such that one piece of information successively follows another, depending on the priority given to the pieces of information.

The analysis on the grammatical names shows a preference for questions on clauses (80%) over phrases (20%), with more questions on adverbial clauses than other ones (See Table 1 and Fig. 1). This may be intentional, considering the stylistic importance of an adverbial clause and its function in relation to the verb in any structure. An adverbial clause can explain cause, time, manner, and place of action, among other functions. Usually, the type of adverbial clause is dictated by the word introducing the clause. For instance, "As we watched from the distance ..." (2011), "As soon as the chit-chat ended ..." (2012), "... while I was watching a 9 o'clock television network programme ..." (2014) and "As he dragged it to the surface ..." (2017). An examination of the four adverbial clauses shows consistency in the pattern. Apart from the fact that all clauses are adverbial clauses of time, the words introducing them are the same, as', at least in three places. Even the fourth one which is introduced with a different word 'while' has the connotation of

‘as’ because the two words can be used interchangeably.

As noted earlier, both noun clauses and adjectival clauses appeared twice each in ten years. This also has implications for any student preparation for an examination. Unlike other grammatical names, noun clauses have varied types and functions within their sentences. This dynamism can be related to the subject and verb, object and verb, complement and subject, complement and object, and complement and preposition, and sometimes, in opposition to the subject or object. Therefore, candidates must be conversant with varied structures and functions. However, the two noun clauses featured for the questions in the two years have the same pattern and function. Example: “...that my role was crucial” (2013), “...that I could take care of myself” (2019). Each of the clauses is introduced by ‘that’ and they function as object of the verb in their respective sentences. The adjectival clauses featured also have structural semblance, although with different relativizers, which ‘and’ ‘who’ introducing them. For example: “...which went along with the hilarious drumming” (2018), “... who was also going to see her son” (2020). The candidates only need to familiarise themselves with the relative pronouns such as ‘who’, ‘which’, ‘whose’, ‘whom’, and ‘that’ which can be used to introduce an adjectival/relative clause.

The reason for the low percentage of questions regarding phrases can be explained stylistically. Students have the tendency of confusing phrases with clauses if they fail to master the structure properly. The students have the common erroneous idea that the clause is larger than the phrase by thinking only in terms of the length or number of words that make up the expression. While the examiners were aware of this misconception among the students, they deliberately asked questions on this aspect to give the candidate

a fair chance in the examination. However, students will need to have a good grasp of phrases and their different types to be able to answer any question on this aspect.

The analysis on figurative expressions (Table 3 and Fig. 3) reveals that only two figures of speech, simile and metaphor, were hammered. Although the two are figures of similarity, they have different ways of identifying them. Why simile compares between two entities using ‘as’ or ‘like’, metaphor makes a somewhat direct comparison. While simile is straightforward and easy to identify, metaphor is easily confused with other figurative expressions such as personification. Obviously, there are more questions on metaphors than on any other figurative expression in WASSCE. The implication is that as frequent as questions on these figurative expressions are, the candidates have not yet been able to master them well. However, the richness and resourcefulness of metaphors to embellish utterances, among all others, cannot be overemphasised.

The analysis in Table 4 and Fig. 4 illustrates the frequency of classes of words featured in the questions asking students to find alternative words/phrases to replace certain words/phrases from the passage. The number of words listed for this aspect varies between five (5) and six (6) every year. In the samples, fifty-four words were featured from 2011 to 2020, and out of this number, adjective has the highest number (37%). This intentionally was done to underscore the functional relevance of adjectives in enhancing clear and descriptive communication devoid of ambiguities. Therefore, the students are indirectly expected to master as many adjectives as they can. Another significant point noticed in the list of words featured is that all the words were content words. Content words include nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs, which carry semantic meanings unlike other classes

of words that are function words. It therefore means that students must deliberately enlarge the scope of their vocabulary of lexical words and also master their meanings. The test requires that if a word is a noun, only a noun word is expected to be used to replace it, ditto if it is a verb or another class of word. This makes it important for the students to consciously learn how to replace words appropriately within given contexts in order to develop good communication skill.

Conclusion

This study has underscored the relevance of stylistics in resolving problematic areas for both teachers and students in treating reading comprehension, by espousing the peculiar linguistic features of WASSCE comprehension passages purposively sampled from past questions between 2011 and 2020. The study has not only interrogated texts of the passages, but also the aspect of questions usually asked to determine implications for teaching and learning of nitty-gritty for mastering comprehension passages in WASSCE and similar examinations. It has demonstrated that the simple sentences were prevalent in WASSCE comprehension passages and this goes to recommend to educators that emphasis should be given to clarity and conciseness in comprehension texts. In addition, through statistical counting, which is one of the approaches of stylistics; different areas of concentration have been exposed for educators to take note of. Such areas of emphasis include simple sentence structure, adverbial clauses, simile and metaphorical use of language, and adjective as a class of word. This will go a long way in preparing students for different examinations on comprehension passages. It is recommended that stylistics be incorporated into the teaching of stylistics to identify areas of linguistic features that are prominent for questioning.

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