



# **TRANSFORMING AND MANAGING HIGHER EDUCATION IN AFRICA FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS**

**Proceedings of the African Academic Research Forum (AARF)**

*in collaboration with*

**The Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and Planning (NAEAP)**

## **2025 HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE**

*Editors*

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**7th-10th July, 2025**

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## **EDITOR'S DESK**

**T**he proceedings of the Transforming and Managing Higher Education in Africa for Global Competitiveness conference present a rich collection of scholarly works that address pressing issues confronting higher education systems in Africa within an increasingly globalized knowledge economy. This volume emanates from the 2025 Higher Education Conference jointly organized by the African Academic Research Forum (AARF), in collaboration with the Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and Planning (NAEAP).

The year's conference received over sixty (60) abstracts, from which forty-two (42) full papers were subsequently submitted by scholars from countries across Africa and the United States of America, reflecting the conference's international outlook and scholarly diversity. Participating countries included Malawi, Tanzania, Nigeria, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Ghana, and South Alabama in the United States of America. This diverse participation enriched the intellectual exchanges and ensured that the deliberations reflected varied institutional, national, and global perspectives.

The theme of the conference underscores the urgent need to strategically transform and manage higher education institutions in Africa to enhance their competitiveness in the global arena. The chapters in this proceeding address key issues such as governance, leadership, policy reform, quality assurance, digital transformation, international collaboration, funding, and capacity development in higher education.

Out of over 42 manuscripts received for consideration, only twenty-seven (27) were found publishable and accepted for inclusion in this proceeding after a rigorous double-blind peer review process. This selective process reflects the editorial board's commitment to academic rigor, originality, and relevance, ensuring that the contributions meet internationally acceptable scholarly standards.

We acknowledge the invaluable contributions of the reviewers, editorial board, conference organizers, and partner institutions whose dedication made this publication possible. We also extend our appreciation to all authors and participants for their intellectual engagement and commitment to advancing higher education scholarship in Africa. It is our expectation that the ideas, evidence, and recommendations presented in this volume will inform policy, guide institutional practice, and stimulate further research toward transforming and managing higher education in Africa for sustainable development and global competitiveness.

**Prof. M. O. B. Mohammed FNAEAP**

*Editor-in-Chief*

## PREFACE

**T**he African Academic Research Forum (AARF), in collaboration with the Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and Planning (NAEAP), Lagos State University Branch, is pleased to present the Proceedings of the International Conference on the theme “Transforming and Managing Higher Education in Africa for Global Competitiveness,” held from 7th to 10th July 2025 in Pretoria, South Africa.

The conference provided a robust intellectual platform for scholars, researchers, and practitioners to interrogate contemporary challenges and opportunities in African higher education within a global context. A total of sixty (60) abstracts were received, out of which forty-two (42) full papers were developed and subjected to a rigorous peer-review process. Ultimately, twenty-seven (27) high-quality papers successfully scaled through the academic hurdles and are published in this volume, reflecting scholarly depth, originality, and relevance.

The conference featured distinguished scholars whose contributions enriched its academic and practical value. The Keynote Address was delivered by Professor Kathija Yassim of the University of Johannesburg, South Africa, offering a compelling and thought-provoking perspective on transforming higher education systems for global relevance. Lead paper presentations by Professor Toyin Enikuomehin of Lagos State University, Nigeria, and Professor David Addae of the University of Ghana, Accra, provided critical insights into leadership, policy, and innovation in higher education. In addition, a highly engaging workshop on Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), facilitated by Dr. Linda Sue Hammonds, equipped participants with practical strategies for internationalizing teaching and learning through digital collaboration.

On behalf of the Local Organising Committee, I sincerely appreciate all contributors, reviewers, partners, and participants for their commitment to academic excellence and for making this conference a success. It is our hope that the ideas and findings presented in these proceedings will inform policy, inspire innovation, and advance higher education development in Africa and beyond.

**Prof. Lateef Oludare Yahya**

*LOC Chairman*

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# **GREENING THE CURRICULUM IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A PATHWAY TO EDUCATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

## **Being a Keynote Address**

*Presented at the African Academic Research Forum (AARF) and Nigerian Association for Educational Administration and Planning (NAEAP) Lagos State University Branch, Lagos State Chapter Conference on Transforming and Managing Higher Education in Africa for Global Competitiveness*

**Prof. Kathija Yassim**

*Department of Education Leadership & Management  
University of Johannesburg, South Africa*

### **Overview**

The urgency of global sustainability challenges necessitates a transformative approach to education, particularly in higher learning institutions. This keynote will explore the integration of sustainability principles into higher education curricula (also referred to as “greening the curriculum”) as a fundamental strategy for fostering sustainability consciousness and responsible decision-making among students. By embedding sustainability concepts across disciplines, higher education institutions can equip graduates with the knowledge and skills necessary to address complex ecological, social, and economic challenges. This keynote will examine various approaches to curriculum greening, including interdisciplinary learning, experiential education, and a green pedagogical approach. It will highlight the benefits of a sustainability-oriented curriculum, such as increased student engagement, the development of critical thinking, and enhanced employability in a rapidly evolving job market that prioritizes green jobs. Furthermore, the keynote will discuss institutional strategies for overcoming barriers to curriculum transformation, including faculty training, policy support, and stakeholder collaboration. Through a review of best practices and case studies from diverse educational contexts, this keynote will show the pivotal role of higher education in shaping a sustainable future. The keynote advocates for a holistic educational framework that not only imparts technical knowledge but also fosters ethical responsibility and global citizenship. Ultimately, greening the curriculum serves as a catalyst for broader societal change, ensuring that future generations are well-prepared to lead sustainable initiatives in their respective fields.

## **BRIDGING GENDER GAP IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: STRATEGIES FOR ADEQUATE REPRESENTATION OF FEMALES IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated gender disparities in leadership across African universities. Despite increased female participation in higher education, women remained underrepresented in leadership due to systemic and cultural barriers such as gender bias, limited mentorship, and inequitable institutional practices. Guided by Social Cognitive and Feminist theories, the research explored how social context and structural power dynamics shape women's leadership aspirations and advancement. Employing a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, data were collected from 125 academic and non-academic staff in Nigeria, South Africa, Kenya, and Ghana. Quantitative analyses revealed significant gender disparities in leadership roles ( $\chi^2 = 7.32, p = 0.007$ ) and perceptions of institutional support ( $p < 0.05$ ), while qualitative findings highlighted barriers including work-life conflict, discrimination, and imposter syndrome. Strategies like mentorship, leadership training, flexible work arrangements, and gender equity policies were generally viewed as moderately effective, though notable gender differences emerged in perceived impact. Findings provided the need for gender-sensitive policies, robust mentorship, inclusive leadership development, and cultural transformation to close the leadership gap. Promoting female leadership is not only vital for equity but also enhances institutional effectiveness and social transformation.*

**Keywords:** African universities, female leadership, gender equity, mentorship, systemic barriers.

### **Introduction**

The perceived underrepresentation of women in leadership positions across African universities reflects broader societal and institutional gender inequalities. Globally, women hold only 25% of higher education leadership roles (UNESCO, 2020), while in sub-Saharan Africa, this figure drops to below 15%, underscoring the persistent gender gap in academic governance (African Union, 2021). Although, global progress has been made toward gender equality, men continue to dominate leadership in tertiary institutions, often excluding women from key decision-making processes. This lack of diverse perspectives hampers innovation and limits universities' ability to address social, economic, and cultural challenges. This study addresses the persistent problem of women's underrepresentation in leadership positions within African universities and examines the systemic and cultural factors that sustain this disparity.

As hubs of knowledge and transformation, universities must advance gender equity in leadership to meet the United Nation Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those focused on gender equality and quality education. In Nigerian universities, women remain significantly underrepresented in leadership due to cultural norms, societal expectations, and institutional barriers. Research by Morley and Crossouard (2016) attributes this to patriarchal structures, work-life balance issues, and discriminatory practices. Despite growing female enrolment and achievements, women face limited advancement opportunities, tokenism, and increased scrutiny in male-dominated spaces (Morley, 2013). Moreover, Nigerian female staff often lack access to mentorship and supportive institutional policies (Odejimi & Okeke, 2022). Odhiambo (2011) highlights the need for inclusive, African feminist approaches to leadership in Kenyan universities, while Simbanegavi and Goronga (2025) emphasise diversity, equity, and inclusion in Zimbabwean academia. In Nigeria, strategies like mentorship, leadership training, and gender-sensitive reforms are essential, as shown in research by Yusuf et al. (2018). Promoting women in university leadership is not just a matter of representation but vital for institutional effectiveness and societal progress. Female representation in leadership not only promotes fairness but also improves organisational decision-making and innovation outcomes (Post & Byron, 2015). Yahya, Anwar, and Zaki (2024) stress the importance of addressing structural barriers, self-perception challenges, and unsupportive cultures to empower women. This paper examines gender disparities in leadership across Nigeria and other African universities, highlighting systemic barriers and proposing strategies to close the gender gap. It addresses a critical knowledge gap, specifically the lack of comparative data on gender equity in university leadership across African contexts, thereby informing policies that advance sustainable development and social justice.

## **Hypotheses**

1. There are no significant gender disparities in leadership roles within African universities.
2. Systemic and cultural factors do not significantly hinder women's advancement to leadership positions.
3. Actionable strategies have no significant impact on promoting female leadership in African universities.

## **Literature Review and Theoretical Background**

**Global Perspective on Gender Equity in Education and Leadership** - Gender equity in education and leadership is a key global priority, reflected in frameworks like the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5, which aims to remove barriers to women's leadership. Despite advances in educational access, women remain underrepresented in university leadership worldwide due to structural barriers such as gender bias, discriminatory policies, and lack of mentorship (UNESCO, 2020; Ogbogu & Bosompem, 2023). Some regions have made progress through gender quotas and leadership training, offering models relevant to African universities (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2024).

**Gender Equity in African Tertiary Institutions: Challenges and Gaps** - In Africa, historical, cultural, and socio-political factors perpetuate gender disparities in university leadership. While access to education for women has improved, leadership remains male-dominated. Systemic obstacles include gender stereotypes, limited mentorship, cultural norms, patriarchal structures, weak policies, and exclusion from professional networks (Ogbogu, 2022; Ogbogu, 2023; Mabokela & Mlambo, 2023). Intersectional factors such as race, class, and age exacerbate exclusion, particularly for Black women, whose experiences are often overlooked.

**Gender Equity and Female Leadership in African Universities** - Opportunities for Change  
Despite challenges, progress is emerging. Some African universities are adopting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) policies, and countries like South Africa and Kenya are implementing affirmative action and gender quotas that require ongoing assessment (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2024). Mentorship and leadership training programs are expanding, supporting women's leadership capacity. Inclusive dialogue involving both men and women is vital to dismantle cultural constraints (Nkonkobe, 2020). Bridging the gender gap demands comprehensive strategies combining strong policies, mentorship, capacity-building, and male allyship to foster equitable leadership in African universities.

### **Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)**

Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986) explained how individuals learn and adopt new behaviors through observation, social interaction, and environmental influences. It is relevant to understanding female leadership in African universities, as it highlights the importance of self-efficacy, role models, and social context in shaping leadership aspirations. Systemic interventions like mentorship and gender-sensitive policies can positively influence women's beliefs and behaviors, enhancing their leadership potential (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994).

### **Feminist Theory**

Feminist theory, advanced by scholars such as Carol Gilligan (1982), Simone de Beauvoir (1949), and Judith Butler (1990), critically examined gendered power relations and the marginalization of women. It provides essential insights into the structural causes of gender inequality in African universities and informs strategies for transformative change. This framework helps to analyze how institutional and societal power dynamics limit women's leadership and how these barriers can be dismantled (Evans, 2017). SCT and Feminist Theory offered a comprehensive lens: SCT addresses individual-level influences like self-belief and social learning, while Feminist Theory focuses on systemic power structures. Their integration enables a holistic understanding of the challenges and pathways to advancing female leadership in African universities.

## Methods

This study used a convergent parallel mixed-methods design to examine gender disparities, barriers, and strategies for advancing female leadership in African universities. Data were collected through a cross-sectional online survey of 125 purposively sampled academic and non-academic staff from Nigeria, South Africa, Ghana, and Kenya. The Gender Equity in Leadership Questionnaire covered demographics, leadership roles, barriers, strategies, and aspirations on a 5-point Likert scale. Cronbach's alpha values above 0.80 confirmed reliability, and expert reviews ensured content validity. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS 30 (descriptive statistics, chi-square tests, t-tests, and Spearman's correlations). Qualitative data from open-ended survey questions were coded and thematically analyzed in NVivo to identify key patterns. Ethical protocols included informed consent, confidentiality, and voluntary participation. Integration of findings strengthened validity by cross-verifying quantitative and qualitative results.

## Results

**Hypothesis 1:** There are no significant gender disparities in leadership roles within African universities.

**Table 1: Gender Disparities in Leadership Roles within African Universities**

Gender	No Leadership Role	Leadership Role	Total
Male	13.7 (18.4%)	31.3 (43.7%)	45
Female	24.3 (81.6%)	55.7 (56.3%)	80
<b>Total</b>	<b>38.0</b>	<b>87.0</b>	<b>125</b>

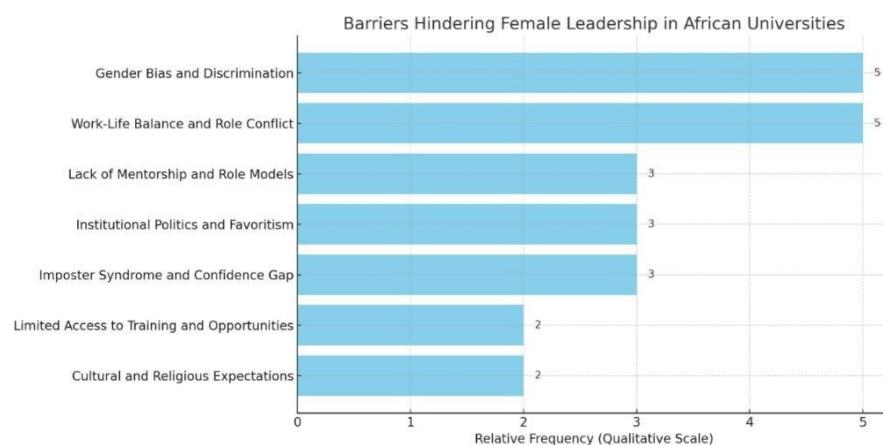
Males hold 43.7% of leadership roles despite representing only 36% of the sample, while females hold 56.3% but make up 64% of the sample, indicating male overrepresentation in leadership. A chi-square test confirmed a significant association between gender and leadership roles,  $\chi^2(df=1, N = 125) = 7.32, p = 0.007$ .

**Hypothesis 2:** Systemic and cultural factors do not significantly hinder women's advancement to leadership positions.

**Table 2: Perceived Systemic and cultural factors hindering women's advancement to leadership positions.**

Item	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df
Cultural expectations and gender biases restrict opportunities	Male	45	2.53	1.34	-2.85	123
	Female	80	3.28	1.42		
Work-life balance challenges hinder women's pursuit of leadership	Male	45	3.04	1.28	-0.44	123
	Female	80	3.15	1.29		
The institution provides sufficient mentorship opportunities for women	Male	45	3.67	1.09	3.17	123
	Female	80	2.99	1.19		
Societal stereotypes about gender roles have minimal impact	Male	45	3.07	1.21	3.20	123
	Female	80	2.58	1.28		
Institutional hiring/promotion practices create equal opportunities	Male	45	4.24	1.00	3.20	123
	Female	80	3.63	1.06		

An independent-samples t-test revealed significant gender differences in perceptions of systemic and cultural barriers to women's leadership. Females ( $M = 3.28$ ,  $SD = 1.42$ ) were more likely than males ( $M = 2.53$ ,  $SD = 1.34$ ) to agree that cultural expectations and gender biases hinder women's leadership,  $t(123) = -2.85$ ,  $p = 0.005$ . Females also reported significantly less mentorship support ( $M = 2.99$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) compared to males ( $M = 3.67$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ),  $t(123) = 3.17$ ,  $p = 0.002$ , and perceived a greater impact of societal stereotypes,  $t(123) = 2.10$ ,  $p = .038$ . Additionally, they perceived less equity in institutional hiring practices,  $t(123) = 3.20$ ,  $p = .002$ . No significant gender difference was found in perceptions of work-life balance as a barrier,  $t(123) = -0.44$ ,  $p = .661$ . These findings indicate that female staff perceive more systemic and cultural barriers than their male counterparts, especially in areas of mentorship, institutional equity, and cultural norms highlighting the need for gender-sensitive leadership development initiatives.



**Figure 1. Barriers Hindering Female Leadership in African Universities.**

Figure 1 displays the thematic analysis of qualitative responses identifying barriers to female leadership. The most frequently mentioned themes were **gender bias and discrimination** and **work-life balance and role conflict**; both rated at the highest frequency level. Moderately cited themes included **lack of mentorship**, **institutional politics**, and **imposter syndrome**. Less frequently mentioned themes were **limited access to training** and **cultural/religious expectations**.

**Table 3: Spearman's Rank Correlation between Gender and Perceived Systemic and Cultural Barriers (N = 125)**

Variable	$\rho$	$p$
Gender & Cultural expectations and gender biases restrict women's leadership opportunities	+0.251	0.005
Gender & Work-life balance challenges hinder women's leadership pursuit	+0.041	0.649
Gender & Institution provides sufficient mentorship for women's leadership	-0.273	0.002
Gender & Societal stereotypes have minimal impact on women's leadership	-0.184	0.040
Gender & Hiring and promotion practices create equal leadership opportunities for women	-0.329	<.001

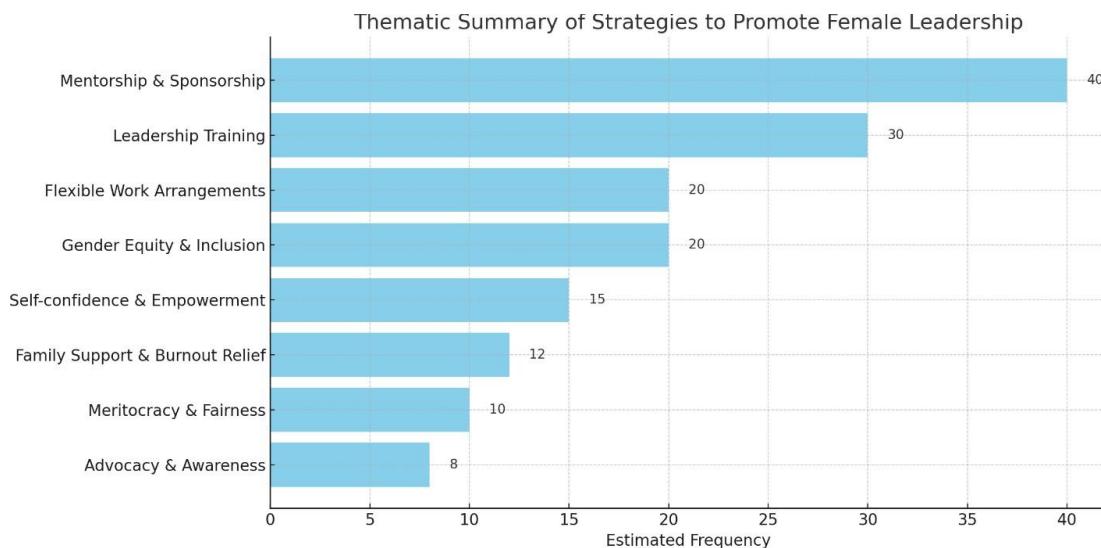
A Spearman's rank-order correlation examined associations between gender and perceptions of systemic and cultural barriers to women's leadership. As shown in Table 3, gender was positively correlated with perceptions that cultural expectations restrict women's leadership,  $\rho(125) = 0.25, p = 0.005$ , and negatively correlated with views that mentorship is sufficient,  $\rho(125) = -0.27, p = 0.002$ ; that societal stereotypes have minimal impact,  $\rho(125) = -0.18, p = 0.040$ ; and that hiring and promotion practices are equitable,  $\rho(125) = -0.33, p < 0.001$ . No significant association was found with work-life balance challenges,  $\rho(125) = 0.04, p = 0.649$ . Overall, females were more likely than males to perceive institutional and cultural barriers to women's leadership.

**Hypothesis 3:** Actionable strategies have no significant effect on promoting female leadership in African universities.

**Table 4: Actionable strategies on promoting female leadership in African universities.**

Item	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df
Mentorship programs support women's advancement	Male	45	3.93	0.89	3.56	123
	Female	80	3.35	0.87		
Leadership training is well-designed for female preparation	Male	45	3.58	1.03	2.68	123
	Female	80	3.08	0.99		
Women's networks and advocacy have limited impact (reverse coded)	Male	45	3.33	0.98	0.79	123
	Female	80	3.19	0.99		
Gender equity policies promote advancement	Male	45	3.89	0.86	2.56	123
	Female	80	3.44	0.99		
Flexible work arrangements support leadership pursuit	Male	45	3.84	0.85	2.66	123
	Female	80	3.33	1.14		

An independent-samples *t*-test was used to examine gender differences in perceptions of strategies promoting female leadership in African universities. Males rated several strategies as more effective than females: mentorship programs ( $M = 3.93, SD = 0.89$  vs.  $M = 3.35, SD = 0.87$ ),  $t(123) = 3.56, p = .001$ ; leadership training ( $M = 3.58, SD = 1.03$  vs.  $M = 3.08, SD = 0.99$ ),  $t(123) = 2.68, p = .008$ ; institutional gender equity policies ( $M = 3.89, SD = 0.86$  vs.  $M = 3.44, SD = 0.99$ ),  $t(123) = 2.56, p = .012$ ; and flexible work arrangements ( $M = 3.84, SD = 0.85$  vs.  $M = 3.33, SD = 1.14$ ),  $t(123) = 2.66, p = .009$ . No significant gender difference was found for perceptions of women's networks and advocacy initiatives,  $t(123) = 0.79, p = .430$ . These findings suggested that while both genders value structural and cultural support strategies, females tend to be more critical of their effectiveness, potentially reflecting lived experiences or perceived implementation gaps.



**Figure 2. Thematic Summary of Strategies to Promote Female Leadership.**

Figure 2 displays the thematic analysis of qualitative responses of strategies to promote female leadership. Open-ended responses ( $N \approx 125$ ) revealed recurrent themes. The most frequently mentioned strategies were **mentorship and sponsorship**, followed by **leadership training**, **flexible work arrangements**, and **gender equity policies**. Themes such as **self-confidence and empowerment**, **family support**, and **fair assessment practices** also emerged.

**Table 5: Spearman's Rank Correlation between Gender and Perceived Effectiveness of Strategies for Promoting Female Leadership ( $N = 125$ )**

Variable	$\rho$	$p$
Gender & Mentorship Programs	-0.290	0.001
Gender & Leadership Training	-0.214	0.017
Gender & Women's Networks	-0.051	0.575
Gender & Gender Equity Policies	-0.209	0.019
Gender & Flexible Work Arrangements	-0.212	0.017

Spearman's rank-order correlations were conducted to examine associations between gender and perceived effectiveness of strategies for promoting female leadership. As shown in Table 5, gender was negatively correlated with perceptions of mentorship programs,  $\rho(125) = -0.29$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ; leadership training,  $\rho(125) = -0.21$ ,  $p = 0.017$ ; gender equity policies,  $\rho(125) = -0.21$ ,  $p = 0.019$ ; and flexible work arrangements,  $\rho(125) = -0.21$ ,  $p = 0.017$ , indicating that females perceived these strategies as less effective than males. No significant association was found for perceptions of women's networks,  $\rho(125) = -0.05$ ,  $p = 0.575$ .

## Discussion

This study revealed ongoing gender gaps in leadership within African universities, addressing all three research objectives and leading to the rejection of the null hypotheses. First, the analysis met Objective 1 by showing that men hold leadership roles at rates higher than their proportion in the overall university staff population, consistent with previous studies that

document gender disparities (UNESCO, 2020; Ogbogu & Bosompem, 2023). Second, in line with Objective 2, women reported significantly more systemic and cultural barriers, such as gender bias, cultural expectations, limited mentorship, and unequal institutional practices, confirming these as key obstacles to advancement (Mabokela & Mlambo, 2023; Ogbogu, 2022). Thematic analysis also identified work-life balance pressures, institutional politics, and imposter syndrome as common challenges. These findings support Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986) and Feminist Theory (Crenshaw, 1989), which explain how social context and structural power relations shape leadership opportunities. Third, addressing Objective 3, the study found clear gender differences in perceptions of strategies like mentorship, leadership training, flexible work policies, and gender equity measures. Men viewed these as more effective than women, whose lower confidence suggested gaps in implementation or relevance (Nkomo & Ngambi, 2024). Overall, the results underscore the need for tailored policies, cultural change, and sustained institutional commitment to achieve equitable leadership in African universities.

## **Conclusion**

This study met its objectives by first confirming gender disparities in leadership within African universities, with men holding a disproportionate share of leadership roles. It also identified systemic and cultural barriers such as gender bias, limited mentorship, and unequal institutional practices that restrict women's advancement. Additionally, while strategies like mentorship, leadership training, flexible work policies, and gender equity initiatives are in place, women expressed lower confidence in their effectiveness, pointing to a gap between policy and practice. These findings emphasize the need for comprehensive gender-sensitive reforms, strong mentorship systems, and cultural change to achieve equitable representation and support women in leadership across African universities.

## **Recommendations**

Based on these findings, universities should adopt equitable hiring and promotion practices to reduce gender disparities in leadership. Structured mentorship and sponsorship programs are crucial to address the lack of support reported by female staff. Leadership development tailored to women's experiences can counteract bias and institutional politics. Policies that support work-life balance directly address role conflict, while fostering male allyship and open dialogue can challenge cultural norms and stereotypes. Beyond institutional efforts, universities should collaborate with ministries of education, engage in policy advocacy, and partner with professional bodies and civil society organisations to strengthen regulations and advance gender equity across the higher education sector.

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## DISSATISFACTION AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT: PRE-EMPTIVE PERCEPTIONS IN NIGERIAN YOUNG HEALTH PROFESSIONALS – A CRISIS OF EMERGING WORKFORCE?

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### Abstract

Within the Nigerian Health Sector, underemployment and dissatisfaction are push factors of brain drain amongst health workers but are undetermined in graduating young health professionals (YHPs), representing emerging workforce continually lost to migration before working in Nigeria. The study investigated if YHPs harbor perspectives of underemployment and dissatisfaction. Graduating YHPs students: doctors (181), dentists (16), nurses (60), physiologists (58), and pharmacologists (53); a total of 368 students of Lagos State University College of Medicine (LASUCOM) were surveyed using a five-point structured Likert scale questionnaire in 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 academic sessions. Coded data were analysed with Microsoft Office 2013 Excel® spreadsheet and Statistical Product and Service Solution package (IBM SPSS Statistics 27®) to obtain descriptive statistics, correlation, and graphs. The YHPs' strongest dissatisfaction is that many financially endowed patients prefer to go abroad for treatment, with skewness of  $-0.863 \pm 0.131$  towards agree, strongly agree. The YHPs' highest leaning towards agree, strongly agree amongst underemployment indicators is for "I do not know excellent places wherein I would like to work in Lagos State," with skewness of  $.240 \pm 131$ . The YHPs without experience of proper employment harbor preemptive perspectives of underemployment and dissatisfaction. Effective mentoring is recommended against perspectives.

**Keywords:** Young health professionals, underemployment, dissatisfaction, emerging workforce, brain drain

## **Introduction**

A functional health sector is a cornerstone of national development, workforce stability, and population well-being. In Nigeria, however, the health sector has for decades operated under considerable strain, manifested in persistent workforce shortages, declining service capacity, and weakened institutional confidence (Adeloye et al., 2017). These systemic pressures have contributed to a cycle in which the country invests heavily in training health professionals, only to lose a substantial proportion of them before their productive years are realized within the national system. This paradox raises critical concerns about the sustainability of health workforce in Nigeria and the future of its service delivery architecture.

The Nigerian health sector currently sustains a well-recognised inadequacy, reflected in massive brain drain, outward medical tourism, and the importation of essential health-sector resources that ought to be locally available. These structural weaknesses have been extensively documented in the literature (Ike, 2007; Makinde et al., 2014). The situation deteriorated markedly during the COVID-19 pandemic, which amplified existing vulnerabilities, intensified workload pressures, and accelerated migration intentions among health workers (Lawal et al., 2022). Although recent policy responses at both federal and state levels suggest renewed commitment to reform, the long-term implications for workforce retention remain uncertain.

Brain drain and outward medical tourism are driven by a constellation of push factors within the local health system. Among the most consistently identified are underemployment and job dissatisfaction, which undermine professional fulfillment, economic security, and career progression (Ahmad, 2023; Akinyemi & Atilola, 2013). These factors have been widely studied among practicing health professionals, where poor working conditions, limited advancement opportunities, and perceived undervaluation of skills fuel decisions to migrate. However, an important dimension of this phenomenon remains underexplored: whether such perceptions are already entrenched before entry into the workforce.

Graduating students and young health professionals constitute emerging health workforce in Nigeria, yet they are increasingly lost to migration pathways even before meaningful local engagement. Understanding whether these individuals harbor pre-emptive perceptions of underemployment and dissatisfaction is therefore critical. Such perceptions, if present prior to professional practice, may signal a deeper crisis, one rooted not only in workplace realities but also in expectations, exposure, and institutional socialization during training. Addressing this gap is essential for developing timely interventions that go beyond retention strategies aimed at mid-career professionals. This study therefore investigates perceptions of underemployment and dissatisfaction among graduating young health professionals in a Nigerian medical training institution.

## **Literature Review and Theoretical Background**

The fear of underemployment may lead young health professionals to seek greener pastures in developed countries. Entrepreneurial education of emerging workforce on opportunities and issues in their own field has become a necessity in Nigerian universities in order to encourage the emerging workforce to stay in Nigeria and contribute independently to their chosen fields of study. Educational issues leading to specialization of roles within the economy,

diversification of inputs, innovative and creative contributions, collaborative efforts, and public private partnerships require more attention in order to steer the emerging workforce away from stereotyped professionalism and stimulate sustainable development. The career orientation of young health professionals (YHPs) and their exposure to opportunities is a vital part of Health Professions Education in Nigeria (John and Ofi, 2021). Graduates and YHPs in a developing country such as Nigeria could be pro-development rather than pro-migration (Figure 1). If from the onset of their careers, graduating YHPs with entrepreneurial bent are able to anchor themselves in medical entrepreneurship in line with their personal vision, affinities, talents, and capabilities, they are bound to have professional satisfaction that may be lacking for them in a regular government employment. Moreover, weak areas of the national economy, such as local manufacturing and productivity, could be more addressed by such diversification. The business of medicine is nothing new (Alubo, 1990; Matthews, 2004) but has to be put in perspective and regulated by an astute government.

The problem of dissatisfaction in the Nigerian Health Sector is well researched and documented (Ike, 2007; Adeloye *et al.*, 2017). Dissatisfaction may be automatically assumed by the emerging workforce even though they seem to not have adequate work experience and such perceptions may contribute to brain drain. While the problems of brain drain of Young Health Professionals spans decades and the Nigerian Health Sector continues to struggle to meet the country's needs, not much scholarly attention has been given to fresh graduates who form the emerging workforce, key components of which become lost to developed countries.

In the African context where the continent continually suffers from significant efflux of fresh graduates from African universities to developed countries, the term "emerging workforce" and its relevance to the continent surprisingly lacks scholarly consideration (John, 2024). In this study, Emerging Workforce is defined as graduating, professionally trained youths that are embarking on their careers. In the context of LASUCOM, Emerging Workforce are graduating Young Health Professionals (YHPs): medical doctors, dentists, nurses, physiologists, and pharmacologists that have completed their training and done with their final examinations at the institution. Brain drain is defined as "the departure of educated or professional people from one country, economic sector, or field for another usually for better pay or living conditions" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). It is severe and chronic in the Nigerian Health Sector (Lawal *et al.*, 2022; Ike, 2007; Adeloye *et al.*, 2017), starting from the economic depression of the 1980's. The largest group of migrants are nurses, over 57,000 of them migrating from Nigeria for greener pastures abroad between 2017 and 2022 (Adejoro, 2022). Nigeria had 39,912 doctors in 2017, down-trending to 24,640 in 2019 (National Bureau of Statistics, 2021). The Nigerian Medical Association indicated that 50 doctors leave Nigeria every week (Oko, 2022). In 2024, The Federal Government stated that 16,000 doctors migrated in the past 5 years while 55,000 remained in the country (Okerinde, 2024). The study of Onah *et al.*, 2022 showed that physicians who are in their 30s, 40s, 50s plus are 3.5, 5.5 and 13.8 times more willing to stay in Nigeria than physicians in their twenties, therefore Young Health Professionals need particular support for being the most prone to migration. If not, they would seek greener pastures. Greener pastures is defined as: "a new situation that is better than the previous one" (Cambridge Dictionary). Recognition of greener pastures is a financial

intelligence (John *et al.*, 2024). Recognition of greener pastures here in this study refers to young graduates and is defined as the intellectual capacity to see opportunity, possibility, potential fortune, areas for progress and other positivity that can be a career focus within a geographical area beyond one's present situation.

"Self-preservation, the first law of nature" is said to be derived from 17th century English poet Samuel Butler (1613-1680). This principle is important in considering the massive migration of Young Health Professionals from Nigeria to developed countries where they perceive they can practice their professions well and live better.

One of the theories that address occupational stress is the effort-reward imbalance theory. The model of effort-reward imbalance (ERI) was proposed by a German medical sociologist (Siegrist, 1996). The theory deals with the relationship between the worker's efforts and the work-related rewards the employee receives. According to the theory, work characterized by high levels of effort and low rewards leads to strain (e.g., psychological symptoms and physical health problems). Both tangible rewards such as pay and intangible rewards such as appreciation and fair treatment are included. The theory is important in considering the notorious migration of young doctors and other Young Health Professionals which is related to finding the best rewards for their efforts.

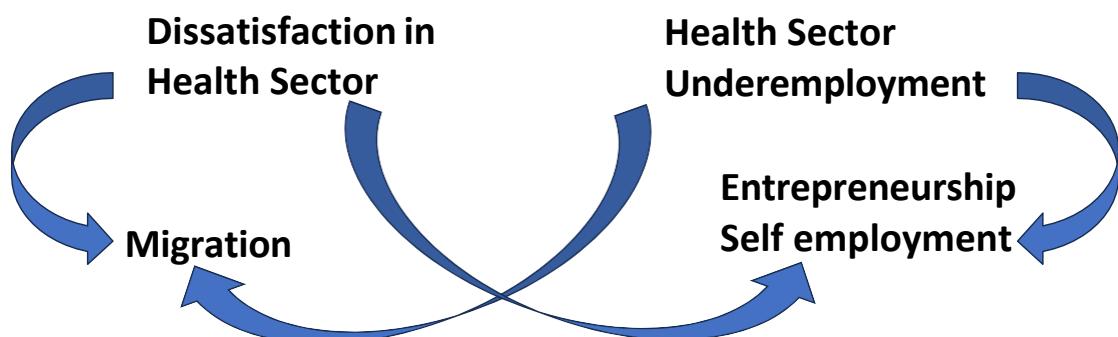
The random utility theory (Horowitz, 1994) posits that people generally choose what they prefer and according to where they yield maximum utility. This theory is important for the consideration of brightening greener pastures at home against any fixed beliefs of YHPs with respect to greener pastures abroad. The medium utility in Health Sector entrepreneurship in Nigeria should exceed the maximum utility in migration to developed countries, if Nigeria wants to retain its Young Health Professionals and emerging workforce (John *et al.*, 2024).

Unfortunately, for a developing country such as Nigeria, one may recognize greener pastures in foreign lands without recognizing greener pastures in one's own country. Nigeria Option is here defined as the option for staying and working in Nigeria, especially as an independent entrepreneur (John *et al.*, 2024). Governments in Nigeria need to promote Nigeria option by continuing to identify various factors that result in loss of human capital. The current study seeks to know if the emerging Health Sector workforce has preemptive perceptions of underemployment and dissatisfaction and to inform toward promotion of Nigeria option.

The conceptual model in fig. 1 reflects the overarching objective of the study, which is to determine whether the emerging workforce in the Nigerian health sector, using LASUCOM as a case example, harbors pre-emptive perceptions of dissatisfaction and underemployment. Dissatisfaction with the health sector is depicted as a direct push factor leading toward migration, indicating that adverse sectoral perceptions may precede actual workforce participation and influence early exit intentions.

At the same time, perceived underemployment directs young health professionals toward entrepreneurship and self-employment, representing anticipatory responses to expected limitations in formal health sector opportunities. The intersecting arrows between dissatisfaction and underemployment signify a reciprocal and reinforcing relationship, whereby each perception intensifies the other. Collectively, the model demonstrates how pre-emptive perceptions formed at the point of professional emergence shape divergent career

trajectories, thereby providing an analytical framework for assessing early workforce attrition risks within Nigeria's health sector.



**Figure 1: Conceptual model**

## Methods

Graduating Young Health Professionals (doctors, dentists, nurses, physiologists, and pharmacologists) of Lagos State University College of Medicine (LASUCOM) in two successive academic sessions, 2021/2022 and 2022/2023, participated in this descriptive survey research design. Surveys are part of the operational feedback mechanism of the Entrepreneurial

Training Unit, LASUCOM. The data from the questionnaire survey of the students are utilized as primary data for this study. The survey looked at the Young Health Professionals' perspectives. The study was conducted at Lagos State University College of Medicine (LASUCOM), a leader in entrepreneurial education amongst Nigerian medical schools, having begun entrepreneurial education for its students in 2012. The graduating YHPs, although they have various potentials, are regarded in this study as emerging workforce: including potential Health Sector entrepreneurs and potential migrants to developed countries. The students have completed their programmes and are surveyed on the last days of respective final examinations in 2022 and 2023. Total populations were involved in the survey which for the two sessions included: doctors – 181 students, dentists – 16 students, nurses – 60 students, physiologists – 58 students, and pharmacologists – 53 students. A total of 368 students were survey respondents in this study. Students did not know of the survey before the time. Students were asked to be confidential and not discuss the survey amongst themselves. Questionnaires were answered and returned at the venue. All the students in a class were surveyed. Entire populations were utilized. The research instrument for data collection was a five-point structured Likert scale questionnaire. The variables of interest were each represented by five statements. Data was extracted from the questionnaires used in the surveys and coded in Excel® spreadsheets. Values given to answers were: strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, undecided = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5. Descriptive statistics and bar charts of interest were produced. Skewness of data was determined to verify leanings of responses towards strongly agree-agree or strongly disagree-disagree using Statistical Product and Service Solution package (IBM SPSS Statistics 27®).

## Results

### General perceptions of dissatisfaction

Details of SPSS-generated results giving frequencies and descriptive statistics revealed that the most frequent responses for “Lagos State Government pays Young Health Professionals low income”, “Health Sector jobs in Lagos State are not interesting” and “Lagos State Health Sector lacks job vacancies” were agree, coded 4; mode = 4 in all cases (Figure 2a-c). The most frequent response for “A new health professions entrepreneurship cannot thrive in Lagos State in the next ten years” was disagree, coded 2; mode = 2, 96 students (26.1%) responded disagree. The most frequent response for “Many financially endowed patients in Lagos State prefer going abroad for treatment” was agree, coded 4; mode = 4, 165 students (44.8%) responded agree.

### Skewness of responses on dissatisfaction

From derivations using SPSS descriptive statistics function, students’ highest leanings toward agree-strongly agree are for “Many financially endowed patients in Lagos State prefer going abroad for treatment”, skewness =  $-.863 \pm .131$  and “Lagos State Government pays Young Health Professionals low income”, skewness =  $-0.809 \pm .129$ .

### General perceptions of underemployment

The most frequent responses for “I do not know excellent places wherein I would like to work in Lagos State” and “I do not know famous health professions specialists working in Lagos State that inspire me” were agree, coded 4; mode = 4. The most frequent responses for “I do not have passion to support a particular Government agency or department on issues of the Health Sector” and “I am not sure I have high income possibilities of employment or entrepreneurship in the Lagos State Health Sector, public or private” were undecided, coded 3; mode = 3. The most frequent response for “Lagos State is not a good incubator for businesses involved in production or manufacturing of Health Sector Resources” was disagree, coded 2; mode = 2, 102 students (27.7%) responded disagree. The distribution of responses for the latter are shown in Figure 3a.

### Skewness of responses on underemployment

From derivations using SPSS descriptive statistics function, students highest leaning toward agree-strongly agree is for “I do not know excellent places wherein I would like to work in Lagos State”, skewness =  $0.240 \pm .131$ .

## Discussion

For decades, the Nigerian Health Sector has been plagued with brain drain, outward medical tourism, and importation of resources utilized in the Health Sector, all of which have impacted the Nigerian economy to now warrant intervention of policy for change. Education that is continually followed by brain drain of emerging workforce, costly outward medical tourism, and default importation of Health Sector resources need to identify gaps to be filled that will curb the serious societal problems. Medical school education in Nigeria is subsidized by the Nigerian Government. A significant proportion of graduated YHPs ends up serving foreign

Health Sectors through brain drain while the Nigerian Health Sector continues to suffer the inadequacy. The significance of this project is to improve cost-effect benefits of medical school educational efforts for the Nigerian Health Sector and the economy.

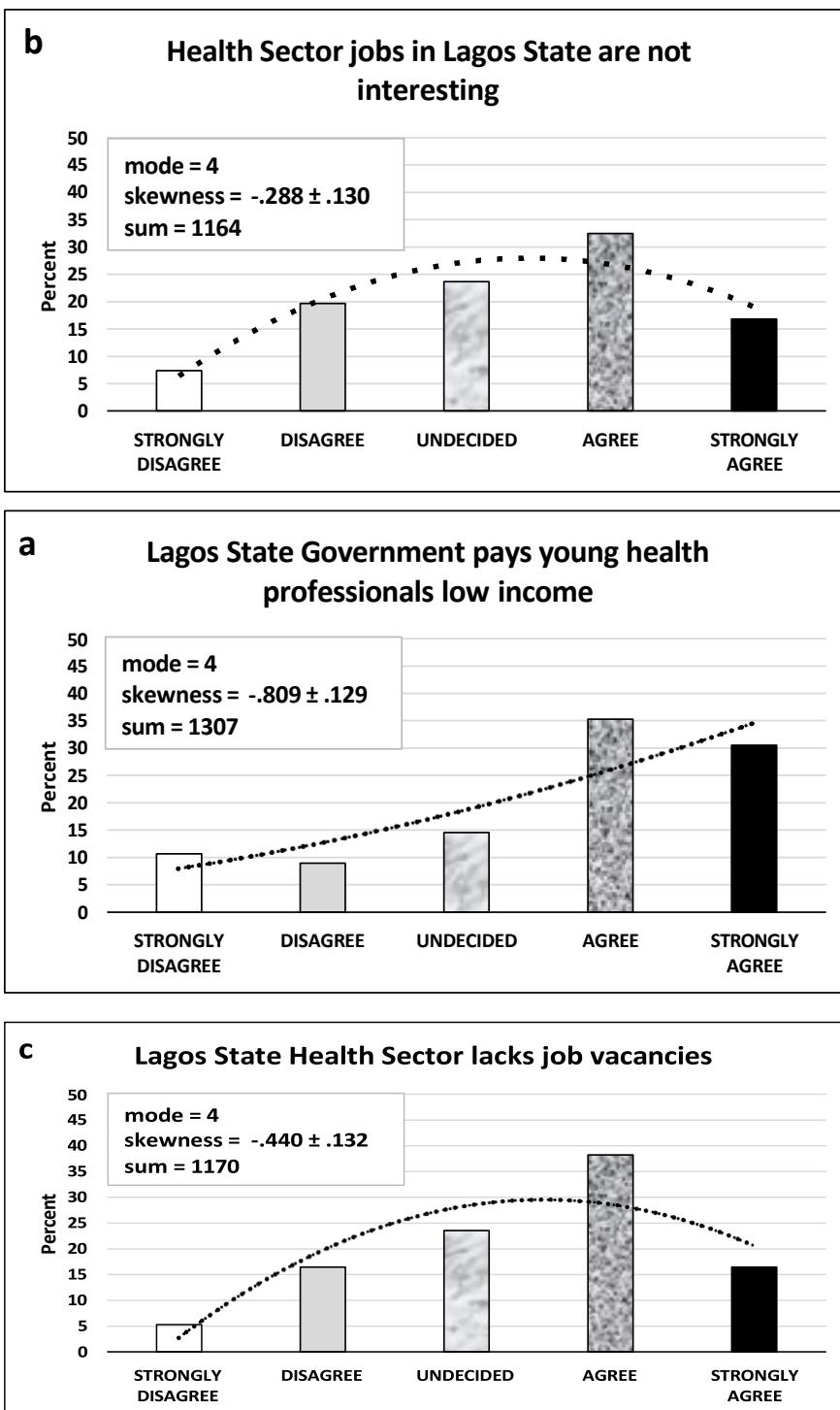
As discussed by Onah *et al.*, 2022 the youngest physicians are the less willing to stay in Nigeria than their older counterparts. The present study is focused on fresh professionals just about to graduate, the Young Health Professionals which form an emerging workforce. The emerging workforce from LASUCOM have pre-emptive perceptions of dissatisfaction with the most frequent responses to indicators of dissatisfaction being agree (coded 4). Their strongest dissatisfaction is that many financially endowed patients prefer to go abroad for treatment with a skewness of  $-.863 \pm .131$  towards agree – strongly agree. Students disagree (coded 2) that a new health professions entrepreneurship cannot thrive in Lagos State in the next ten years; the sum of coded responses is 1051, the lowest amongst all the indicators for dissatisfaction.

The emerging workforce from LASUCOM have pre-emptive perceptions of underemployment, the most frequent responses being agree (coded 4) for two indicators and undecided (coded 3) for two indicators. The highest leaning towards agree-strongly agree amongst these indicators is for “I do not know excellent places wherein I would like to work in Lagos State”, with a skewness of  $.240 \pm .131$ . The highest sum of coded responses, 1111, is for “I do not know famous health professions specialists working in Lagos State that inspire me”. The students disagree (coded 2) that “Lagos State is not a good incubator for businesses involved in production or manufacturing of Health Sector Resources” which has the lowest sum of responses, 1009.

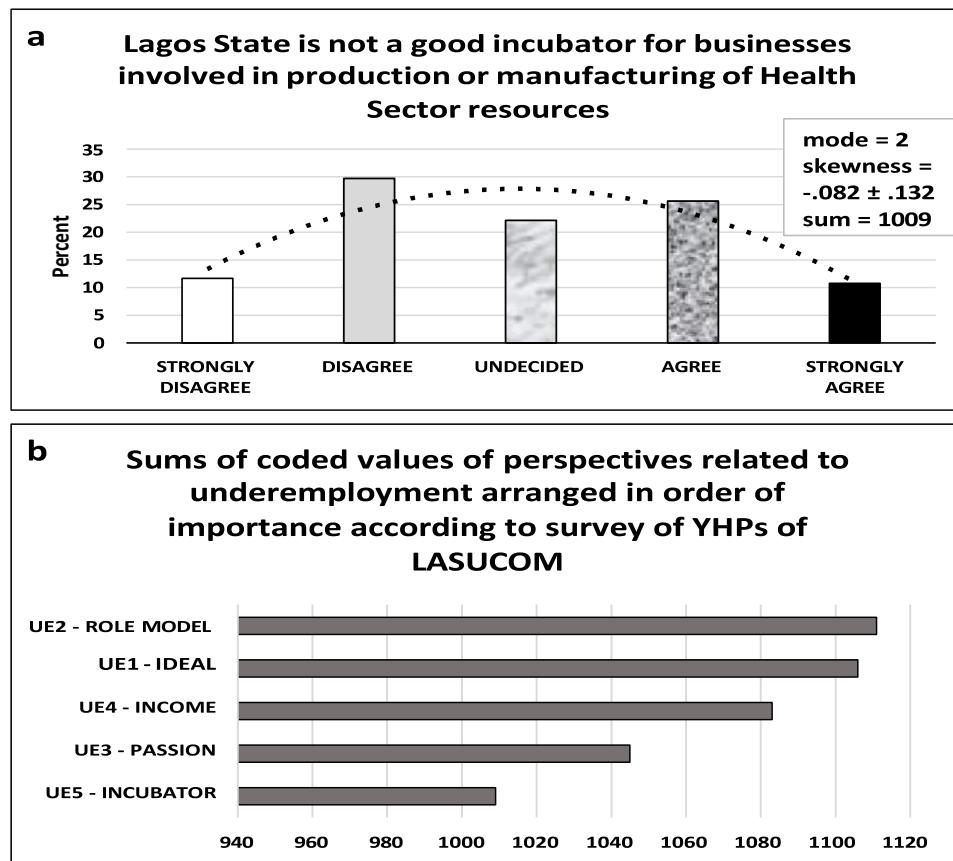
As documented by Awire and Okumaga (2020) dissatisfaction is a key problem in the Health Sector and pre-emptive perspectives of dissatisfaction are observed here within the emerging workforce. It means that Nigerian leaders need to facilitate factors that lead to job satisfaction which, according to Akinyemi and Atilola, 2013 discussed above, include career advancement opportunities, autonomy of practice, alignment of job with core personal and professional values and working environment. This population of emerging Health Sector workforce’s pre-emptive perspectives skewed towards underemployment is easily a push factor of migration. The study done by Adetayo, 2010 showed that migration decision is mainly caused by conditions within organizations. Push factors are more important for Nigerian leaders to watch than pull factors. Oleribe *et al.*, 2019 and Lawal *et al.*, 2022 indicate that push factors include salary issues, leadership and management, poor infrastructure, poor guidelines and services, as well as inter-professional disputes. It is interesting that this emerging workforce already has perspectives of dissatisfaction and underemployment before launching into careers within Nigeria.

Workforce development is a predictor of national development and economic growth compared to migration which leads to brain drain and may contribute to underdevelopment. For local workforce development, we need to facilitate the choices of individuals towards the option to serve in their homeland. People want the best for themselves. Butler’s principle “Self-preservation is the first law of nature” is important in considering the massive migration of Young Health Professionals from Nigeria to developed countries where they perceive they can

practice their professions well and live better. Against a fixed perspective that the Nigerian socio-economic environment is destructive or disabling for ambitious young professionals, solutions are needed for professional security and bright futures in Nigeria for young professionals. The random utility theory (Horowitz, 1994) is important for the consideration of brightening greener pastures at home against any fixed beliefs of YHPs with respect to greener pastures abroad. This theory is important for developing a new educational objective or focus that exposes YHPs to bright careers in Nigeria as well as for the development of corresponding Government policies to brighten greener pastures.



**Figure 2: Responses of the emerging workforce of LASUCOM on their perceptions of dissatisfaction in the Health Sector. The mode, skewness, and sum of coded responses, and polynomial curves are inserted.**



**Figure 3: Some responses of the emerging workforce of LASUCOM on their perceptions of underemployment in the Health Sector. The mode, skewness, and sum of coded responses, and polynomial curves are inserted (a). The various indicators arranged in order of sum of coded responses show that lack of familiarity with famous health professions specialists (role models) is the strongest factor for this emerging workforce (b).**

in Nigeria. The theory of effort-reward imbalance (Siegrist, 1996) should inform Government and policy making for the Nigerian Health Sector for advancing the local rewards of health professionals and making migration less relevant and less attractive. From some viewpoints of economics, on the one hand, health professionals may consider health as an investment that determines the people's availability on market or non-market productive activities and their effectiveness per unit of time (Mushkin, 1962). Health is important for mental and physical contributions of workers (Porath, *et al.*, 2012) and indeed, all citizens. On the other hand, Grossman, 1972 has argued that health is a "consumer good" which tends to prevent people from being affected by diseases and hence gives them some sense of satisfaction and utility. Financially secured workers can invest in health, acquiring health knowledge, being in health clubs, purchasing equipment for exercise, and having frequent medical check-ups, etc.

(Feinstein, 1993; Nussbaum and Sen, 1993). Thus, it could be projected that Young Health Professionals are determinants of a better national economy and there is need to preserve this emerging workforce for the rest of the populace.

## Conclusion

The young health professionals investigated in this study have not yet been exposed to proper employment and have not acquired work experience within Nigeria as professionals. Nevertheless, they harbour perspectives of underemployment and dissatisfaction. It behooves upon the local educators and authorities concerned with national development to help to tilt career choices towards Nigeria Option by changing the realities for green pastures at home and Health Sector economics rather than abandoning the emerging workforce to migration.

## Recommendations

In order to utilize the findings of this study for emerging workforce development, the following recommendations are made.

- i. Mentoring by lecturers to support perspective management for each generation of emerging workforce and to mitigate pre-emptive notions of dissatisfaction and underemployment is needed.
- ii. Special government agency is needed to facilitate an economically independent Health Sector and to generate exportation-importation balance of human capital and Health Sector goods and services. This can also help to manage YHPs' perspectives and support both home grown entrepreneurship (Nigeria Option) and migration in a balanced manner.

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## CAN MORE WOMEN LEAD? A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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### **Abstract**

*The underrepresentation of women in leadership positions within higher education institutions (HEI) is a pervasive global issue, often attributed to systemic barriers. This study provides a systematic research synthesis on women's leadership in HE, addressing whether and how more women can be involved in leadership roles. Guided by critical theory, the research critiques the power dynamics and dominant ideologies that perpetuate inequality. The study identified gender-based disparities in leadership opportunities, pay, and representation, while uncovering barriers such as sociocultural, organisational, and personal ideologies. Thirty studies from the past five years were analysed using a critical research paradigm, sourced from academic journals, online libraries, and data repositories. A qualitative, thematic analysis revealed challenges to increasing women's representation in leadership, including the persistence of the "glass ceiling." However, the findings also indicated that women are increasingly being empowered through leadership training programmes, mentorship, networking opportunities, and gender policies that promote equity. The study concluded with recommendations for implementing a comprehensive strategy involving all key stakeholders in education to enhance women's leadership in HE. This strategy should dismantle existing barriers and promote inclusive practices that ensure women's full participation in leadership roles.*

**Keywords:** Critical theory, HE institutions, Underrepresentation, Women leadership

### **Introduction**

The number of men and women is roughly equal across the globe (World Economic Forum, 2024), and it is reasonable to expect equal representation in the labour force, including leadership positions in HEIs. United Nations Women (2024) shows that the global employment of women was nearly 40% representation, but only held 27.5% of management positions in 2022, a notable decrease from 28.5% in 2021. The statistics indicated a concerning decrease in women in management positions at a time when more women should be taking up leadership positions to reverse the historic inequality. Abundant literature and practices indicated that women are seriously underrepresented in leadership positions in HEI across the globe (Byham, 2024; Adamu, 2022). Though literature shows evidence of women in leadership, the question we should ask ourselves is "Can more women lead?".

This theoretical paper focuses on women's leadership in HE and sought to answer the question around the possibility of an increase in women in leadership in HE institutions. The underrepresentation of women is associated with barriers that hindered women from occupying leadership positions in HEIs globally (World Economic Forum, 2024). Some of these barriers include social norms, laws and discriminatory policies towards women. It is evident in American (Habibullah et al., 2023) and in Sub-Saharan African (Abdulet al., 2023) universities that women in leadership are underrepresented. A report from UNESCO (2024) reiterates that women comprise fewer than half of the members in decision-making and leadership positions across most surveyed HEIs in Southern African countries.

Women remain underrepresented in leadership positions within higher education institutions despite the global advancement in gender equality. This disparity is evident across various regions and cultures (Morley & Crossouard, 2023), suggesting systematic barriers that prevent women from advancing to leadership positions (O'Connor & White, 2021). The disparity, therefore, raises a critical question of whether their representation can be increased. The progress report from the United Nations (UN) (2024) on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 5, which aims to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls by 2030, indicated that gender parity in leadership positions remains distant, projected to take 176 years. It further indicated that action is needed to challenge biased social norms and eliminate harmful practices and discriminatory laws. Therefore, this paper explores the literature to determine if more women can lead in HEIs.

### **Theoretical framework**

The critical theory laid a robust analytic theoretical framework for this paper. In developing the critical theory, scholars of the Frankfurt School, a group of German philosophers and social theorists such as Horkheimer (1972), Walter Benjamin and Fromm (1963) (Bronner, 2013) revealed that the critical theory was about critiquing society and culture, ideologies that maintained the status quo and sustained power dynamics, empowering individuals and an understanding of social issues through examining their historical development and the interplay between society and economic systems. In the light of this, the critical theory aided in analysing power dynamics and critiquing dominant ideologies and gender norms that perpetuate inequality (McLaren, 2022), becoming the critical lens through which literature on women in HE is reviewed. The quest of the critical theory to empower individuals and critique social, cultural and economic systems advocated for a broader, inclusive definition of leadership, shifting away from its association with masculinity. This allowed a critical analysis of the literature on women's leadership in HEI and provided an understanding of whether an increase in women's leadership in HEI was possible. The critical theory assisted in scrutinising workplace policies, cultural norms and historical practices that may affect more women occupying leadership positions in HEI.

### **Methods**

The study was located within the feminist paradigm. It aligned well with the focus of the study, which was on women's leadership. It provided a more nuanced understanding of the diverse

experiences of women leaders (Hawkes & Baru, 2024). It assisted in advocating for changes that support women's leadership and allowed the researcher to delve deeply into the gender-specific challenges and capture the complexities of gender dynamics (Kark, Barthel & Buengeler, 2023). A qualitative approach was proposed for this desktop study. Non-numerical data from the literature was collected to understand concepts, opinions, beliefs, behaviour and experiences regarding the potential for increasing women's leadership in higher education institutions (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The desktop study involved gathering data and analysing existing information from academic publications, online databases, books, journals, articles, websites, reports, government and organisational documents and reports (Genske, 2003). From the study's topic, related keywords were identified and put in the search engine Google Scholar, Global policies, blogs, newspapers and a physical library to gather data. Data were analysed by comparative and thematic analysis (McAllum et al., 2019).

**Table 1: List of Articles and Books that were Consulted on Women's Leadership**

Study	Title	Methodology	Findings
Abebaw Yirga Adamu (2023)	Barriers to women's participation in and contribution to leadership in Ethiopian Higher Education	Qualitative study	Improve women's leadership development in Ethiopian HEIs, but many glass ceilings remain unbroken. Greatest are institutional influenced by exacerbate sociocultural and personal barriers.
Afua DUAH (2022)	Experiences of Women in Higher Education: A Study of Sexual Harassment at Selected Universities in Lesotho	Desktop study	The largely patriarchal society of Lesotho basically makes gender disparity unavoidable and entrenches it. The concept that males are inherently better equipped to lead, rule, and make wise judgments
Ramohai(2019)	Women in Senior Management positions at South Africa Universities	Qualitative, interview	Patriarchal practices that led to oppression and dominance
Thelma, & Ngulube (2024)	Women in Leadership; Examining Barriers to Women's Advancement in Leadership Positions	Mixed method approach	Deep-seated social attitudes, favor men, women face unequal career advancement opportunities and struggle to develop skills, experiences necessary for leadership roles
Fuller, Moorosi, Showunmi & Shah, (2021).	Ways of Seeing Women's Leadership in Education— Stories, Images, Metaphors, Methods and Theories.	Desktop study	Feminist intersectionality, incorporation of gender and Afrocentric theories into leadership responsibility. Women are knowledge production contributors

Schiffecker & McNaughtan (2022)	Leading the way- Understanding women's university leadership during crisis through a feminist educational leadership lens	Qualitative, interview	Women universities presidents employ FEL to successfully lead their institutions through crises-showed desire to establish social justice and an equitable environment on their campuses.
Komiti & Moorosi (2020)	Career development of women principals in Lesotho: Influences, opportunities and challenges	Qualitative narrative inquiry	Patriarchal ideology that views men as the official holders of authority. Family played a vital role in influencing women's teaching career choices
Mayya, Martin, Ashok & Monterio (2021)	Women in Higher Education: Are They Ready to Take Up Administrative Positions? - A Mixed-Methods Approach to Identify the Barriers, Perceptions, and Expectations	Qualitative narrative inquiry	Implications for the education sector. Administrators in academia must identify and understand the issues faced by women in HEI. Support facilities and recognition of work performed by women require due consideration. With senior leadership positions being vacant at the institutions of higher education, authorities can recruit and select women for the programs.
Meza-Mejia, Villarreal-Garcia, Ortega & Barba (2023)	Women and Leadership in Higher Education: A Systematic Review	Mixed Method	The harmonisation of work and family life within higher education institutions presents a significant challenge for female academics seeking to balance both worlds, work and home.
Kerimova (2021)	Career advancement and gender equity in academia	Quantitative Questionnaire	No statistically significant differences between female and male career advancement. Work-related factors (degree, subject area) are statistically significant, but they equally contribute to male and female careers, revealing no statistically significant gender difference career-wise
Eslen-Ziya & Yildirim (2022)	Perceptions of gendered- challenges in academia: How women academics see gender hierarchies as barriers to achievement	Quantitative survey	Those occupying high positions believe that being a woman in academia harms their job prospects. Sceptical about women's potential in overcoming such challenges in the future.
UN Women Strategic Plan	Women's Economic Empowerment		Overrepresentation of women is evident in low-wage, precarious jobs -

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of 2022-2025 (UN Women (2021)			in the informal sectors and face challenges in accessing education, finance and productive resources. Women have fewer legal rights than men in many countries. Patriarchy perpetuates gender inequality
UN Progress Report (2024).	Final Report for SDG 5 Round Table	Qualitative Open-ended questions	Gender parity is projected to take 176 years. Women lack control over their sexual and reproductive health. Violence against women persists. 2022 statistics indicates that 55% of countries did not have non-discrimination laws that would promote women representation in leadership positions.
O'Connor (2020)	Gender imbalance in senior positions in Higher Education: what is the problem? What can be done?	Quantitative - experimental studies	The article argues that gendered constructions are embedded in the purportedly gender-neutral evaluative discourses (viz excellence, 'fit' and national relevance), which explain, perpetuate and legitimate the under-representation of women in senior positions in HEIs.

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## Discussion

Collected data were organised into themes to be easily managed and analysed (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Caulfield, 2019). The identified themes were redefining inclusivity for genuine gender equity, enhancing mentorship and representation for aspiring female leaders, weighing work-life policies and women's leadership success and accessible professional development for women's leadership. Data from multiple sources was then compared and synthesised to identify patterns, trends and gaps, guiding the results' presentation in the subsequent subtopics.

### Redefining inclusivity for genuine gender equity

The discussion around the culture and climate of an institution being one of the enabling factors to women's leadership has gained prominence (Matt, 2020; Duah, 2022). This was because institutions that actively worked to dismantle patriarchal norms and promote gender equity were more likely to have women in leadership positions. These active efforts were grounded on the concept of inclusivity. Contrarily, Adamu (2022) criticised the concept of inclusivity for being subtly gendered, as it often assumed a level playing field where women competed on equal terms with men. This perspective overlooked the existing disparities and structural inequalities that disadvantaged women. Inclusivity efforts, therefore, needed to be mindful of these nuances and strive to create genuinely equitable conditions. This involved not only the implementation of policies but also challenging cultural norms and stereotypes that perpetuated

gender biases. Ferreira and Muthengi (2024) emphasise that without addressing these deeper issues, inclusivity initiatives might have fallen short of achieving true gender equality.

### **Breaking the cycle: Enhancing mentorship and representation for aspiring female leaders**

Even though having mentors who have walked the path can be incredibly empowering, it should be noted that there are already few women in leadership positions to whom women can relate. Hence, this study intends to explore the potential for increasing women's leadership in higher education institutions. Insufficient number of women in leadership positions can perpetuate the circle of underrepresentation and limit chances for growth and networking (Aggarwal, 2023). This would mean aspiring female leaders may struggle to find guidance and support that addresses their unique challenges (Zhang & Basha, 2023). Ibarra (2022) corroborated that these networks provide access to resources, information and opportunities essential for career growth.

Sandel (2020) contended that an overemphasis on networking undermined the principle of meritocracy. Career advancement, he argued, ought to have been based solely on individual merit and performance, not on who one knew or the strength of their professional connections. However, McMillan (2022) argued that networking had the potential to perpetuate exclusivity and inequality, in that when such networks were dominated by certain groups (women in this case), they could reinforce existing power structures and marginalise those who are not part of these networks. This, in turn, led to a lack of diversity and inclusion within professional circles.

### **Weighing work-life policies and women's leadership success**

Policies such as flexible working hours, parental leave and childcare facilities that support work-life balance are essential for making leadership positions more accessible to women. In contrast, studies (Barbar et al., 2024; Owotemu et al., 2024) argued that the administration and financial burden of flexible working hours, parental leaves and childcare facilities can be too high, potentially impacting the organisation's efficiency and profitability. Reiterated by Lupu and Ruiz-Castro (2021), work-life balance policies could lead to decreased productivity and a lack of commitment. There is a possibility of exploiting such policies, resulting in lower overall output and dedication to the job. The study's findings also revealed that institutions that recognise and celebrate the achievement of female leaders are more likely to encourage other women to pursue similar paths (Jongen, 2024). American Association of University Women (AAUW) (2023) also acknowledged that recognition is a positive step but emphasised that it must be part of a broader strategy that addresses systemic issues and promotes genuine equality in leadership opportunities.

Even though literature from Gisselquist and Kim (2024) indicates that women's involvement can be promoted through affirmative actions and gender quotas, Mor Barak et al. (2021) criticise that affirmative action and gender quotas can lead to tokenism, neglecting meritocracy. On the other hand, UNICEF (2021) insisted that policies that mandate gender diversity in leadership positions ensure that women have equal opportunities to advance. Multiple questions pop up: How will the policy ensure women's involvement without

qualifications? Are women qualified enough to compete with their male counterparts? If yes, what is stopping them from advancing to leadership positions?

### **Empowering through visibility**

Having visible female leaders within an institution can inspire and motivate other women to aspire to leadership positions (Madsen & Longman, 2020). World Economic Forum (2023) strongly emphasise that due to the deep-seated gender stereotypes that can question women's competence, it may not be easy for women to be accepted as leaders. One may then ask, "How will women overcome all these?" Studies by Kalev et al., (2020) have shown that the presence of female role models can positively influence women's career aspirations and confidence and challenge the stereotypes. The bottom line is that fewer women are in leadership positions in HE institutions, meaning even having mentors remains a challenge. So, how would the least motivated majority bring a traceable impact? Anyway, a little goes a long way! On the other hand, Hawkes and Baru (2024) vigorously contend that mere presence does not address the systemic inequalities that hinder women's advancement. It must be accompanied by broader structural changes and policies that address systemic biases and promote genuine equality in leadership opportunities.

### **Accessible professional development for women's leadership**

Even though training and professional development opportunities are observed as essential elements in promoting women leadership, the argument remains that not all women have equal access to these programmes (Lupu & Ruiz-Castro, 2021). Factors such as cost, location and time commitment can limit participation, particularly for women from underrepresented or economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Professional development programmes align with the Sustainable Development Goals 5 (SDG) which sought to achieve gender equality, empower women and ensure their effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all decision-making levels in political, economic and public life. The relevance of this lies in the basis that gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world (UN, 2022).

### **Conclusion**

Generally, patriarchal norms and institutional barriers significantly disadvantaged women. If inclusivity is redefined for genuine gender equity, mentorship for female leaders increases, and professional development for women's leadership is taken seriously, then women's leadership will increase. The underrepresentation of women denies women the opportunity to have visible mentors and engage in network opportunities. Institutional culture and climate play significant roles in enabling women's leadership by dismantling patriarchal norms and promoting gender equity.

### **Recommendations**

It is recommended that institutions develop gender-sensitive policies that target dismantling patriarchal norms. A strong emphasis was placed on inclusivity efforts, which must be nuanced,

and underlying disparities and structural inequalities must be addressed. Access to mentors, visible women leaders and professional networks was seen to be challenged by the existing underrepresentation of women in leadership positions. Structural changes were perceived to remedy the said, accompanied by the recommendation that institutions would create structured mentorship programs that pair aspiring female leaders with experienced mentors. Several contributing factors to women's leadership promotion, such as the development of policies that support work-life balance, were highlighted with a caution that their implementation should be mindful of exploitation. The paper suggested that further study be conducted to explore women's relevant experiences and qualifications to advance to leadership positions.

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## **EVALUATION OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE ADOPTION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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### **Abstract**

*Technological trends like artificial intelligence (AI) are reshaping the traditional roles of libraries and information centres, which demands new skill sets, opportunities, and challenges. The study evaluates the adoption of AI in library services across Nigerian universities with emphasis on the challenges and opportunities. The study adopts a descriptive survey design with qualitative research methodology. The population comprised of librarians in four university libraries in Nigeria with three participants selected in each library to give a total of 12 participants. Structured interview was used for data collection, which was conducted asynchronously. The interview results were coded and analysed thematically by generating related themes from the data. The results demonstrated that only two out of the four libraries have partially adopted AI and others are non-adopters. AI is integrated in readers services, research, and cataloguing. Strategies for the AI adoption include resource allocation, management support, capacity development, collaboration with stakeholders, provision of infrastructure. Challenges include shortfalls in funding which are being experienced by almost all the universities, staff resistance, and inadequate infrastructure. The study recommended that management of universities, and the library administration must be deliberate about AI adoption. There must be good policy framework, adequate funding and systematic implementation approach to AI adoption.*

**Keywords:** Artificial Intelligence, Digital technologies, University libraries, Library services, Strategies, Nigeria

### **Introduction**

The application and use of technologies in library service delivery spans several years and decades. But the development of digital technologies in recent time is very unprecedented, with significant impact on work processes in library and information services. Olubiyo (2025) acknowledges the changing role of libraries and librarians with the new technologies reshaping the way information products and services are being acquired, accessed, distributed and consumed. This suggests that technological trends like the artificial intelligence (AI) are reshaping the traditional roles of libraries and information centres, which demands new skill sets, opportunities, and challenges. Artificial intelligence (AI) is perceived as a powerful tool designed to imitate human intelligence, enabling machines to carry out tasks such as problem-

solving, decision-making, as well as data analysis with minimal human input. Also, AI technologies are capable of capturing data, making recommendations, and influencing decisions in both virtual and real-world environments, making them essential in modern technological advancements (Omehia, 2020).

According to Oyewale (2023), the application of AI technologies in libraries can be traced to the era of automation in the middle of 20th century. This has evolved and metamorphosed into highly sophisticated AI tools that is being witnessed in recent time. In the present digital era, AI is gradually taking the centre stage in many libraries around the globe. AI is ubiquitous and its application in library operations and services is becoming practically inevitable. As the societal demand for information access is increasing (Olubiyo, 2025), so do libraries are feeling the pressure to adopt and integrate strategies to meet up with this growing demand through the application of intelligent systems like the artificial intelligence. According to Suleiman et al., (2024), the exponential growth of information and the ever-increasing demand for efficient, user-centered services make AI a veritable technology in academic libraries. This technology is capable of streamlining and optimizing technical operations like cataloguing, collection management, and other routine tasks such as information retrieval support.

As far as the adoption of AI in Nigeria is concerned, the University of Lagos is the foremost academic library to adopt AI technology to optimise its services. A key tool in this effort is a robotic called Roboscholar, which warmly welcomes users and helps them navigate the library. This initiative not only improves everyday service delivery but also raises awareness among library professionals in other Nigerian universities about the potential of AI, which is still at a very low ebb in most Nigerian university libraries (Tunde, Ayodele, and Adeosun, 2022). University libraries and the librarians in Nigeria are well aware of the global trends in AI adoption, yet many are yet to catch up with this development. Yusuf et al., (2022) recognize AI as an enabler of practical solutions to real-time challenges encountered by libraries, such that activities like book shelving, acquisition of information resources, cataloguing of new materials have been enhanced through AI adoption, thus enabling more effective and efficient service delivery.

The integration of Artificial Intelligence such as robotics, chatbots, data analytics, automated cataloguing and digitisation/optical character recognition (OCR) into library services has emerged as a transformative approach in academic institutions worldwide creating new challenges and opportunities.

### **Statement of the Problem**

With the rapid advancement of AI technology, academic libraries in Nigeria are generally faced with the challenges of adapting to changing user needs and expectations. Most notably, the adoption rate within Nigerian universities remains relatively new compared to the developed countries like the US, China and Canada among others. According to Ajani et al. (2022), there is mixed feelings among librarians in Nigerian university libraries about the adoption of AI technologies, where on the one hand they appreciate the growing potential of AI to streamline processes, making tasks less prone to human error and ultimately taking library services to a

higher level. But on the other hand, there is a noticeable concern that, if not implemented carefully, these intelligent systems might eventually encroach on traditional job responsibilities, and consequently, force them out of job. Another major concern for universities is the issue of data privacy, which is greatly slowing down the adoption rate. While university libraries in Nigeria also acknowledge the significant contribution of AI to service delivery, the actual implementation of this new technology remains a wishful thinking. It is on this background that this study is carried out to evaluate the level of adoption of AI in Nigerian university libraries, with the opportunities and challenges impeding its adoption.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions were formulated to achieve the objectives of the study

1. What is the extent of AI adoption in library services in Nigerian universities?
2. What are the strategies employed in the adoption of AI in library services in Nigerian universities?
3. What is the impact of AI adoption on service delivery in Nigerian universities?
4. What are the challenges encountered by university libraries in the adoption of AI?

## **Literature Review and Theoretical Background**

Artificial intelligence has been identified as a major breakthrough in the field of digital technologies, which has significantly altered many aspects of daily computing activities (Olubiyo, 2025). Users of new mobile phones and smart devices are being exposed to artificial intelligence features being embedded into the new technologies and are being used inadvertently. The use of AI tools by academics in some northern Nigerian universities was studied by Idris and Umar (2024), with the aim of establishing the various AI tools used for research writing. The quantitative study identified Grammarly, Scite, Rytr AI, Quillbot AI, Research Rabbit, ChatPDF, Elicit AI, ChatGPT, Trinka, as well as Semantic Scholar as different AI tools mostly used for information retrieval, bibliographic and citation management, and plagiarism prevention.

Igbo et al., (2025) explored the requirements and challenges of adopting AI in Nigerian academic libraries, and found that availability of policy documents/frameworks, digital infrastructure facilities, human capital development and expertise, data security were all required. Yusuf et al., (2025) studied the perceived benefits of artificial intelligence (AI) and service delivery at Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library in Nigeria, using a descriptive survey with a sample of 122 library staff. The study identified positive impacts of AI on library operations such as the optimisation of tasks in cataloguing, reference services, and user support services among others. In an exploration of the current state of AI adoption in university libraries in Nigeria, Yusuf et al., (2024) examined the contributive role of AI in promoting library activities notably content management, automated indexing, and user engagement. The study highlighted possible benefits of AI adoption in service efficiency, improved decision-making, and better user experience.

Adewojo et al., (2025) established that AI integration potentially offers dynamic solutions to many libraries problems by streamlining administrative tasks, optimizing the information search process, and also, enhancing user engagement. Additionally, the study emphasized that AI has the potential to improve accessibility, searchability, with long-term efficiency gains in library collections. Wang and Xu (2024) highlighted how AI has transformed library and information science by improving efficiency and enhancing intelligent, personalized information services. AI has revolutionized the way users access, manage, and interact with information, offering dynamic solutions that anticipate needs and provide tailored experiences. Alam (2025) further emphasized AI's role in reshaping information dissemination, making services more adaptive and responsive to user preferences.

In a quantitative survey of librarians' awareness towards the use of AI technologies for sustainable library services, Lulu-Pokubo and Okwu (2025) discovered a high level of awareness in the use of AI technologies for library services among librarians, while also highlighting the fears of over-reliance on AI which could render librarians irrelevant, and consequently, losing their job. Contrary to Lulu-Pokubo and Okwu (2025), Yusuf et al. (2025) revealed low levels of AI awareness and readiness among library staff in OAU, citing different barriers such as skills gap, inadequate ICT infrastructure, and poor funding. It also identified fear of job loss due to automation, which was in line with Lulu-Pokubo and Okwu (2025). Suggestions for improvement include change of attitude, staff training, and improved budgeting to support AI integration. Yusuf, Ibrahim and Sedick (2024) addressed the ethical concerns related to the integration of AI in libraries, especially in the privacy of data, intellectual property (IP), algorithmic bias, and the potential risk of uneven access to AI-powered services. It emphasised the need to address related challenges like poor technological infrastructure, inadequate staff training, and inadequate funding.

Adewojo, Amzat and Hamzat (2025) reviewed the impact of AI in the organization of knowledge within Nigerian libraries, by assessing the challenges encountered, and identifying the potential benefits of AI integration. The study discovered that challenges like limited resources, and outdated systems are encountered by many Nigerian libraries. Despite the benefits of AI, Igbo et al. (2025) identified critical issues affecting its implementation in libraries including high cost of establishing an AI system, lack of technical skills, fear of job loss, inadequate technological infrastructure and unstable power supply.

## Methods

The study adopts a descriptive survey design with qualitative research methodology, which is based on interpretive paradigm. This method is used by researchers to gather non-numerical data about the behaviour, opinions and social contexts of a particular population on certain phenomenon (Oranga and Matere, 2023). The population comprised of librarians in university libraries in Oyo, Ogun and Lagos States. The selected libraries represent the federal, state and private university libraries in Southwest Nigeria. Four universities were purposively selected for the study namely: University of Lagos, University of Ibadan, Lagos State University, and Covenant University. Three participants were selected in each library to give a total of 12 participants. A structured interview schedule was developed for the purpose of data collection,

which was conducted asynchronously among librarians through the use of Google Form. The researcher first sought the consent of the participants and obtained their permission before the interview was conducted. Responses from the interview were coded, collated and downloaded as an Excel file. The qualitative dataset was subjected to detailed content analysis using the thematic method of analysis through Copilot. The .xls dataset was uploaded into Copilot, a generative AI by Microsoft to generate themes and subthemes, giving the following instructions (prompts) [*kindly generate the themes and responses from the following qualitative dataset*]. The “Think Deeper” feature for more complex topics was applied to be able to handle the data synthesis and abstraction. A second prompt [*identify and quote important responses relating to each theme*] was then issued to the initial response for better results.

## Results

The result of the qualitative data collected through the interview is thematically presented in this section. Four research questions were formulated to achieve the set objectives of this study.

### **Research Question 1: What is the extent of AI adoption in library services in Nigerian universities?**

Participants from the four universities were interviewed on their perception to the extent of AI adoption in their various libraries. In response to the question “has AI been implemented in your library?”, participants from both University of Lagos and University of Ibadan answered “Yes” while Lagos State University and Covenant University answered “No”. The responses indicated that while UNILAG and UI are partial adopters, LASU and Covenant are non-adopters.

On the types of AI tools implemented in the university libraries, respondents from UNILAG identified robotics and LLM, while LASU mentioned chatbots, and Covenant identified ChatGPT. For University of Ibadan, respondents identified chatbots, QR codes, plagiarism tool and LLM. One of the respondents mentioned that apart from the institution “...*On individual level, library staff adopts other AI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, Chatbots, and other conversational AI tools.*”

Areas of application of AI tools within the library services vary across the universities. Participants from UNILAG indicated that AI is used in cataloguing and classification, reader’s services and at the reception. One of the respondents in LASU claimed that AI is used for e-resources management and utilisation, while participant from UI noted that AI is used “*Mainly in the area of research, for detecting plagiarism and AI similarities, and information retrieval.*” The responses highlight the role of AI in different areas of library operations.

### **Research Question 2: What are the strategies employed in the adoption of AI in library services in Nigerian universities?**

Different strategies for the adoption of AI in library services were identified by the participant. Resources allocation, staff training, and management support for implementation were

common among the libraries. This result emphasises the important role of management in supporting AI initiative in the library, and thus, effectively allocating financial, human and materials resources to facilitate successful adoption. In further response to this question, one of the participants who happens to be an Electronic Resources Librarian mentioned that

*“Strategies like collaboration with other stakeholders such as the Postgraduate College and ITeMS, training and retraining of staff and researchers, provision of infrastructure and network facilities, provision of technical support for the users have all been adopted for AI implementation.”*

One of the participants attributed the adoption of AI in library services to

*“advancement in digital technologies has compelled many academic libraries to move with the trend of AI adoption. Also, the need to contribute to enhanced user experience, improved service delivery and research productivity”*

### **Research Question 3: What is the impact of AI adoption on service delivery in Nigerian universities?**

Participants in the selected universities identified various impacts of AI on service in university libraries. Participants from UNILAG acknowledged that AI technology *helps in the smooth running of the library* and also allowed *more books to be catalogued, while the use of robotics help to welcome and direct users to the location of information resources* thereby enhancing customer services, enabling personalised services and reducing the time of service delivery. One of the participants in LASU also acknowledged that AI enhances efficient service delivery. Participants from UI reinforced the position of other participants that AI promotes *“effective, easy and timely service delivery”* as well as *“efficient and personalized services”*. *Also, there is “efficiency of service delivery, better productivity and reduction in time of service delivery”*. These suggest operational gains for the university libraries services from AI adoption.

Results further show that library like UNILAG has succeeded in cataloguing more books, with easy location of resources by the users. From Covenant University, the participant noted that *“Adoption of AI has helped librarians in my library curate more useful resources for our users within the shortest possible time”*. One participant from LASU library acknowledged that:

*“libraries utilise AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants to answer queries, provide immediate assistance, and point users towards the resources and services that are offered. Customers can reach these virtual agents more easily because they are always available.”*

As for the University of Ibadan, the first participant maintained that: “It [AI] has improved the outcomes of our accreditation exercises, improved user interactions with the library and

enhanced user education during library orientation.” The second participant noted that AI enhances the quality of written content (plagiarism check), while the third participant posited that *The adoption of AI tool especially with the use of Turnitin in research has enabled the production of quality research output and better institutional reputation*” The outcomes are indications that university libraries achieve both operational gains and qualitative improvements in library outputs from the adoption and integration of AI technologies in service delivery.

**Research Question 4: What are the challenges encountered by university libraries in the adoption of AI?**

Participants identified inadequate funding, staff resistance, inadequate skills and need for specialised training which are peculiar to all the university libraries. In addition, one of the participants pointed out that:

*“AI tools such as robotics, chatbots and the Large Language models have not been fully implemented in the services due to lack of management support, inadequate funding and poor initiative. Also of major concern is poor infrastructure such as unreliable internet connectivity and poor power supply”*

Despite the advantages and positive outcomes from the adoption of AI, university libraries encounter numerous challenges that suppress the enthusiasm for AI adoption in both operational tasks and service delivery. Most of these concerns relate to infrastructure, funding, human factor and management support among others.

**Discussion**

Out of the four universities investigated, University of Lagos and University of Ibadan are partial adopters of artificial intelligence (AI), while LASU and Covenant are non-adopters. Robotics and LLM were the two AI tools adopted by UNILAG, while chatbots, QR codes, plagiarism tool and LLM were adopted in by UI. The study further found that AI tools like ChatGPT, Copilot, Chatbots, and other conversational AI tools are used by individual librarians in the university libraries. Idris and Umar (2024) identified Grammarly, ChatGPT, and others as the different AI tools mostly used by the university scholars, while the adoption of robotics called Roboscholar in University of Lagos was reiterated by Tunde et al., (2022). Areas of application of AI tools within the library services vary across the universities UNILAG adopts AI in cataloguing and classification, reader’s services and at the reception. This aligns with Tunde et al., (2022) who identified the integration of Roboscholar into the library primarily to welcome users to the library and provide directional services in the location of information in the library. At the UI library, AI is used *in the area of research, for detecting plagiarism and AI similarities, and information retrieval. The study established the adoption of AI in different areas of library operations. The result conforms with Yusuf et al., (2024) who identified library*

activities where AI can be integrated such as content management, automated indexing, and user engagement.

Different strategies are used by university libraries for the adoption of AI in library services such as resources allocation, training and retraining of staff and researchers, and management support for implementation. This is corroborated by Igbo et al., (2025) who identified the required strategies for AI adoption to include availability of policy documents/frameworks, digital infrastructure facilities, human capital development and expertise, data security. The result emphasises the important role of management in supporting AI initiative in the library. Also, other strategies like collaboration with stakeholders, provision of infrastructure and network facilities, and provision of technical support for the users have all been adopted for AI implementation in Nigerian university libraries.

Some of the factors that promote the adoption of AI tools in library services include need for improved efficiency, the 5<sup>th</sup> industrial revolution, enhanced user experience, and ease of use of the AI system. Adoption of AI in library services are also attributed to advancement in digital technologies which compelled many academic libraries to move with the trend of AI adoption, as well as the need to contribute to enhanced user experience, improved service delivery and research productivity. The result was further reiterated by Adewojo, Amzat and Hamzat (2025) which agreed that AI adoption is borne out of the need to streamline administrative tasks, optimize the information search process, and also, enhance user engagement.

The impacts and outcomes of AI adoption on operational tasks and service delivery in university libraries include: enabling *smooth running of the library*, allowing *more books to be catalogued*, enhancing customer services, enabling personalised services and reducing the time of service delivery. The study also acknowledged that AI enhances efficient service delivery, promotes *effective, easy and timely service delivery*, as well as *efficient and personalized services*. These impacts suggest operational gains for the university libraries services from AI adoption. In addition, libraries now utilise AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants to answer queries, provide immediate assistance, and point users towards the resources and services that are offered. Users can reach these virtual agents more easily because they are always available. These outcomes are indications that university libraries achieve both operational gains and qualitative improvements in library outputs from the adoption and integration of AI technologies in service delivery. The result further buttressed Yusuf, Ibrahim and Sedick (2024) which reported AI adoption promotes service efficiency, improved decision-making, and better user experience.

Inadequate funding, staff resistance, inadequate skills and need for specialised training are peculiar challenges which affect successful AI adoption in all the university libraries. The result is similar to Nduka, Tella and Okiki (2023) which identified insufficient funding, irregular power supply, technophobia, staff resistance to change, fear of job loss, inadequate ICT facilities, and poor maintenance culture as the major impediments to AI adoption in Nigerian libraries. Other challenges include lack of management support, poor initiative, and poor infrastructure such as unreliable internet connectivity and poor power supply. The findings are also consistent with Akwang and Ebiwolade (2024) who reported low institutional

support for the adoption of AI-powered tools in research writing in universities in South-South Nigerian. The fear of job loss and inadequate infrastructure were also emphasised by Igbo et al. (2025).

## **Conclusion**

The findings of this study highlight the varying degrees of AI adoption in university libraries across Nigeria, categorizing institutions as either early/partial adopters or non-adopters. While some libraries have integrated AI tools into cataloguing, research assistance, and user services, others have yet to embark on implementation. Key strategies for AI adoption include resource allocation, staff training, and management support, with additional emphasis on collaboration and infrastructure development. The adoption of AI has arguably improved service efficiency, user experience, and research productivity, yielding operational gains such as enhanced cataloguing, and more personalized library services. However, challenges persist, including inadequate funding, staff resistance, insufficient training, and infrastructural limitations such as unreliable internet and power supply. These obstacles hinder the full integration of AI into library operations, despite its evident advantages. Ultimately, while AI adoption presents transformative opportunities for university libraries, success hinges on strategic investment, management commitment, and infrastructural improvements to ensure sustainable implementation. Addressing these challenges will facilitate more efficient library services and enhance the overall academic experience for users. If libraries must benefit from AI technologies, they must be ready to invest heavily and do all that is necessary in terms of policy framework, funding and manpower development.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are made for way forward in the adoption of AI.

1. Management of universities, and the library administration must be deliberate about AI adoption and not just reacting. There must be good policy framework, adequate funding and systematic implementation approach.
2. Adoption and implementation of AI in libraries can enhance services, streamline operations, and improve user engagement. However, there is need for user education programmes to educate patrons on new AI-driven services available in the library.
3. For university libraries to effectively implement AI technologies to enhance their services, improve operational efficiency, and better meet the needs of their communities, there is need to make provisions for training and development, choose appropriate technology, select solutions that can grow with the library's needs over time. etc.

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## ASSESSING THE ROLE OF AUGMENTED REALITY AND COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY IN TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN EDUCATION: IMPACT ON STUDENTS' LEARNING OUTCOMES IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigated the effectiveness of Augmented Reality (AR) enhanced with Counselling Psychology compared to Conventional Teaching Methods (CTM) in Social Studies education. Employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, the research combined quantitative quasi-experimental analysis ( $N=193$ ) with qualitative interviews to evaluate academic and psychosocial outcomes. Quantitative results demonstrated statistically superior academic performance in the AR group ( $F(2, 190) = 207.33, p<.001$ ), accounting for 57.1% of variance in scores ( $\eta^2 = 0.571$ ), while pretest scores showed no significant influence ( $p=.289$ ). Qualitative analysis revealed that AR's immersive visualizations significantly boosted student engagement, while integrated counselling strategies improved self-regulation and confidence. Educators observed enhanced conceptual understanding and participation, particularly among traditionally underperforming students. The findings advocate for: (1) curricular integration of AR with psychological support frameworks, (2) teacher training programme blending technological and counselling competencies, and (3) development of standardized assessment tools for multimodal learning outcomes. The study highlighted the transformative potential of combining immersive technologies with psychosocial support, suggesting future research directions including longitudinal studies and cross-cultural adaptations. These results offered actionable insights for educational policymakers, curriculum designers, and teacher educators seeking to modernise pedagogy through evidence-based technological integration.*

**Keywords:** Augmented Reality (AR), Counselling Psychology, Learning Outcomes, Social Studies Education, and Technological Proficiency.

### **Introduction**

The 21st century has witnessed a paradigm shift in education, driven by rapid technological advancements. Digital tools such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), and Artificial Intelligence (AI) are revolutionizing pedagogical approaches, making learning more interactive and student-centred (Selwyn, 2019). These technologies enhance engagement facilitate experiential learning, and bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application (Prensky, 2001). In this context, AR stands out as a particularly promising

tool due to its ability to overlay digital information onto the physical world, creating immersive learning experiences (Azuma, 1997).

Augmented Reality (AR) integrates digital elements such as 3D models, animations, and interactive simulations into real-world environments through smartphones, tablets, or AR glasses (Billinghurst, 2002). Unlike Virtual Reality (VR), which creates entirely artificial environments, AR enhances real-world settings, making it more accessible for classroom use (Milgram & Kishino, 1994). Studies indicated that AR improves spatial understanding, engagement, and knowledge retention, particularly in complex subjects (Abanum et al. 2025; Wu et al. 2013).

Social Studies encompasses abstract concepts such as historical events, cultural dynamics, and geopolitical structures, which can be challenging for students to grasp through traditional textbooks (Martorella, 1997). AR offers a solution by visualizing historical timelines, simulating cultural interactions, and mapping geographical changes dynamically (Yuen et al., 2011). For instance, students can "walk through" ancient civilizations or witness historical battles in 3D, fostering deeper comprehension (Dunleavy & Dede, 2014). While AR presents numerous benefits, its effectiveness depends on students' technological proficiency (Hwang et al., 2016). Learners with limited digital literacy may struggle with AR interfaces, leading to frustration and disengagement (Huang et al., 2019). This digital divide underscores the need for structured training and scaffolding to ensure equitable access to AR-enhanced learning (Van Dijk, 2020). Beyond technical skills, psychological factors such as anxiety, motivation, and self-efficacy influence students' adaptability to AR (Bandura, 1997). Technology-related stress (technostress) can hinder learning, particularly among students who perceive AR as complex or intimidating (Taraifdar et al., 2019). Addressing these psychological barriers is crucial for maximizing AR's educational potential.

Counselling Psychology provides strategies to mitigate technostress and enhance learning adaptability (Dweck, 2006). Techniques such as cognitive-behavioural interventions, motivational interviewing, and growth mind-set training can help students develop resilience and confidence in using AR (Lent & Brown, 2013). Integrating psychological support with AR-based instruction ensures that students not only use the technology effectively but also maintain a positive attitude toward learning (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This study draws upon Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1950) and Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986). Constructivism posits that learners build knowledge through active engagement, which AR facilitates via interactive simulations (Jonassen, 1999). Meanwhile, Social Cognitive Theory emphasizes self-efficacy and observational learning, both of which are reinforced through Counselling Psychology interventions (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). Previous studies have demonstrated AR'S effectiveness in STEM fields, where it enhances spatial reasoning and problem-solving skills (Ibáñez & Delgado-Kloos, 2018). However, research on AR in humanities and social sciences remains limited (Radu, 2014). This study addresses this gap by examining AR 's impact on Social Studies, a discipline that benefits from visualization and experiential learning (Squire & Jan, 2007).

Empirical evidence suggests that AR improves academic performance by making abstract concepts tangible (Akçayır & Akçayır, 2017). For example, students using AR in

history lessons showed higher retention rates compared to those using traditional methods (Chang et al., 2015). This study investigates whether similar benefits extend to Social Studies when combined with Counselling Psychology. Beyond academic gains, AR influences student attitudes by increasing engagement and curiosity (Di Serio et al., 2013). However, negative perceptions may arise if the technology is poorly implemented (Hew & Cheung, 2013). Counseling Psychology can help shape positive attitudes by addressing apprehensions and fostering a growth mindset (Yeager & Dweck, 2012).

AR requires students to navigate digital information effectively, making information literacy a critical skill (Abanum et al. 2025). Students must discern credible sources, interpret AR-generated data, and synthesize information skills that counselling psychology can reinforce through strategies that support self-awareness and reflective thinking (Flavell, 1979). Despite its potential, AR adoption faces obstacles such as high costs, technical glitches, and teacher readiness (Kesim & Ozarslan, 2012). Professional development for educators and institutional support are essential for sustainable integration (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010). Most studies focus solely on AR's technological aspects, neglecting psychological support mechanisms (Radu, 2012). This study advocates for a dual approach, combining AR with Counselling Psychology to optimize learning outcomes. Educational policymakers must consider teacher training, infrastructure investment, and psychological support systems when implementing AR (Zhao & Frank, 2003). This research provides evidence-based recommendations for curriculum designers and policymakers

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the growing adoption of AR in education, its effectiveness in Social Studies remains underexplored, particularly concerning the interplay between technological proficiency and psychological factors. While AR has demonstrated potential in enhancing engagement and knowledge retention, students with low technological adaptability may experience frustration or disengagement, thereby diminishing learning outcomes (Huang et al., 2019). Additionally, the absence of psychological support mechanisms in technology-integrated classrooms may lead to anxiety or resistance, limiting AR's full educational benefits

### **Research Question**

Does Augmented Reality (AR), combined with Counselling Psychology, significantly improve students' academic performance in Social Studies compared to Conventional Teaching Method (CTM)?

### **Hypothesis**

There is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught with AR (supported by Counselling Psychology) and those taught with CTM.

### **Methodology**

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design to comprehensively evaluate the impact of augmented reality (AR) and counselling psychology on students'

learning outcomes in Social Studies. The research design incorporated both quantitative and qualitative phases to provide a robust analysis of the intervention's effectiveness. The quantitative phase utilized a quasi-experimental approach with pre-test and post-test measures to compare academic performance and attitudes between the experimental and control groups. The qualitative phase involved in-depth interviews with selected participants to gain deeper insights into their experiences with the AR-based learning environment.

The study was conducted over a six-week period with Junior Secondary School students II. During the first week, the research team implemented preparatory activities for both groups. For the experimental group, teachers and research assistants were trained on the EduFlow AR platform to ensure proper implementation of the technology. The training covered essential aspects such as navigating the AR interface, sharing lesson materials, and administering tests through the platform. Students in the experimental group received their pre-test via EduFlow links, which were shared by their teachers using available mobile devices and laptops. Meanwhile, the control group completed the same pre-test in a traditional paper format without any exposure to AR technology.

The second week focused on further training and the commencement of the intervention students in the experimental group participated in hands-on sessions to familiarize themselves with the AR tools, such as interacting with 3D historical models and virtual simulations concurrently, counselling psychologists conducted motivational sessions to address potential technostress and enhance students' confidence in using the new technology. These sessions were designed to foster a growth mind-set and reduce anxiety related to technological adaptation. In contrast, the control group continued with conventional teaching methods, which included standard lectures and textbook-based instruction without any AR components or psychological support.

From week three to five, the experimental group engaged in AR-enhanced Social Studies lessons, where they explored curriculum-aligned content through immersive AR experiences. For example, students could visualize historical events in 3D or interact with geographical maps overlaid with digital annotations. Counselling support sessions were held weekly to reinforce students' psychological readiness and address any emerging challenges. The control group, on the other hand, received the same Social Studies content but through traditional instructional methods, ensuring a clear comparison between the two approaches.

In the sixth week, post-test assessments were administered to both groups to measure changes in academic performance and attitudes. The experimental group completed their post-tests via the EduFlow platform, while the control group used paper-based tests. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 randomly selected students from the experimental group to explore their perceptions of the AR intervention and the role of counselling support. These interviews, which lasted approximately 20-30 minutes each, were audio-recorded and later transcribed for thematic analysis. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS software, with independent samples t-tests and ANCOVA at 0.05 level of significance employed to compare post-test results between groups while controlling for pre-test scores. The qualitative data underwent thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes related to students' experiences. Ethical considerations were prioritized throughout the

study, with informed consent obtained from all participants and confidentiality maintained through anonymized identifiers. This comprehensive methodology ensured a rigorous evaluation of the intervention's impact, combining statistical evidence with rich qualitative insights to provide a holistic understanding of the research outcomes.

## Results

Source	Type III Sum of Square	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Square	Eta
Corrected Model	2773.034 <sup>a</sup>	6	462.172	69.492	.000	.573	
Intercept	2909.399	1	2903.399	436.551	.000	.584	
PRETEST	7.502	1	7.502	1.128	.289	.004	
GROUP	2757.755	2	1378.878	207.326	.000	.571	
Error	2068.387	190	6.651				
Total	47012.000	193					
Corrected Total	4841.421	192					

### Answer to Research Question

Does Augmented Reality (AR), combined with Counselling Psychology, significantly improve students' academic performance in Social Studies compared to Conventional Teaching Methods (CTM)?

The results from the analysis clearly showed that using Augmented Reality (AR) combined with Counselling Psychology significantly improved students' academic performance in Social Studies compared to Conventional Teaching Methods (CTM). The key finding was the strong effect of the GROUP variable (which compared AR vs. CTM), with a very high F-value of 207.326 and p-value ( $p < .001$ ). This indicated that the difference in performance between the groups was not due to chance and that AR truly worked better. Additionally, the Partial Eta Squared ( $\eta^2 = .571$ ) showed that 57.1% of the improvement in scores could be explained by the teaching method (AR vs. CTM). On the other hand, students' initial ability (pretest scores) did not have a significant impact ( $p = .289$ ), meaning the improvement came from the teaching method itself, not from prior knowledge. In simple terms, AR with Counselling Psychology was much more effective than traditional teaching for boosting Social Studies performance.

### Test of Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in academic performance between students taught with AR (supported by Counselling Psychology) and those taught with CTM.

The results show a statistically significant difference between the groups, F-value (207.326) and p-value of .000, which is below significance level of .05. This means we can be highly confident that the observed improvement in academic performance is real and not due to chance. Furthermore, the partial Eta Squared = .571 indicates that the teaching method explains over 57% of the variation in student performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, the evidence clearly shows that AR combined with Counselling Psychology leads to

significantly better academic outcomes in Social Studies compared to Conventional Teaching Methods (CTM).

### **Discussion of Findings**

The study's outcomes aligned with existing literature on immersive educational technologies and psychological interventions. The notable boost in academic performance achieved through augmented reality (AR) alongside counselling psychology (partial  $\eta^2 = .571$ ) supported prior research emphasising the effectiveness of interactive digital learning tools. Radu (2014) highlighted that AR fostered deeper student engagement and enhanced spatial comprehension, particularly in subjects requiring conceptual visualisation, such as social studies. Likewise, the integration of counselling strategies with technology-based instruction echoed findings by Chen et al. (2020), who asserted that psychological support interventions contributed to academic success by minimising anxiety and improving self-regulation skills. The study implied that combining technological advancements with psychological interventions produced greater educational benefits than either approach used individually.

This result ( $p = .289$ ) suggested that the AR and counselling intervention was equally beneficial across students with varying initial knowledge levels, showcasing the inclusive potential of this educational strategy. Hwang et al. (2016) argued that well-structured digital learning tools helped mitigate achievement gaps by providing tailored learning experiences. The findings of the current study extended this notion, demonstrating that when AR technology was complemented by psychological support, disparities in prior knowledge could be lessened. This had considerable implications for equitable education, as it suggested that AR-enhanced learning strategies incorporating counselling could effectively support students across different proficiency levels.

Moreover, the 57.3% variance explained by the full model highlighted the transformative impact of integrating Augmented Reality (AR) with counselling psychology in education. These results resonated with Mayer's (2014) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which emphasises the role of interactive and visual elements in enhancing cognitive processing and information retention. The additional inclusion of psychological counselling appeared to amplify these cognitive benefits, potentially by addressing emotional and motivational aspects affecting students' learning experiences. Durlak et al. (2011) reinforced this perspective through their meta-analysis, showing that social-emotional learning programmes contributed to academic improvements beyond their emotional benefits. The current study provided empirical support for combining psychological interventions with emerging educational technologies to create more effective learning environments. Future investigations should examine the underlying mechanisms driving this improvement, exploring key factors such as cognitive load, motivation, and self-efficacy as potential mediators.

The current study's findings demonstrated the powerful synergistic effect of combining augmented reality (AR) technology with counselling psychology principles in social studies education. The analysis revealed that this innovative pedagogical approach produced substantially stronger academic outcomes than conventional teaching methods, with ( $\eta^2 = 0.57$ ) comparable to effects reported in other technology-enhanced learning interventions (Radu,

2014; Chen et al., 2020). These results suggested that the immersive, interactive nature of AR, when paired with psychological support mechanisms, created a uniquely effective learning environment that transcended traditional instructional limitations supporting Mayer's (2014) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, which emphasises the importance of combining visual and verbal information processing. The intervention's effectiveness remained robust regardless of students' prior knowledge levels, indicating its potential as an equitable educational strategy that could benefit diverse learners a finding that aligned with Hwang et al.'s (2016) work on technology's role in bridging achievement gaps.

The success of this combined intervention may have been attributed to how it simultaneously addressed multiple dimensions of learning. Augmented reality likely enhanced cognitive engagement through visual–spatial representation of abstract social studies concepts, while the counselling components potentially improved students' motivation and self-regulation consistent with Durlak et al.'s (2011) findings regarding the academic benefits of social-emotional learning programmes. This dual approach appeared to have created optimal conditions for knowledge acquisition and retention, surpassing what either method could have achieved independently, echoing recent calls for integrated pedagogical frameworks (Johnson et al., 2022). The substantial variance explained by the instructional method (57.3%) underscored the transformative potential of such integrative approaches in classroom practice. These findings carried important implications for contemporary education, particularly given the increasing recognition of the need for pedagogical approaches that accommodated digital-native learners while supporting their socioemotional development (Twenge et al. 2020). The study provided empirical support for moving beyond traditional lecture-based methods toward more dynamic, student-centred learning experiences that blended technological and psychological innovations. The results aligned with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, suggesting that technology could serve as a cultural tool that mediated learning when combined with appropriate psychological scaffolding. Future research should investigate the longitudinal effects of this intervention and explore its adaptability across different cultural contexts, building on recent cross-cultural studies of educational technology (Li et al. 2023). Such investigations could further refine our understanding of how to optimally integrate technological and psychological approaches in diverse educational settings.

## **Conclusion**

This study provided compelling evidence that augmented reality (AR) combined with counselling psychology enhanced academic performance in social studies more effectively than conventional teaching methods (CTM). The  $\eta^2 = .571$  underscored the efficacy of this approach, while the non-significant influence of pre-test scores indicated its potential for equitable learning outcomes. These findings supported existing multimedia learning theories (Mayer, 2014) and social-emotional learning frameworks (Durlak et al., 2011), emphasising the importance of addressing both cognitive and emotional factors to maximise learning effectiveness.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed for educators' policymakers, and researchers:

1. Expanding Research on Long-Term Outcomes Although this study demonstrates short-term academic improvements, further longitudinal research is essential to determine whether these benefits persist over time. Future studies should also investigate the effectiveness of AR and counselling-based interventions across various subjects, such as STEM and humanities, as well as different student demographics, including age groups and socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. Policy Initiatives for Technology-Enhanced Learning Educational policymakers should prioritize funding for AR-equipped learning environments and school-based counselling services. Since pre-test scores showed no significant impact, this intervention could be instrumental in minimizing achievement disparities, making it a valuable investment in inclusive education.

Looking ahead, educators should have adopted blended methodologies that integrated immersive technology with psychological support, ensuring students benefited from both innovative teaching techniques and holistic personal development. Further research should have explored the feasibility and cost-effectiveness of these interventions to facilitate broad implementation across diverse educational settings. Ultimately, this study advocated for a transformation in pedagogical approaches one that seamlessly combined technological advancements with comprehensive student support systems.

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## **EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION IN NIGERIA TERTIARY EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS: THE EDUCATIONAL PLANNERS' LENS**

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### **Abstract**

*In the light of global possibilities and challenges, equity, diversity, and social inclusion (EDSI) are essential elements for raising the standard and competitiveness of postsecondary education in Nigeria. This study examines the current state of EDSI in Nigerian universities and its implications for sustainable global competitiveness. Despite a rich tapestry of cultural, linguistic, and social diversity, Nigerian tertiary institutions continue to grapple with issues related to access, representation, and inclusivity, particularly for the marginalized groups. Through a conceptual research approach, this study seeks to investigate barriers to EDSI, including socio-economic disparities, gender inequities, and regional disparities in educational access. It is fastened on a scoping review which served as data and the social justice theory that served as the lens – theoretical framework. This paper highlights the need for comprehensive policies that promote equitable access to quality education, foster inclusive curricula, and implement initiatives that celebrate cultural diversity. Furthermore, the study pinpoints that embracing EDSI not only enhances educational outcomes and innovation but also equips graduates with the necessary skills to thrive in a globalized economy. To support sustainable global competitiveness, Nigerian educational policies must prioritize EDSI by embracing interdisciplinary and collaborative frameworks that encourage participation from various stakeholders, including government bodies, educational institutions, and civil society. In conclusion, the study argues that fostering an equitable and inclusive educational environment in Nigeria is essential for building a diverse talent pool and its more than a moral imperative that is essential for driving innovation, economic growth, and social cohesion in Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Equity, Diversity, Social Inclusion, Sustainable, Global Competitiveness

## **Introduction**

In the 21st century, the principles of equity, diversity, and social inclusion have emerged as fundamental aspects of the global conversation surrounding education, especially in higher education institutions. These concepts are deeply connected to principles of fairness and rights, serving as essential drivers for national development, innovation, and global competitiveness. In the current landscape of knowledge, universities have a vital role in equipping students to succeed in diverse, collaborative, and tech-focused settings (OECD, 2021). This preparation needs structures that break down systemic obstacles and encourage inclusive excellence, especially in areas such as sub-Saharan Africa, where inequality continues to be a significant issue.

Tertiary education in Nigeria is crucial for influencing the country's socio-economic growth and its status in the world. Nigeria, being the most populous country in Africa, boasts more than 170 universities, including federal, state, and private institutions. However, the system faces significant challenges related to access, marginalization, and imbalance (National Universities Commission [NUC], 2023). Even with Nigeria's vibrant cultural and ethnic variety, its higher education institutions have faced challenges in fostering fair and inclusive settings. Disparities in gender representation, socio-economic access, and regional resource distribution persist and continue to grow (Aina & Adeoye, 2023; World Bank, 2022).

Equity in education means providing fair access to opportunities, resources, and support so that every student, no matter their background, can succeed academically (UNESCO, 2021). Diversity reflects the existence of a range of identities, experiences, and viewpoints, encompassing aspects such as gender, ethnicity, socio-economic background, and disability. Inclusion involves a deliberate and comprehensive approach to make sure that diverse individuals are not only present but also actively involved, appreciated, and supported in educational environments (Fraser, 2018; Page, 2017). EDSI represents more than just a moral or ethical aim; recent studies have shown that inclusive institutions drive innovation, create well-rounded graduates, and promote democratic and socially unified communities (Gurin et al., 2020; Page, 2017). However, in Nigeria, tertiary institutions have not yet incorporated EDSI as a fundamental part of policy and teaching practices. Gender disparities continue to exist, particularly in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), where women represent less than 30% of enrolled students (UNESCO Institute for Statistics [UIS], 2023). In a similar vein, students from rural and economically disadvantaged backgrounds encounter significant obstacles in both gaining admission and remaining enrolled, largely due to financial, infrastructural, and socio-cultural barriers (Okoye & Okoye, 2020). Additionally, institutions in Northern Nigeria struggle with persistent financial shortages and safety concerns, worsening the inequalities in access and quality of education.

The impact of these disparities reaches far beyond Nigeria's borders. In a globalized world where people are central to economic competitiveness, the inability to tap into the full spectrum of national talent undermines Nigeria's ability to compete in global education rankings, labor markets, and innovation indices (World Economic Forum, 2023). As Okonjo-

Iweala (2021) wisely pointed out, “the future of African economies depends not just on the number of people we educate, but on the inclusivity and equity of that education.”

This paper aims to explore the current state of equity, diversity, and social inclusion in Nigerian tertiary education, examining its implications for sustainable global competitiveness from the viewpoint of educational planners. This study examines the structural and institutional obstacles to EDSI, analyzes current policy responses, and offers evidence-based suggestions for integrating EDSI into the planning frameworks of higher education. This analysis, rooted in Social Justice Theory and following a scoping review methodology, seeks to support a transformative agenda that reshapes Nigeria’s tertiary education system into an inclusive force for national development and global significance.

## **Literature Review**

The concept of equity in education refers to fairness in the distribution of resources, opportunities, and outcomes while diversity encompasses the presence of different identities, including ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic background, while inclusion refers to the intentional and systemic efforts to ensure all learners feel welcomed, supported, and valued (Gurin et al., 2012). Globally, institutions that incorporate EDSI principles into their structures tend to produce graduates who are more innovative, socially conscious, and adaptable to changing environments (Page, 2017).

In the Nigerian context, numerous studies have identified barriers to equity in tertiary education. For instance, students from Northern Nigeria often face educational disadvantages due to decades of underinvestment, insecurity, and socio-cultural norms that discourage female education (Adedokun et al., 2021). Moreover, access to tertiary education is highly competitive and disproportionately favors students from urban and affluent backgrounds, where better secondary education is available (Ajadi, 2019).

There is also underrepresentation of certain ethnic groups and women in leadership positions within universities, which undermines efforts toward institutional inclusivity. The curriculum remains largely Eurocentric and fails to reflect the country’s multicultural identity or indigenous knowledge systems (Bamgbose, 2020). Therefore, the literature supports the urgent need for deliberate planning and reforms to embed EDSI in policy, practice, and curriculum.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study is grounded in Social Justice Theory, particularly as articulated by John Rawls (1971), who proposed the principles of justice as fairness. Rawls argues that institutions should be designed to benefit the least advantaged members of society. In the educational framework, this implies creating systems that do not merely offer access to education but ensure meaningful participation and equitable outcomes for all students. Additionally, Nancy Fraser (2003) further expanded on social justice by highlighting three dimensions: redistribution (economic justice), recognition (cultural justice), and representation (political justice). Applying Fraser’s framework helps to understand that barriers in Nigerian tertiary education are not just economic but also cultural and political. Social justice theory provides a critical lens for examining how

exclusion is embedded within structures and how policy can be redesigned to dismantle these barriers.

Within the scope of the scoping review, varied collections of peer-reviewed journals, policy statements, and national and international reports were reviewed to investigate trends of contemporary Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDSI) in Nigerian higher education. Various studies investigated gender inequality and inclusion and commenced with Adeyemi and Arogundade's (2019) investigation of enduring gender imbalances in access to higher education. This theme was further unfolded by Ogundipe's (2018) examination of women's under representation in leadership positions at universities and by Afolabi's (2021) investigation of gender-related issues of progression in academia. The results infer system-wide gender disparities in light of prevailing reforms. Concurrently, an in-depth assessment of inclusive educational practice at Nigerian universities involved Salami and Olawale (2021) and Yusuf and Balogun's (2020) strategic plan to foster inclusive teaching and learning environments.

Equity and access were also strong themes. Eze (2020) wrote about access inequality to tertiary education, particularly among marginalized groups. Bello and Dada (2019) contributed empirical richness by examining barriers to access by disadvantage groups. Ibrahim (2018) shed light on the socioeconomic drivers undermining attainment, highlighting how economic and geographic disparities overlap with EDSI targets. Along similar lines, Umeh and Johnson (2022) wrote about disability inclusion, providing proposals to enhance accessibility at the level of universities. Tackling structural inequality, Chukwuemeka (2021) outlined institutional and policy-level obstacles, and Obi (2020) chronicled policy shortcomings in realizing effective implementation of inclusive practice. In policy and institutional response, landmark documents such as the National Policy on Education (Federal Ministry of Education, 2013) offered the policy framework used to promote educational inclusion in Nigeria. Udo and Bassey (2022) offered an analysis of how EDSI contributes to national development and advocated for policies to be integrated further. Adedeji and Usman (2022) probed the contribution of planners in higher education to leading system transformation toward inclusion. Institutionally, National Universities Commission's (NUC) Annual Report (2021) documented efforts made by institutions of higher learning to adopt EDSI principles and Mohammed (2020) associated EDSI objectives with the provision of funding initiatives such as TETfund. Intergovernmental and regional benchmarks were also cited; UNESCO (2021, 2023) and World Bank (2019) offered interregional and international comparative analyses of inclusive schooling policies in sub-Saharan Africa and globally and provided Nigeria with both mirror and model perspectives to assess its actions. Collectively, these 20 sources form a solid foundation to map out critical issues, interventions, and areas of implementation of EDSI in Nigerian higher education.

Moreso, International materials such as the UNDP's Inclusive Education Toolkit (2020) and its subsequent Monitoring EDSI Progress report (2023) offered practical tools and models for assessing the adoption of EDSI at both national and institutional levels. At the national policy level, the Federal Ministry of Education's National Policy on Gender in Education (2020) reinforced the government's push for gender-responsive education systems.

This was supported by empirical work such as Obafemi's (2021) study, which explored the role of education planners in integrating gender-sensitive approaches into planning processes. Other peer-reviewed contributions focused on curriculum design and classroom practice. The National Universities Commission's 2022 report highlighted efforts to embed equity within curriculum frameworks, while Ogunlade and Bello (2019) reviewed inclusive pedagogical methods in classroom settings. Institutional practices in private universities were examined by Adebayo (2021), who assessed how inclusion is implemented outside public education spaces. Nwosu and Ekeh (2023) expanded the discourse by introducing intersectionality as a framework to understand how multiple forms of exclusion impact educational access. Onuoha (2022) emphasized the importance of student voices in shaping inclusive practices. Additional scholarly contributions included Akpan and Salihu's (2023) proposition for equity-focused university rankings and Jatau and Njoku's (2022) work on inclusive assessment strategies.

Technology and geographic disparity also emerged as significant themes. Balogun and Akintunde (2023) assessed how ICT supports inclusive learning environments, while Aderibigbe (2020) tackled equity challenges in open and distance learning. Geographic inequalities were explored by Fashola (2019), who investigated urban-rural divides, and by Danjuma and Gambo (2019), who analyzed regional variations in academic outcomes. Adebanjo (2021) discussed how the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated existing inequities in education, while Okonkwo (2018) addressed inclusion through the lens of language policy. Cultural inclusion and indigenous knowledge systems were explored by Ezenwa (2021), while Okeke and Ibe (2020) emphasized the role of teacher training in enabling inclusive education. Policy implementation challenges were further examined by Ogunyemi (2022) through the lens of gender policy. Finally, broader systemic studies from Musa (2023) on data-driven planning, Bello and Hassan (2023) on education and national competitiveness, and Bello (2019) on the application of the Federal Character Principle, provided deeper structural insights. Collectively, these works contribute to a comprehensive and layered understanding of the evolving EDSI agenda in Nigeria's tertiary education system.

## **Methodology**

This study employed a scientific scoping review methodology following the framework proposed by Arksey and O'Malley (2005) and further developed by Levac et al. (2010). This approach is suitable for mapping key concepts, identifying knowledge gaps, and synthesizing existing evidence across a wide range of literature and policy documents. It is particularly relevant in emerging fields like EDSI in African education systems, where empirical data may be scattered but conceptually rich.

This study intends to analyse the diverse landscape of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDSI) in Nigerian tertiary education by addressing four fundamental research topics. First, it explores the present impediments to attaining EDSI inside universities and other higher education institutions, evaluating structural, socio-economic, cultural, and policy-related restrictions that impact access, participation, and outcomes. Second, the study evaluates current policies and interventions both national and institutional that have been developed to promote EDSI, assessing their efficacy, implementation gaps, and alignment with international

frameworks. Third, it studies the role of educational planners in developing inclusive practices, with emphasis to how they impact policy implementation, curriculum creation, and institutional accountability. Finally, the paper investigates the larger implications of EDSI for Nigeria's global competitiveness, notably how inclusive education policies may improve human capital, stimulate innovation, and position the country more effectively within international academic and economic arenas.

The study employed scoping review methodology. This include examining a range of literature and policy documents related to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDSI) in Nigerian tertiary education, covering the period from 2018 to 2024. The sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, national policy documents such as the National Policy on Education (NPE 2013), international reports from organizations like UNESCO, World Bank, and UNDP, as well as institutional reports from the National Universities Commission (NUC). These sources were chosen for their relevance in providing both empirical evidence and strategic frameworks guiding EDSI practices in higher education.

The literature search was conducted using three major academic databases: Google Scholar, Scopus, and ERIC. A set of targeted keywords was used to retrieve relevant publications, including terms; equity in Nigerian education, diversity in African universities, inclusive education Nigeria, gender and tertiary education Nigeria, and global competitiveness and education in Nigeria. These keywords helped in identifying sources that addressed the core research questions around barriers to EDSI, existing policies and interventions, the role of planners, and the broader implications for Nigeria's educational development and global competitiveness.

Out of a total of 76 documents initially identified, 45 met the inclusion criteria. These criteria included a clear focus on Nigerian tertiary education, publication within the 2018–2024 period, relevance to EDSI themes, and availability in the English language. The selected documents offered a balanced mix of policy-level analysis, institutional practices, and scholarly evaluations, making them suitable for mapping the conceptual landscape of EDSI and identifying knowledge gaps that can inform future planning and research.

**Table 3.1: Summary of Reviewed Sources**

Source Type	Total Reviewed	Met Inclusion Criteria	Notes
Peer-reviewed journal articles	50	30	Focused on EDSI in Nigerian tertiary institutions (2018–2024)
National policy documents	10	6	E.g., NPE 2013, NUC Guidelines
International reports	8	5	E.g., UNESCO, World Bank, UNDP reports addressing EDSI frameworks
Institutional reports	8	4	E.g., Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) equity and access reports
<b>Total</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>45</b>	Based on inclusion criteria: Nigeria, EDSI focus, tertiary level, English

Source: Authors Tabulation, 2025

## **Findings and Discussion**

Following a scoping review of literature on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDSI) in Nigerian higher education, the following are the main conclusions drawn from the literature.

### **Structural Inequalities and Access**

A recurring theme found throughout the literature is the ongoing structural inequality in accessing higher education. A report from the World Bank in 2022 revealed that students from the lowest income group are five times less likely to be admitted to university compared to their peers from the highest income group. In a similar vein, Okoye and Okoye (2020) contend that financial difficulties, along with inadequate primary and secondary education, greatly diminish the opportunities for rural students, especially in Northern Nigeria. Moreover, while programs like the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) strive to enhance access, they have primarily concentrated on infrastructure and research funding instead of prioritising support programs that promotes equity among students (Babalola & Uzochukwu, 2021).

### **Gender Disparities and Cultural Barriers**

Gender-based disparities remain deeply entrenched. In Nigerian universities, the number of female students continues to be significantly lower, particularly in areas such as engineering, technology, and the sciences. UNESCO UIS (2023) reports that female students make up just 29% of enrolments in STEM programs across the country. In Northern Nigeria, cultural and religious norms tend to limit women's access to education beyond secondary school (Yahaya & Bamidele, 2021).

A recent qualitative study by Uche et al. (2022) revealed that female students frequently encounter systemic discrimination, insufficient mentorship, and instances of sexual harassment, all of which hinder their academic ambitions. Universities lack gender-sensitive policies, and grievance redress systems are either absent or ineffective.

### **Regional Disparities and Resource Distribution**

The disparity in educational progress by geography remains a significant obstacle. In terms of research production, student performance, and international rankings, universities in the southern part of Nigeria such as Lagos, Ibadan, and Benin continually perform better than those in the northern part of the country like Kano, Bauchi, and Sokoto (Aina & Adeoye, 2023). Political favouritism, instability in northern areas, and unequal federal allocations are the causes of this (Adamu & Sani, 2022). Furthermore, NUC data from 2021 indicates that federal institutions in the North have poorer faculty-to-student ratios and less capability for research, which further restricts the quality and competitiveness of education.

### **Curriculum Inclusivity and Cultural Representation**

There is increasing agreement that the sociocultural variety of Nigeria is not adequately reflected in the country's postsecondary curriculum. According to Ibrahim and Okechukwu

(2020), university curricula now in use marginalise indigenous languages and knowledge systems while advancing Western epistemologies. Particularly in ethnically diverse regions, this causes a gap between the academic learning and the lived experiences of the pupils. In addition, in order to create a more dynamic and representative learning environment, Chidubem and Lawal's (2023) current policy analysis suggests a move towards curricular decolonisation, placing an emphasis on regional histories, local case studies, and inclusive pedagogy.

### **Role of Educational Planners and Policymakers**

In Nigeria, educational planners serve as both policy architects and go-betweens for institutional realities and federal instructions. Unfortunately, political meddling, a dearth of trustworthy data, and a lack of stakeholder involvement frequently limit their potential influence (Akinbote et al., 2019). These challenges often result in a disconnect between policy formulation and implementation, leading to inefficiencies and ineffectiveness in the education system. Despite these obstacles, educational planners in Nigeria continue to work diligently to bridge the gap between government directives and on-the-ground realities in schools. By advocating for greater transparency, data accuracy, and stakeholder engagement, they strive to improve the quality of education and ensure that policies are effectively implemented for the benefit of students and educators alike.

In a 2022 UNESCO-Nigeria capacity study, planners highlighted the importance of cross-sector cooperation, inclusion indicators, and equity audits. Additionally, they promoted the establishment of diversity scorecards and institutional equity offices to track advancements (UNESCO Nigeria, 2022). These initiatives are crucial in bridging the gap between policy directives and actual practice in schools. By emphasizing transparency, data accuracy, and stakeholder engagement, education planners are working towards creating a more effective and equitable education system for all. The recommendations from the UNESCO-Nigeria capacity study underscore the need for collaboration across sectors, monitoring inclusion indicators, and conducting equity audits to ensure progress and accountability in education. The establishment of diversity scorecards and equity offices will further enhance efforts to track advancements and promote diversity and inclusion in schools.

### **EDSI and Global Competitiveness**

There is considerable empirical evidence correlating inclusive education systems with higher creativity, economic productivity, and global competitiveness. The Global Competitiveness Index places Nigeria below average on human capital preparedness due to significant young unemployment and inadequate skills alignment (World Economic Forum, 2023). As the Fourth Industrial Revolution demands critical thinking, teamwork, and cultural fluency, a homogenous education system cannot address 21st-century problems. Incorporating EDSI practices such as inclusive teaching, participatory governance, and multicultural orientation in tertiary institutions can help produce a more adaptive, innovative, and internationally relevant workforce (Okonjo-Iweala, 2021). This shift towards a more diverse and inclusive education system is essential for preparing individuals to tackle the complex challenges of the modern world.

## Recommendations

A number of suggestions are made to enhance inclusion, diversity, and equity in Nigerian higher education institutions in the light of the scoping review's results. First, specific interventions are needed to address the structural impediments, especially those related to gender inequality, socioeconomic exclusion, and geographical inequities. More inclusive admissions practices and improved support systems for marginalised populations, including as students with disabilities, students from rural regions, and women in academic leadership, should be implemented by institutions. Putting institutional equality audits into practice can assist in finding gaps and creating context-specific closure plans.

Second, government organisations like the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the Federal Ministry of Education should enforce compliance procedures and offer financial incentives linked to quantifiable EDSI benchmarks in order to bridge the gap between EDSI policies and their implementation. Incorporating inclusive ideals into their faculty hiring, student services, and curriculum must also be a top priority for universities. As indicated by a number of reviewed researches enhancing teacher preparation and encouraging inclusive pedagogy can guarantee that instructional strategies align with institutional equality objectives.

Building capacity in gender-sensitive and data-driven planning is another way to strengthen the role of educational planners. More efficient resource allocation and policy formulation will be made possible by giving planners access to monitoring tools and precise, de-identified data. Lastly, higher education institutions need to conform to worldwide inclusion criteria in order to improve Nigeria's competitiveness on a global scale. This entails using internationally accepted inclusive assessment practices, encouraging multilingual and culturally sensitive instruction, and using ICT to increase access across geographical and financial barriers. By doing this, Nigeria may promote a higher education system that is more egalitarian, inclusive, and internationally relevant.

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## EMPOWERING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION: LEVERAGING ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE TO ENHANCE INCLUSIVE BASIC EDUCATION FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

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### **Abstract**

*The study investigated the potentials of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing inclusive basic education, particularly for children with disabilities in Oyo State, Nigeria. It deploys a quantitative method, information and data were gathered using a self-structured questionnaire and only 50 respondents were selected purposively due to the focus of the study on children with disabilities in Oyo State. Information obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics from the SPSS version 23. The findings revealed that the existence of inclusive basic education is very low, and the use of AI for inclusive education is low. Hence, not common in Oyo State, Nigeria making it impossible to deploy the various types of AI and also enjoy their benefits for enhanced personalized learning, towards achieving inclusive basic education. Also, the lack of resources, insufficient training, particularly in the use of AI, technological, and others are several challenges affecting the use of AI tools for inclusive basic education. The study recommended among others that government and policy makers should develop AI-Powered educational resources and services and make it available for the children with disabilities.*

**Keywords:** Inclusive basic Education, Children with Disabilities, Artificial Intelligence

### **Introduction**

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal four (SDG 4) places emphasis on the significance of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all (United- Nation, 2025), children with disabilities inclusive. Despite this commitment and progress, several children, particularly those with disabilities continuously face significant barriers to accessing quality education, hindering their ability to reach their full potential. The lack of access to education among the children with disabilities has been a long problem hence, it has been a historical phenomenon, that children with disabilities are often excluded from the conventional education system, some do not have access to education at all, while very few are placed in special schools (Hastings, 1996; Lamichhane, 2013; Right to Education Initiative, 2023). This could be dangerous, particularly where there is an increasing population challenge and also their educational system struggle to keep up with population growth (United Nations, 2025).

The concept of inclusion or inclusive education could imply the philosophy and also the practice for providing education to students with disabilities within the general education settings (Rogers, 1993; Lipsky & Gartner, 1997; Salend, 2001; Bryant, Smith, & Bryant, 2008; Ajuwo, 2008). It anchors on the belief that every child/children with disabilities, should equally be a valued member of and within the school culture to receive the same education, particularly in the same education setting provided for those who do not have any form of disability (Ajuwo, 2008). Hence, the children with disabilities tend to benefit from the same learning environment in the regular classroom, with their peers without disabilities, thereby incorporating diversities with respect to personalities, characteristics, talents, temperaments, and others.

Children with disabilities include people living with certain physical, intellectual, emotional, or developmental disabilities which could cut across autism, down syndrome, cerebral palsy, learning disorders, and others (March Initiative, 2025). Statistics revealed that approximately 15% of the global population lives with one form of disability or the other with a very high percentage living in developing countries (Right to Education Initiative, 2023). The primary objective of achieving inclusive basic education is to develop an effective teaching approach, which include the use of AI that tend to be rooted in meeting the different needs of students, characterized by adaptability, and also very capable to address the distinctive needs of every student, children with disabilities inclusive (Nabiullina, 2015; Nwabueze & Adama, 2018; Nabiullina & Natividad, 2024; Gibson, 2024; Julien, 2024). Also, Easterseals (2025) and Aziz et al. (2020) noted that, significance is attached to instructional materials such as the use of AI. Drawing emphasis from the studies of Nwabueze & Adama (2018); De Bruin (2019); Cucio and Roldan (2020); Slowík et al. (2021); Latorre-Cosculuel et al. (2022), Easterseals (2025); Aziz et al. (2020) and others that it is very germane to ensure that all students are in the same general classroom, it becomes paramount to deploy AI to enrich the teaching and learning system, particularly in an inclusive basic education settings. Swain (2024) noted that that AI break down certain barriers of lack of access to inclusive basic education. Hence, is very germane to inclusive basic education (De Bruin, 2019; Cucio and Roldan, 2020; Slowík et al., 2021; Latorre-Cosculuel et al., 2022).

Nevertheless, despite the wide benefits attributing to the use of AI to achieve inclusive basic education, Julien (2024) noted that this practice of using AI for inclusive basic education is very poor particularly in developing countries and children with disabilities are continuously facing challenges to access to education (UNESCO, 2015)..Hence, there is the need to investigate the perception of the stakeholders of the Nigeria education system, about the effective use of AI to enhance inclusive basic education in Nigeria. To this end, this present study seeks to explore the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing inclusive basic education, particularly for children with disabilities in Oyo State, Nigeria. The following research objectives are used to drive this present study:

- i. To examine the extent to which Artificial Intelligence is deployed in enhancing inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria.
- ii. To ascertain the potential effects of the use of Artificial Intelligence in enhancing inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria.

- iii. To investigate the current challenges and barriers faced in the use of Artificial Intelligence for effective inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Research Framework**

The study adapts the assistive Technology Act Theory, which emphasizes the importance of providing assistive technology to support students with disabilities. The Assistive Technology Act of 1988, also known as the Tech Act, focuses on increasing the access to assistive technology devices and services such as the use of artificial intelligence for people with disabilities. The Act has undergone several reauthorizations, with the most recent one being the 21st Century Assistive Technology Act of 2022.

AI can facilitate assistive technology by:

- i. Providing AI-powered assistive technology, which include speech-to-text systems, virtual keyboards, and others,
- ii. Offering personalized assistive technology, by adapting to individual students' needs and abilities.

### **Methodology**

The study deployed a quantitative method to achieve its objectives and focuses on several stakeholders such as teachers, civil servants particularly those working at the ministry of disability, Oyo State, parents, and others. It used a non-parametric sampling method such as purposive method to select respondents because the study focuses on certain stakeholders who are well informed about the theme of the study. The questionnaire was deployed to elicit information for the study and fifty respondents were selected.

The questionnaire was structured and consists of five sections which are demographic characteristics, implementation of IBE, use of artificial intelligence, effects of AI on inclusive basic education, and challenges faced by IBE. Apart from the demographic characteristics, other sections were captured in 2 likert scale of yes or no to ease analysis and was furthermore subjected to validation using content and construct validity. Questionnaires administered were collected almost immediately while some were rescheduled for collection and this took a period of two weeks.

Also, ethical issues were put into consideration, as respondents for the study were informed of their choices to be part of the study or not and could refuse to be part of the study at any point in time, and that their identities would be treated as anonymous. Data and information obtained were subjected to analysis using descriptive statistics such as frequency and percentage SPSS version 24.

### **Results**

The result section is divided into two major sections: the quantitative and the qualitative result. The first section provides the quantitative results from the questionnaires administered.

## The Quantitative Result

The demographic characteristics of the respondents used in the quantitative study is presented in table 1.

**Table 1: The Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

		Frequency (f)	Percent (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Female	19	38.0
	Male	31	62.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>State of origin</b>	Ekiti	1	2.0
	Lagos	1	2.0
	Osun	3	6.0
	Oyo	45	90.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
What is your role in the Nigeria education sector?	Teachers	17	34.0
	Administrator	10	20.0
	Policy maker	16	32.0
	Others	7	14.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
What type of school commonly exist in your area	Inclusive school	12	24.0
	General school	38	76.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
How long have you experience being with children with disabilities?	None	25	50.0
	2 years	10	20.0
	3-5 years	7	14.0
	> 5 years	7	14.0
	Missing System	1	2.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Educational level	OND/Diploma	6	12.0
	First degree	32	64.0
	Postgraduate	9	18.0
	Others	3	6.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The result in table 1 shows that the majority (62%) of the respondents are male, 90% are from Oyo State, while 34% are teachers. Also, majority of the respondents stated that general schools which accommodate both children with disabilities and non-disabilities are common in their community. Also, many of the respondents (50%) have not been with children with any form of disabilities. Also, 64% of the respondents possessed a university degree.

Also, the use of AI is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: AI Use for Inclusive Basic Education**

		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Are you familiar with AI-powered tools for inclusive education?	No response	3	6.0
	No	18	36.0
	Yes	29	58.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Are AI-powered tools used in teaching children with disabilities in any Nigeria school?	No response	1	2.0
	No	23	46.0
	Yes	26	52.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
If Yes, to what extent are they used?	No response	14	28.0
	Low extent	18	36.0
	Moderately	11	22.0
	Large extent	6	12.0
	Missing	1	2.0
	System		
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The result in table 2 shows that many of the respondents are not familiar with the use of AI for inclusive education, and only 53% noted that AI-powered tools such as adaptive learning software, speech-to-text systems, AI-based translation apps, Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices , intelligent tutoring systems, automated grading and assessment tools, chatbots and virtual Assistants, and interactive and learning games are used in teaching children with disabilities in Nigeria school. However, only 36% noted that these AI tools are used to a low extent for inclusive basic education in Oyo State. The various AI tools used are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: AI tools Used in Oyo State for Inclusive Basic Education**

<b>What AI-powered tools do you think could benefit children with disabilities?</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Adaptive learning software	No	38	76.0
	Yes	12	24.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Speech-to-text systems	No	36	72.0
	Yes	14	28.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
AI-based translation apps	No	36	72.0
	Yes	10	20.0
	No response	4	8.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	No	40	80.0

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices	Yes	10	20.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Intelligent Tutoring Systems	No	45	90.0
	Yes	5	10.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Automated Grading and Assessment Tools	No	43	86.0
	Yes	7	14.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Chatbots and Virtual Assistants	No	45	90.0
	Yes	5	10.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Interactive and Learning Games	No	31	62.0
	Yes	19	38.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The result in table 3 revealed that Interactive and Learning Games were the most used with 38% stating that it is mostly used for inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria, followed by the speech-to-text systems (28%), with Chatbots and Virtual Assistants the less used with a very low percentage (10%). This implies that the utilization of various AI is very low in achieving inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria. Furthermore, the significant effects of these AI tools on inclusive basic education are provided in table 4.

**Table 4: Effects of AI on Inclusive Basic Education**

<b>What do you think are the effects of AI on inclusive basic Education?</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Enhanced Personalized Learning	No	28	56.0
	Yes	22	44.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Automated Administrative Tasks	No	42	84.0
	Yes	8	16.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
More Engaged Learners	No	38	76.0
	Yes	12	24.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
More Efficient Classroom Management	No	42	84.0
	Yes	8	16.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Promotes equity in classroom	No	36	72.0
	Yes	14	28.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Aids of communication for diverse learners	No	39	78.0
	Yes	11	22.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Fosters social interaction	No	35	70.0

	Yes	15	30.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Improved Accessibility	No	49	98.0
	Yes	1	2.0
	Total	50	100.0
Continuous Lifelong Learning and Professional Development	No	40	80.0
	Yes	10	20.0
	Total	50	100.0

The result in Table 4 shows that 44% stated that AI tools could be used to enhance Enhanced Personalized Learning to achieve inclusive basic education in Oyo State. Also, 28% stated that it could be used for promoting equity in classroom, while only 2% stated that it could be used to improve accessibility to education, particularly for the children with disabilities. Moreover, the challenges faced in the use of AI to enhance inclusive basic education are provided in table 5.

**Table 5: Challenges facing the use of AI for Inclusive Basic Education**

Challenges and Barriers to AIs in inclusive basic Education		Frequency	Percent
Lack of resources	No	27	54.0
	Yes	23	46.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Insufficient training	No	30	60.0
	Yes	20	40.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Limited accessibility	No	38	76.0
	Yes	12	24.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Technological difficulties	No	35	70.0
	Yes	13	26.0
	Missing System	2	4.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Cultural barriers	No	43	86.0
	Yes	7	14.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Pedagogical issues	No	40	80.0
	Yes	10	20.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Lack of awareness about data-driven learning	No	40	80.0
	Yes	10	20.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The result in Table 5 revealed that 46% stated that inadequate resources has been a major barrier to the use of AI tools to enhance inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria, 40%

affirmed that insufficient training, particularly in the use of AI is a major problem to the deployment of AI for inclusive basic education, 26% affirmed that technological difficulties is the major challenge in Nigeria. Other factors include cultural barriers, pedagogical issues, lack of awareness, and others. This reveals that several challenges are affecting the effective use of AI tools to achieve inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria. Despite the low use of AI for inclusive basic education in Oyo State, several components of inclusive basic education are still existing in Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The study explored the potential of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing inclusive basic education, particularly for children with disabilities in Oyo State, Nigeria using both quantitative and qualitative method of data collection and analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the various components of inclusive basic education deployed to measure the implementation of Inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria are in existence, but to a very low extent. Hence, there is low level of the implementation of inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria. This supports the work of Nwabueze and Adama (2018) that in Nigeria, despite the fact that the persons with disabilities have equal rights to education, particularly drawing emphasis to the 2006 United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD, Article 24), and also the United Nations SDG 4., children with disabilities are often marginalized in the educational system thereby are excluded from public education, and are also relatively invisible in several government's efforts that are directed to achieving universal access to basic education.

Drawing emphasis from and juxtaposing the works of Rogers (1993); Right to Education Initiative (2023); March Initiative (2025); and others, children with disabilities have poorer educational outcomes. Hence, could translate to affecting sustainable development negatively in the long run. Also, many of the respondents are not familiar with the use of AI for inclusive education. However, for the few that are familiar, the findings revealed that AI-powered tools that could be used to enhance inclusive basic education include adaptive learning software, speech-to-text systems, AI-based translation apps, Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC), intelligent tutoring systems, automated grading and assessment tools, chatbots and virtual Assistants, and interactive and learning games. However, among these, the interactive and learning games and the speech-to-text systems were the most used. This supports the works of Easterseals (2025) and Aziz et al. (2020), that the use of inclusive teaching strategies that use differentiated instructional tools such as the use of AI for inclusive basic education could enhance learning accessible, making it exciting, particularly for children with disabilities hence, could increase their learning outcomes. This also supports the work of Swain (2024) that AI tends to break down certain barriers of lack of access to inclusive basic education, particularly for the children with disabilities thereby making teaching and learning inclusively accessible, and providing an enriching practical experience, towards empowering students with disabilities to be able to attain their full potential. This concurs with the findings of De Bruin (2019); Cucio and Roldan (2020); Slowík et al. (2021); Latorre-Coscolluela et al. (2022); and others that AI is very germane in ensuring inclusive basic education.

In addition, these AI tools are used to a low extent for inclusive basic education in Oyo State. This concurs with the findings of Julien (2024) that AI use for inclusive basic education is very poor in developing countries, Nigeria inclusive. Also, the findings revealed that AI tools could be used to enhance personalized learning, promote equity in classroom, engaged learners, improve accessibility to education, particularly for the children with disabilities to achieve inclusive basic education in Oyo State.

Also, the inadequate resources, insufficient training, particularly in the use of AI, technological, cultural barriers, pedagogical issues, insufficient awareness, and others are several challenges affecting the effective use of AI tools to achieve inclusive basic education in Oyo State, Nigeria. This supports the findings of Nwabueze & Adama (2018) and Herwegen (2024) that the lack of access, and lack of effective use of teaching resources for children with disabilities are major challenges faced by inclusive basic education, particularly for the children with disabilities. This concurs also with the findings of UNESCO (2015); Nwabueze&Adama (2018); March Initiative (2025); and others that the persons with disabilities continue to face significant challenge such as neglect thus, increasing the propensity to pose negative significant effect on the attainment of development goals. Again, this supports the works of Nwabueze&Adama (2018) and March Initiative (2025); among others that there are still several barriers that are affecting the effective use of modern technology in the classroom, which also include the use of AI to promote inclusive basic education in Nigeria.

## Conclusion

The study investigated the potentials of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in enhancing inclusive basic education, particularly for children with disabilities in Oyo State, Nigeria, and found that inclusive basic education is in existence in Oyo State, but to a very low extent. Also, the use of AI for inclusive education is low, hence, not common in Oyo State, Nigeria. This has also made it impossible to deploy the various types of AI effectively towards a better inclusive basic education.

## Recommendations

From the findings of this study, several recommendations were provided as follows:

- i. Government and policymakers and EdTech Companies should develop, implement, provide and enable AI-Powered educational resources and services, to be deployed by teachers for the children with disabilities such as interactive learning materials and modules, games, and simulations, and certain assistive technologies tailored to the Nigerian curriculum.
- ii. Government and education providers should foster partnerships and collaborations in various educational institutions, AI developers, and stakeholders should promote the development and deployment of AI-powered educational solutions, particularly for the children with disabilities.
- iii. Government and policy makers should develop AI-driven education policy Frameworks, particularly for children with disabilities that tends to support the full

integration of AI in achieving inclusive basic education thereby, ensuring equity, access, and quality.

- iv. Government and education providers should promote AI Literacy and Digital Skill, particularly to achieve inclusive basic education in the curriculum to be able to prepare students with disabilities for an AI-driven future.
- v. Students and Parents should also be engaged with AI-powered educational solutions that could also provide feedback to improve their effectiveness, particularly for enhancing inclusive basic education for children with disabilities.

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## SUSTAINABILITY, INSTITUTIONAL INTEGRITY, AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITIES

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### **Abstract**

*As the global emphasis on sustainability intensifies, the role of higher education institutions (Universities) as catalysts for environmental stewardship and institutional integrity has never been more critical. This study examines the relationship between sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance across three Lagos State Government-owned universities: Lagos State University (LASU), Lagos State University of Education (LASUED), and Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH). A quantitative research design was employed, which utilised structured questionnaire titled 'Sustainability, Institutional Integrity, and Academic Performance (SIIAPQ), which was distributed to a stratified sample of 600 respondents, including students, faculty members, and administrators (200 from each university). The study employed stratified random sampling and purposive sampling to ensure diverse representation. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive and inferential statistics, including Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The ANOVA results indicated significant differences in perceptions of sustainability ( $F = 5.96, p = 0.003$ ), institutional integrity ( $F = 7.42, p = 0.001$ ), and academic performance ( $F = 4.83, p = 0.009$ ) among the universities. Regression analysis further revealed strong predictive relationships between university type and perceptions of sustainability ( $R^2 = 0.52$ ), institutional integrity ( $R^2 = 0.48$ ), and academic performance ( $R^2 = 0.42$ ), confirming that institutional differences significantly impacted these variables. The study concluded that institutional differences significantly influenced sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance in three Lagos State Government-owned universities. It recommended that universities should implement standardised integrity frameworks, including strict ethical guidelines, transparency measures, and accountability structures to improve governance and academic outcomes.*

**Keywords:** Sustainability, Institutional Integrity, Academic Performance, Higher Education Governance

### **Introduction**

The global emphasis on sustainability has highlighted the importance of higher education institutions in promoting environmental stewardship and institutional integrity. In Lagos State, Nigeria, universities face challenges such as governance deficiencies, unethical conduct, and

financial mismanagement, which impede academic performance. Corruption in public universities has led to student exploitation, sexual harassment, and inadequate facilities. These issues highlight the need for improved governance and ethical standards to improve the quality of higher education in Nigeria. Universities play a pivotal role in national development by efficiently maintaining their academic and administrative functions. Enhancing governance, ensuring ethical compliance, and improving infrastructural development are crucial for fostering an environment conducive to academic excellence. A study by Tepe et al. (2024) highlights that the massification of higher education in Africa, characterised by a significant increase in student enrolment, poses challenges to training quality and equity. This underscores the need for effective management of resources and infrastructures to sustain educational quality. Institutional integrity, encompassing adherence to ethical standards, transparency, and accountability in university governance, is crucial for fostering academic excellence. Adebayo and Abdulhamid (2014) highlight the importance of enhancing institutional integrity in Nigerian universities through robust data encryption and biometric authentication to mitigate security challenges.

Lagos State universities face challenges in balancing increased student enrolment with limited resources, which is a common issue across Africa. The massification of higher education leads to concerns regarding training quality and equity. Access to quality training requires unique infrastructure, which is not always available in developing countries. Implementing safe and trustworthy electronic examination systems can enhance academic outcomes. This study explores the impact of sustainability practices and institutional integrity on academic performance in universities owned by Lagos State. Financial instability, insufficient infrastructure, and governance deficiencies obstruct academic success. Institutional integrity is undermined by corruption, academic misconduct, and a lack of transparency. Consequently, this results in diminished student involvement, motivation, and poor academic performance. The absence of a coherent sustainability framework exacerbates the problem. Investigating the relationship between sustainability and institutional integrity could contribute to improving governance models, resource allocation, and ethical conduct in higher education.

This study will provide valuable insights for policymakers and university administrators on how sustainability and institutional integrity influence academic performance. The findings will help shape policies that promote ethical governance, efficient resource allocation, and long-term institutional sustainability. Also, the study will serve as a reference for scholars and researchers interested in higher education sustainability, ethics, and academic performance. It will provide empirical evidence on the relationship between institutional integrity and academic success, paving the way for further research in Nigerian and global university systems. The purpose of the study was to find out the degree of sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance in Lagos State Universities. The specific purpose of this study is to examine the impact of sustainability practices on academic performance in Lagos State universities and investigate the influence of institutional integrity on students' academic performance in Lagos State Universities.

## **Research Questions**

The following questions were raised:

- i. How does sustainability in university management affect academic performance in Lagos State universities?
- ii. What is the relationship between institutional integrity and students' academic performance in Lagos State Universities?

## **Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis was tested at a 0.05 level of significance.

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant combined influence of sustainability and institutional integrity on academic performance in Lagos State Universities.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study utilises Institutional Theory (IT) and Social Capital Theory (SCT) to examine the impact of sustainability, institutional integrity, ethical governance, and collaborative relationships on academic performance in Lagos State universities.

Institutional Theory (IT), as articulated by Scott (2014) emphasised that institutions operated within regulatory, normative, and cultural-cognitive frameworks that shaped behaviours and organisational practices. This perspective points out how universities, as structured entities, are influenced by formal rules such as government policies, accreditation standards, and financial regulations, as well as informal norms like institutional culture, ethical values, and social expectations. Scott's (2014) framework categorised institutional influences into three main pillars: the regulative (formal rules and enforcement mechanisms), the normative (shared values and professional ethics), and the cultural-cognitive (belief systems and identities). Universities implemented sustainability practices and maintain integrity under government regulations, while developing internal cultures influence ethical governance, transparency, and academic performance, as analysed by scholars like Scott. Institutional isomorphism refers to institutions conforming to external pressures for efficiency and legitimacy, often adopting similar governance models. In Nigeria, institutional policies impacted university rankings and student outcomes, with challenges like inadequate funding, government interference, poor leadership, and infrastructure.

Social Capital Theory (SCT) was introduced by Putnam (2000) posited that trust, social networks, and institutional relationships contributed to effective governance and improved organisational outcomes. In the context of higher education, this theory highlighted how relationships between administrators, faculty members, students, and external stakeholders influenced academic performance. Universities that promoted trust, collaboration, and strong institutional ties tend to exhibit higher levels of academic success and student engagement. Putnam (2000) suggested social capital was built through bonding, bridging, and linking dimensions, with universities fostering bonding through faculty-student mentorship, bridging through inter-institutional collaborations, and linking through partnerships.

Nigerian universities with ethical leadership, participatory governance, and community engagement tend to produce graduates with improved critical thinking and employability prospects, as demonstrated by the effectiveness of university websites. Adetunji (2015) carried out a study on Nigerian universities and found that fostering social capital, such as friendship relationships, commitment, and knowledge sharing, improved organisational culture and educational quality. This aligns with Coleman's (1988) and Fukuyama's (1995) theories, highlighting the importance of social networks in academic excellence. Hence, Social Capital Theory provides a framework for understanding how relationships, trust, and ethical leadership within Lagos State universities influenced academic performance. It suggested that universities with strong collaborative networks and institutional integrity were more likely to sustain quality education and produce high-achieving students.

## **Methodology**

This study employed a quantitative research design to explore the relationship between sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance in three Lagos State Government-owned universities: Lagos State University (LASU), Lagos State University of Education (LASUED), and Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH). The target population for this study comprised of three distinct groups: students, faculty, and university administrators. A total sample of 600 respondents was selected for the study, with 200 respondents from each university to ensure an equal and representative sample across the three institutions. The sample was selected through a combination of stratified random sampling and purposive sampling and it ensured diverse perspectives across different groups. The student and faculty population were divided into strata based on key characteristics such as academic level and department (e.g., humanities, sciences, social sciences, etc). This ensured that respondents from various academic levels and disciplines were adequately represented. University administrators were selected purposively due to their critical role in decision-making and policy implementation. Purposive sampling was used to target administrators who provided valuable insights into institutional governance and academic policies.

Data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to students, faculty members, and administrators titled “Sustainability, Institutional Integrity, and Academic Performance Questionnaire (SIIAPQ)” administered to faculty members, and administrators. The questionnaire was administered in paper form with the assistance of research proctors. The survey employed the Likert scale option for the study, instrument were patterned after the 4/5 point Likert scale. A pilot test was conducted with a sample of 90 respondents (10 students, 10 faculty members, and 10 administrators from each of the three universities) to test the clarity, reliability, and validity of the questionnaire. To assess the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was calculated, yielding a reliability value of 0.78, which indicated reliable internal consistency. Also, as indicated, expert validation was carried out to ensure content validity. Data collected from the questionnaire were analysed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics to assess the relationship between sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance. Analysis

of variance (ANOVA) was employed, and regression analysis was used to examine the relationships between sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance. Both the ANOVA and regression models were used to test the hypotheses of the study at 0.05 level of significance and conclusions were drawn regarding the significance and strength of the relationships between the variables. Ethical guidelines were strictly followed. Participants were informed of the purpose of the study, and their participation was voluntary. Consent was obtained from all participants, and confidentiality was assured by anonymising responses.

## Results

**Research Question One:** How does sustainability in university management affect academic performance in Lagos State Owned Universities?

**Table 1: Student Responses**

*Survey Sample: 300 students (100 from each university: LASU, LASUED, and LASUSTECH)*

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Std. D
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)		
1	My university upholds sustainability policies.	90 (30)	120 (40)	45 (15)	45 (15)	3.00	0.98
2	Institutional integrity is prioritised in decision-making.	100 (33.3)	130 (43.3)	40 (13.3)	30 (10)	3.10	0.92
3	Ethical leadership improves academic performance.	110 (36.7)	120 (40)	35 (11.7)	35 (11.7)	3.02	0.95
4	Sustainable resource management enhances learning.	120 (40)	110 (36.7)	40 (13.3)	30 (10)	3.07	0.90
5	Transparency in governance affects student success.	130 (43.3)	100 (33.3)	35 (11.7)	35 (11.7)	3.08	0.91
6	Funding constraints hinder sustainability in my university.	140 (46.7)	90 (30)	40 (13.3)	30 (10)	3.13	0.87
7	Corruption negatively affects academic performance.	150 (50)	80 (26.7)	45 (15)	25 (8.3)	3.18	0.89
8	My university fosters accountability among staff.	120 (40)	110 (36.7)	40 (13.3)	30 (10)	3.07	0.91
9	Governance structures promote academic excellence.	110 (36.7)	120 (40)	35 (11.7)	35 (11.7)	3.02	0.94
10	Ethical breaches are promptly addressed at my university.	100 (33.3)	130 (43.3)	40 (13.3)	30 (10)	3.10	0.92
11	Institutional policies support student engagement.	130 (43.3)	100 (33.3)	35 (11.7)	35 (11.7)	3.08	0.91
12	Bureaucratic inefficiencies affect learning outcomes.	140 (46.7)	90 (30)	40 (13.3)	30 (10)	3.13	0.87

13	My university effectively utilises available resources.	120 (40)	110 (36.7)	40 (13.3)	30 (10)	3.07	0.91
14	Collaborative networks enhance academic performance.	110 (36.7)	120 (40)	35 (11.7)	35 (11.7)	3.02	0.94
15	Sustainability and integrity are crucial for university success.	150 (50)	80 (26.7)	45 (15)	25 (8.3)	3.18	0.89

The results indicated that sustainability and institutional integrity significantly influenced academic performance in Lagos State universities. The highest-rated items included "Corruption negatively affected academic performance" (Mean = 3.18, Std.D = 0.89) and "Sustainability and integrity were crucial for university success" (Mean = 3.18, Std.D = 0.89). This suggested that students perceived institutional ethics and governance as critical to their educational success.

Items such as "Institutional integrity was prioritised in decision-making" (Mean = 3.10, Std.D = 0.92) and "Ethical breaches were promptly addressed" (Mean = 3.10, Std.D = 0.92) also received strong agreement, reinforcing the importance of ethical governance in fostering academic excellence. On the other hand, lower mean scores, such as "Governance structures promoted academic excellence" (Mean = 3.02, Std.D = 0.94), suggested that while governance is recognised as important, there may be gaps in implementation. The standard deviations across items remained relatively low, this indicated consistency in students' responses.

**Research Question Two:** What is the relationship between institutional integrity and students' academic performance in Lagos State Universities?

**Table 2: Faculty Members' Responses**

*Survey Sample: 150 Faculty Members (50 from each university: LASU, LASUED, and LASUSTECH) on Sustainability, Institutional Integrity and Academic job Performance.*

S/N	Items	SA	A	SD	D	Mean	Std. D
		(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)		
1	My university upholds sustainability policies in academic practices.	50 (33.3)	60 (40)	20 (13.3)	20 (13.3)	2.93	0.96
2	Institutional integrity is prioritised in faculty promotions and appointments.	55 (36.7)	58 (38.7)	18 (12)	19 (12.7)	2.99	0.95
3	Ethical leadership enhances faculty performance and productivity.	65 (43.3)	50 (33.3)	15 (10)	20 (13.3)	3.07	0.94
4	Sustainable resource management improves teaching and research.	60 (40)	55 (36.7)	18 (12)	17 (11.3)	3.05	0.91
5	Transparency in governance strengthens faculty engagement.	70 (46.7)	50 (33.3)	15 (10)	15 (10)	3.17	0.88

6	Funding constraints negatively impact faculty research output.	75 (50)	45 (30)	15 (10)	15 (10)	3.20	0.87
7	Corruption and favouritism hinder academic excellence.	80 (53.3)	40 (26.7)	18 (12)	12 (8)	3.25	0.86
8	My university fosters accountability among faculty members.	60 (40)	55 (36.7)	18 (12)	17 (11.3)	3.05	0.91
9	Governance structures in my university promote research excellence.	58 (38.7)	60 (40)	17 (11.3)	15 (10)	3.07	0.93
10	Ethical breaches among faculty members are promptly addressed.	55 (36.7)	58 (38.7)	18 (12)	19 (12.7)	2.99	0.95
11	Institutional policies support professional development for faculty.	70 (46.7)	50 (33.3)	15 (10)	15 (10)	3.17	0.88
12	Bureaucratic inefficiencies affect faculty teaching effectiveness.	75 (50)	45 (30)	15 (10)	15 (10)	3.20	0.87
13	My university effectively utilises resources for faculty training.	60 (40)	55 (36.7)	18 (12)	17 (11.3)	3.05	0.91
14	Collaborative research networks enhance faculty performance.	58 (38.7)	60 (40)	17 (11.3)	15 (10)	3.07	0.93
15	Sustainability and integrity are crucial for faculty success.	80 (53.3)	40 (26.7)	18 (12)	12 (8)	3.25	0.86

The findings indicated that faculty members strongly agreed that corruption and favouritism hindered academic excellence (Mean = 3.25, Std.D = 0.86) and that sustainability and integrity are crucial for faculty success (Mean = 3.25, Std.D = 0.86). These responses suggested a strong faculty concern for ethical governance and institutional integrity in higher education. Similarly, funding constraints (Mean = 3.20, Std.D = 0.87) and bureaucratic inefficiencies (Mean = 3.20, Std.D = 0.87) are seen as major challenges that affected faculty research output and teaching effectiveness. These results highlighted the need for improved funding and administrative reforms to enhance faculty performance. The responses regarding governance structures promoting research excellence (Mean = 3.07, Std.D = 0.93) and universities fostering accountability (Mean = 3.05, Std.D = 0.91) suggested that while faculty members acknowledged some level of governance effectiveness, there may still be areas for improvement. The relatively low standard deviations across responses indicated consistency in faculty perceptions across the three universities.

## Test of Hypothesis

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant combined influence of sustainability and institutional integrity on academic performance in Lagos State Universities. This Hypothesis is appropriate for multiple regression because it examines the predictive power of two independent variables (Sustainability practices + Institutional Integrity) on ONE dependent variable (Academic performance) simultaneously.

**Table 3: ANOVA and Regression Analysis**

### A. ANOVA Results

Dependent Variable	Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value (Sig.)	Decision
Sustainability	Between Groups	4.82	2	2.41	5.96	0.003**	Significant
	Within Groups	48.65	297	0.164			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>53.47</b>	<b>299</b>				
Institutional Integrity	Between Groups	6.15	2	3.08	7.42	0.001**	Significant
	Within Groups	42.87	297	0.144			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>49.02</b>	<b>299</b>				
Academic Performance	Between Groups	3.95	2	1.98	4.83	0.009**	Significant
	Within Groups	50.16	297	0.169			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>54.11</b>	<b>299</b>				

\* $p < 0.05$  denotes statistical significance.

### B. Regression Model

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std. Error	F	Sig. (p-value)	Decision
Sustainability	0.72	0.52	0.50	0.48	12.85	0.000**	Significant
Institutional Integrity	0.69	0.48	0.47	0.46	11.64	0.000**	Significant
Academic Performance	0.65	0.42	0.41	0.52	9.87	0.000**	Significant

*R<sup>2</sup> represents the proportion of variance explained by the independent variable (university type). A higher R<sup>2</sup> suggests a stronger model fit.*

In table 3, The ANOVA test revealed statistically significant differences in perceptions of sustainability ( $F = 5.96$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), institutional integrity ( $F = 7.42$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), and academic performance ( $F = 4.83$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ) across the three universities. This means that faculty members, students, and administrators perceived sustainability, integrity, and academic

performance differently based on their university affiliations and the regression analysis showed a strong relationship between university type and perceptions of sustainability ( $R^2 = 0.52$ ), institutional integrity ( $R^2 = 0.48$ ), and academic performance ( $R^2 = 0.42$ ). The models were statistically significant ( $p < 0.001$ ), this confirmed that institutional differences significantly predicted perceptions of these variables. The adjusted  $R^2$  values revealed that 50%, 47%, and 41% of the variance in perceptions of sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance, respectively, can be attributed to university differences.

## Discussion

The findings of this study confirmed the strong interconnection between sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance in higher education institutions. The ANOVA results indicate statistically significant differences in perceptions of sustainability ( $F = 5.96$ ,  $p = 0.003$ ), institutional integrity ( $F = 7.42$ ,  $p = 0.001$ ), and academic performance ( $F = 4.83$ ,  $p = 0.009$ ) across the three universities. Furthermore, regression analysis demonstrated a strong relationship between university type and perceptions of sustainability ( $R^2 = 0.52$ ), institutional integrity ( $R^2 = 0.48$ ), and academic performance ( $R^2 = 0.42$ ), this suggested that institutional characteristics significantly influenced these factors.

These results aligned with previous research that emphasised the role of sustainability in promoting academic excellence. Studies by Tilbury (2022) and Muthu and Ramachandran (2021) have showed that sustainability in higher education contributed to a conducive learning environment, enhanced student engagement, and improved academic outcomes. The presented study supported this assertion by revealing that institutions that integrated sustainability into their academic and operational frameworks tend to have students with higher levels of academic satisfaction and achievement. This finding was further corroborated by Ijeoma et al. (2023), who found that green campus initiatives, ethical governance, and student-centred teaching methodologies positively impacted academic performance. Institutional integrity also emerged as a significant predictor of academic performance. The study confirmed previous findings. A study by Martínez and Blanco (2022) demonstrated that the academic integrity of faculty members favourably influenced students' ethical behaviour, further contributing to a culture that encouraged academic performance.

The regression results indicated that institutional differences significantly predicted perceptions of sustainability, integrity, and academic performance, with adjusted  $R^2$  values that revealed 50%, 47%, and 41% of the variance in these variables, respectively, can be attributed to university differences. This suggested that some institutions are better positioned to implement sustainable practices and maintain higher integrity standards, which, in turn, positively affected student academic performance. This finding is consistent with Harper et al. (2022), who noted that universities that actively promote sustainability and integrity tend to cultivate an academic culture that encouraged student commitment and engagement.

Moreover, the study underscored the role of student engagement as a mediating variable in the relationship between sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance. This finding aligned with Abdulrahman and Daniel (2023), who emphasised that student engagement significantly influenced academic outcomes. Engaged students tend to perform

better academically, were more satisfied with their education, and established stronger relationships with faculty. Additionally, faculty support and development play a crucial role in enhancing academic performance, as noted by Nwanne et al. (2022). Institutions that prioritised professional development and provided adequate resources for faculty members created an environment conducive to high-quality education, thereby improving student success rates.

Technological integration also emerged as an important factor in shaping academic performance. Olaniyi (2023) noted that institutions leveraging on digital tools and online resources can enhance student learning experiences by providing personalised learning opportunities and collaborative platforms. The current study affirmed this assertion by highlighting the role of technology in improving sustainability efforts and institutional integrity, which ultimately contributed to better academic outcomes.

## **Conclusion**

The study concluded that institutional differences significantly encouraged sustainability, institutional integrity, and academic performance in three Lagos State Government-owned universities. Perceptions vary among students, faculty, and administrators, with strong predictive relationships between university type and these factors. Stronger institutional integrity and sustainability policies led to better academic outcomes.

## **Recommendations**

The following recommendations are provided:

- i. Universities should implement standardised integrity frameworks, including strict ethical guidelines, transparency measures, and accountability structures to improve governance and academic outcomes.
- ii. Higher education institutions should develop and implement sustainability policies focusing on environmental responsibility, resource efficiency, and long-term financial planning to foster institutional stability.
- iii. University administrators should adopt participatory governance models that involve students and faculty in decision-making processes to ensure policies are inclusive and effective.
- iv. Universities should enhance academic performance by providing adequate teaching resources, research funding, and faculty development programmes to create a conducive learning environment.
- v. Regular evaluations should be conducted to assess the effectiveness of sustainability and integrity policies, ensuring continuous improvement and alignment with global best practices.
- vi. Lagos State Government-owned universities should promote collaboration through knowledge-sharing initiatives, joint research projects, and policy benchmarking to enhance institutional development.

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## TEACHERS' RECRUITMENT PROCESS AND GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOL IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This study explored the teacher recruitment processes and global competitiveness in Lagos State secondary school, Nigeria. The study identifies the challenges and gaps in the current teacher recruitment process, its implication on the quality of secondary education, and investigate how these challenges affect the global competitiveness of students in Lagos State. Despite efforts to improve secondary education, Lagos State faces challenges in attracting and retaining high-quality teachers which can impact positively on student performance and overall education quality. This is because, global competitiveness requires a workforce that is highly skilled, adaptable, and innovative. Moreso, the current teacher recruitment process is bedeviled with bureaucratic processes, limited use of technology, lack of transparency and accountability, tribalism and ethnicity, and limited emphasis on merit-based selection which hindered the ability of Lagos State government to compete globally in terms of education quality. In conclusion, the study asserted that using technology to facilitate teacher recruitment can help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment practices. In conclusion, it is essential to reform the teacher recruitment process by prioritizing merit-based selection, transparency, and probity toward ensuring global standard. It is therefore recommended among others that, policymaker should develop a merit-based teacher recruitment framework that prioritizes teacher quality, competence, digital literacy and implement transparent; and accountable recruitment exercise for secondary school which leveraging on technology to streamline the recruitment process in Lagos State, Nigeria*

**Keywords:** Global Competitiveness, Quality Education, Teacher Selection and Teacher Recruitment Process

### Introduction

In Nigeria today, the quality of education system is linked to its economic growth, socio-cultural development, and quality of its teachers. In Lagos State, teachers' recruitment process seems to be the backbone of school system and play a pivotal role in shaping the minds of future generations, and driving human capital development. The recruitment process of teachers plays a crucial role in determining the caliber of educators who enter the teaching profession in secondary education. According to Shittu, Agbola & Mohammed (2024),

secondary education in Nigeria is to help individuals live a useful life in society as well as prepare them for higher education. A major challenge to secondary education in Nigeria is teacher recruitment process. However, teacher recruitment process is a critical factor which influence the quality of education and, by extension, the state's global competitiveness. The process attracting, retaining, and developing high-quality teachers remains a significant challenge for many states, including Lagos State. Despite its importance, there is a paucity of research on the teacher recruitment process in Lagos State secondary schools, particularly in relation to its impact on global competitiveness.

In Lagos State, the recruitment of high-quality teachers has been a persistent challenge. Teacher recruitment seems to be the process of identifying, attracting, and selecting qualified individuals to fill teaching positions in educational institutions. Despite efforts to improve secondary education, the teacher recruitment process remains a critical issue affecting the quality of education and global competitiveness. Moreover, recruitment can be defined as the process of advertising available job spaces in an organisation or school and selecting from the pool of applicants those considered competent in terms of certification and experience to be employed to work or teach in the school (Agih, Paultey & Offor, 2018). The goal of teacher recruitment is to ensure that schools have a sufficient number of highly qualified teachers to provide high-quality education to students.

In Lagos State secondary school, teacher recruitment seems to face the following issues which includes: limited pool of qualified subject-teacher, ineffective recruitment strategies, poor teacher quality, bureaucracy, lack of transparency, and ineffective technology-base recruitment due to political interference and ethnic jingoism. The staff recruitment policy is to ensure that the 'best' teacher is selected for a particular post and process of teacher selection is a form of social control which significant individuals within the school organisation consistently look for other teachers to join the system (Abari & Mohammed in Mohammed, Shittu & Lawal, 2019). Many secondary schools face challenges in recruitment and retaining teachers, particularly in subjects such as special education and science subject. The effective recruitment strategies which include offering competitive salary and benefits, providing professional development opportunities, and creating a positive school culture. These challenges have made teaching not to be respected as a profession like every other discipline such as: Nursing, medicine, law, accounting, engineer, architect and so on.

### **Teachers Recruitment and Selection Process in Lagos State**

The teaching profession is said to be the oldest and most respected all over the world. Therefore, in order to retain the public perception of the profession, it is important that what goes on within the walls of the classroom is a true reflection of what teaching is and should be. Teachers are professional individuals who undergo educational training through the four walls of classroom with certification and ready to discharge qualitative education to students with strong pedagogical skills cum classroom management character. The idea of teachers' recruitment at the secondary school level, whether public or private springs from the dearth of competent hands to fill vacant position of tasks in a school. In some cases, it could arise due to the creation of new subject areas that would need extra teachers to teach such new subjects

(Ezeugbor & Anozie, 2019). The identification of such job vacancies itself is the product of job analysis carried out in the school by the principal. Recruitment simply referred to the process by which organizations fill up vacancies in order to ensure that there is no vacuum in-service delivery. Ololube (2019) added that recruitment is the process of finding and attracting teachers who are qualified to fill teaching vacancies. Both descriptions and job specifications are very vital in the recruitment process because they specify the nature of the teaching and the qualifications. Therefore, the success of any organization such as a school system can largely be attributed to the efforts of workers within it.

However, teacher recruitment process is an important factor for the success of secondary education as qualified and competent professionals are needed to improve student academic performance. Recruitment process is the mechanism used in organisation for continuity in the workplace due to retirement, and deployment of staff in order to fill the vacuum created especially in the complex teaching profession. At the first stage, emphasis is laid on attracting a large pool of applicants in order to select from among them those who have the ability and qualifications for the jobs being advertised. The next step is the selection process. This consists of the interview process and the purpose of making a choice out of those that attended the interview on who will be engaged to work or teach in the school. At the public secondary school section, recruitment of teachers is the responsibility of the Teaching Service Commission. Teacher recruitment has been the process of identifying and attracting qualified and suitable candidates to fill vacant positions in teaching service based on present situation. It creates a pool of applicants or candidates from which personnel manager can select to fill vacant positions that are usually made public through advertisements and publications using different mediums such as newspapers, notice boards, paid advertisements on radios, television stations and social media. Applicants that meet the set criteria are invited to the next phase which could be written or oral examinations including standardized and aptitude tests.

The selection of teachers for teaching engagement in a school comes after a thorough personnel planning exercise which is aimed at providing for a school, the sufficient number and quality of teachers who are ready to respond to the academic staff need of the school (Anyaogu, 2016). At this stage, the statistical data gathered during job analysis is used to generate a human resource plan for the school. As indicated earlier, this is done by the Teaching Service Commission acting on the facts and data supplied by the principals of secondary schools in the state. As it were, personnel planning has to do with projecting the present and future human resource needs of the school, auditing the available academic staff capacity of the school and identifying teachers that need additional training to cope with the intricacies of their jobs (Ezeugbor & Anozie, 2019). After the selection process, the next step is the placement of the staff recruited into the various jobs specified for them. This is the process of assigning job responsibilities to newly employed staff or teachers. At this point, the technicalities of the jobs are matched with the qualifications, experiences and competencies of the recruited teachers or workers (Jackson, 2012).

In most cases however, orientation or induction programme are organised for the new staff to get them acclimatized into the job environment. A teacher is an academic staff of a secondary school. He is one trained in a particular subject area and equipped professionally to

teach or impart knowledge to students. He has the teaching qualifications of B. Ed, B.A. (Ed) or B. Sc (Ed). At least the teacher possesses the NCE or even the higher qualification of M. Ed in his subject specialization. Moreso, Lagos State, being a major hub of economic and educational activities in Nigeria, faces unique challenges in recruitment and retaining high-quality teachers for its secondary schools. The state's education system is characterized by a high demand for quality education, driven by its rapidly growing population and economic significance. However, the ability to attract and retain top teaching talent is hampered by various factors, inadequate remuneration, and limited career advancement opportunities. Obviously, teacher recruitment process in Lagos State engulfs with, tribalism, ethnicity and corruption practice which cannot be underrated particularly in the process of teachers' appointment, discipline, transfer and promotion. Today, the recruitment process observes to be faulty and unprofessional which contribute to poor quality teacher and student failure. As a result, the future of teaching profession may face several challenges if not properly address. Kumah et al., (2023) posited that most instructors being produced by the Teaching Service Commission are engrossed with a poor attitude toward indiscipline among college students. Such attitudes like receiving bribes and extortion of money from the candidates seeking for job which undermined the integrity of teachers' recruitment in line with global competitiveness.

However, teacher recruitment and selection process has been subjected to computerize and online in Lagos State. The purpose of recruitment is to attract and retain the interest of applicants suitable for the given job and to create a positive image of the people who come in contact with the organization. Section 79(a) of the National Policy on Education (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2014) editions requires the appointment of academically and professionally qualified persons as teachers and head teachers in public secondary schools. According to Section 17(2) of the Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN), Act 2004 stated that any unqualified persons found performing the job of teachers have contravened this section and they shall be prosecuted in the law court (TRCN ACT, 2004).

**Challenges of Teachers Recruitment Process and Its Impact on Global Competitiveness**  
Global competitiveness is the country's capability to compete effectively in the global market, creating economic growth, education development and prosperity through investing in human capital development and teaching skills. The global competitiveness rankings such as Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) and assess countries performance teachers' recruitment in other developed countries. The teachers' recruitment process in Lagos State junior secondary schools has been subject to scrutiny due to issues related to political influence, lack of merit-based selection, inadequate qualification standards, and insufficient screening mechanisms (Akinyele, 2018). Many education stakeholders argue that the selection of teachers should be based on competency, experience, and pedagogical skills to enhance the quality of instruction. However, in several cases, teachers are employed without undergoing rigorous assessments to determine their suitability for the role. This has resulted in a decline in the standard of teaching, negatively affecting students' academic performance (Ogunyemi, 2020). Furthermore, the high rate of contract and temporary teaching appointments has led to instability in the teaching

workforce, causing disruptions in learning continuity and student-teacher relationships (Abiodun, 2021).

However, reports indicate that some teachers recruited in Lagos State junior secondary schools exhibit poor professional behaviour, including absenteeism, lateness, lack of commitment, and unethical practices (Adepoju & Ojo, 2021). Such misconduct disrupts the learning process, leading to diminished student motivation, lack of discipline, and ultimately, poor academic performance. Instances of corporal punishment, favoritism, and improper teacher-student relationships have also been cited as ethical concerns that negatively impact students' mental well-being and academic achievement (Adebayo, 2022). In addition to recruitment challenges and professional conduct among teachers is another critical factor influencing student learning outcomes. Professionalism in teaching entails punctuality, dedication, adherence to ethical guidelines, classroom management skills, and student engagement strategies (Eze, 2019).

Some educational stakeholders in Nigeria have faulted the recruitment process of teachers into schools and advised government to review the recruitment process for primary and secondary schools because unqualified teachers were the bane of the education sectors. One of the challenges facing the education sectors was the prevalence of unqualified people. Unqualified teachers are recruited who cannot manage the process of teaching and learning in schools effectively which is reflection in the poor performances of students and consequently brings dissatisfaction among parents regarding the performance of government schools. This is especially worrying because poor instruction and ineffective teaching reduce the demand for education which in turn reduces the pool of qualified teachers. Most unqualified teachers lack the competence to deliver quality teaching to their students. Such teachers have not been trained in employing 21st century skills in teaching, and most of the teachings are teachers-centered. These observations are proved of poor recruitment process that is marred with who-know-man and political interferences on part of government officials or appointees of the government. The quality of the recruitment process therefore determines to a large extent the type of teachers that are employed to bring the students into a working relationship with the contents of their chosen subjects (Igumbor, 2018). As hinted earlier, a lot of reasons account for academic staff recruitment at the secondary school level. First is the need to get competent hands to teach the subjects that students do not have teachers to teach them, especially in the sciences. There could also be new subject areas like "marketing" carved out of "commerce", or "wood making" carved out of Introductory Technology. Such new subjects would necessarily need new teachers to teach them. The dearth of teachers in the secondary school system could also call for staff recruitment (Okara, 2014).

## **The Way Forward**

To enhance the teachers' recruitment process and global competitiveness in secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria, some of the following strategies can be employed by developing a robust recruitment framework by establishing clear guidelines and criteria for teacher recruitment; offer competitive incentives by providing attractive salaries, benefits and professional development opportunities; emphasize teacher quality by prioritize recruiting

highly qualified teacher and experienced teachers, fostering partnerships with universities and teacher training institutes to identify and develop future teachers; and utilize technology by leverage through online platforms and social media to reach a wider pool of qualified candidates and merit-based recruitment process. This position is in line with Ingersoll (2017), who found identifies teacher turnover and recruitment challenges as major issues in education. This position provides insights into the complexities of teacher recruitment and its impact on global competitiveness, highlighting the need for effective strategies to attract and retain high-quality teachers.

## **Conclusion**

The study concludes by highlighting the need for a robust and effective recruitment process to attract and retain high-quality teachers and identified best practices, challenges and implications for policymakers, school management and other stakeholders seeking to improve education quality and global competitiveness. However, using technology to facilitate teacher recruitment can help to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the recruitment practices. It is essential to reform the teacher recruitment practices by prioritizing merit-based selection, transparency, and probity toward ensuring global standard. Therefore, the study has explored the teachers' recruitment process in secondary school in Lagos State, Nigeria and its impact on global competitiveness.

## **Recommendations**

The study recommended the following among others that:

1. Government should develop a robust recruitment framework by establishing clear guidelines and criteria for teacher recruitment.
2. Policymaker should develop a merit-based teacher recruitment framework that prioritizes teacher quality, competence, digital literacy and implement transparent and accountable recruitment processes for secondary school which leveraging on technology to streamline the recruitment practices in Lagos State.
3. Policymaker for public secondary schools in Lagos State should invest in teacher development by providing routine professional development opportunities for them.
4. The Ministry of Education should foster partnerships and collaboration with universities and training institutions to produce quality teachers in line with global standard.
5. The Lagos State Ministry of Education should implement clear guidelines and criteria for teacher recruitment, and offer attractive salaries, welfare package and professional development opportunities in line with global standard.
6. The Lagos State Teaching Service Commission management should monitor and assess teacher recruitment process regularly in order to achieve global best practice.
7. Government should leverage online platforms for teacher recruitment and create a supportive school environment.

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## **TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP STYLE AS CATALYST OF MANAGING HIGHER EDUCATION IN LAGOS STATE FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS: THE WAY FORWARD**

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### **Abstract**

*Lagos State, a hub of educational excellence in Nigeria, faces intense global competition in higher education. This study explores transformational leadership style as catalyst of managing higher education in Lagos State for enhancing global competitiveness particularly in the area of leadership, partnership, innovation, and sustainable development. By employing a multidisciplinary approach, the study examines the intersection of educational management, governance, technological advancement, and socio-economic factors that collectively shape the state's higher education landscape. It addresses the current challenges, best practices, and innovative approaches to improve institutional performance which includes: limited access to modern educational technologies, insufficient fund for research output and innovation, and a lack of strategic partnerships with industry and international academic institutions. Lagos State, with its burgeoning population, economic power, and strategic location, faces unique challenges and opportunities in the context of higher education. These include inadequate infrastructure, inconsistent funding, outdated curricula, and limited industry-academia linkages. Additionally, the expansion of student populations and the uneven access to quality education pose significant hurdles. This study identifies the critical need for a comprehensive reform strategy that balances global competitiveness with the distinct socio-political, economic, and cultural realities of Lagos State. The study proposes a framework for leadership transformation, emphasizing collaboration, digitalization, and industry partnerships in the area of digital transformation, capacity-building initiatives, and public-private partnerships (PPPs) in creating a sustainable and globally competitive higher education system. Recommendations include investing in lecturer development, fostering innovation ecosystems, and promoting internationalization. By adopting transformational leadership style, Lagos State's higher education institutions can improve their global rankings, attract international talent, and produce competitive graduates globally.*

**Keywords:** Higher Education, Global Competitiveness, Transformational Leadership, Innovation and University Ranking

### **Introduction**

The global higher education landscape is undergoing significant transformations driven by technological advancements, globalization, and changing workforce demands. Universities

worldwide are under pressure to adapt, innovate, and demonstrate their relevance in an increasingly interconnected world. In Nigeria, particularly in Lagos State, higher education plays a pivotal role in shaping the nation's human capital and driving economic growth. Higher education institutions serve as incubators of innovation, repositories of knowledge, and catalysts for socio-economic development. However, the higher education sector in Lagos State is beleaguered by systemic inefficiencies, infrastructural deficits, policy inconsistencies, leadership approach and an antiquated curriculum that is often misaligned with the exigencies of the 21st-century knowledge economy. In an increasingly digitized and interconnected world, the failure to adapt higher education systems to global standards imperils not only academic excellence but also the workforce readiness.

Higher education is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics including those institutions offering correspondence courses. Such institutions award academic degrees, professional certificates and advanced/higher diploma; and as further step, Postgraduate programme such as Masters' degrees and Doctorate degrees. Such institutions involve in teaching, research and social (community) service activities (Benedict in Mohammed, Shittu & Lawal, 2019). Despite its potential, higher education in Lagos State faces numerous challenges, including administrative leadership, inadequate infrastructure, brain drain, limited funding, and a disconnect between academic outputs and industry needs. These challenges hinder the ability of institutions to compete globally, attract international talent, and produce graduates who are equipped to meet the demands of the modern workforce. Moreover, the study examines the transformative imperatives of higher education in Lagos State by exploring strategic frameworks for institutional growth, policy innovation, and pedagogical restructuring to enhance global competitiveness. The study employs a multidimensional analytical approach, drawing on theoretical constructs from educational management, transformational leadership style and developmental economics to propose a sustainable roadmap for higher education reform. It also critically appraises the role of government, private sector stakeholders, and international partnerships in fostering an ecosystem conducive to academic excellence, research innovation, and human capital development. Despite its potential, higher education in Lagos State faces numerous challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, brain drain, limited funding, and a disconnect between academic outputs and industry needs. These challenges hinder the ability of institutions to compete globally, attract international talent, and produce graduates who are equipped to meet the demands of the modern workforce.

This study seeks to explore the current state of higher education in Lagos State, identify key challenges and opportunities, and propose strategies for managing and transforming the sector to enhance its global competitiveness. By doing so, it aims to contribute to the development of a more robust, innovative, and globally relevant higher education system in Lagos State. Higher education in Lagos State is fraught with systemic inefficiencies, infrastructural inadequacies, governance bottlenecks, and financial constraints that undermine its global competitiveness. The University of Lagos (UNILAG), Lagos State University (LASU), Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), and private universities sector also

plagued by multifaceted challenges that inhibit academic excellence, research productivity, and industry relevance.

## **Literature Review**

The study anchored Institutional theory and Globalization theory. The interplay of these theoretical framework provides a robust intellectual foundation for this study, enabling a comprehensive exploration of governance imperatives, policy exigencies, technological imperatives, and internationalization strategies requisite for repositioning Lagos State's higher education sector for global competitiveness. Institutional theory developed by Walter Powell (1983), institutional theory provides a compelling explanatory framework for understanding how regulatory norms, cultural expectations, and organizational structures shape institutional behavior. It posits that higher education institutions are not merely autonomous knowledge-producing entities but are embedded within a sociopolitical and economic ecosystem that dictates their operational modalities and strategic orientations. This theory is particularly germane to the Lagos State higher education sector, where institutional isomorphism the tendency for universities and polytechnics to conform to prevailing norms and regulatory frameworks often results in bureaucratic rigidity, resistance to innovation, and sluggish policy adaptation. By applying Institutional Theory, this study critically examines how government policies, accreditation standards, and international benchmarking shape institutional performance, while also identifying avenues for structural reengineering, policy liberalization, and adaptive governance models.

More so, Globalization Theory in an era where higher education is increasingly transnational, Globalization Theory provides an essential analytical lens for situating Lagos State's higher education transformation within a broader international discourse. This theory, articulated by Ulrich Beck (2000), postulates that globalization precipitates the convergence of educational paradigms, mobility of knowledge, digitization of learning, and cross-border institutional collaborations. The implications of globalization for higher education in Lagos State are profound, necessitating a recalibration of pedagogical methodologies, research orientations, and academic partnerships to align with global best practices. The lack of robust international linkages, limited student and faculty exchanges, and inadequate digital infrastructure has hindered the ability of Lagos State institutions to compete on the global stage. Through the lens of Globalization Theory, this study elucidates strategic imperatives such as internationalization of curricula, cross-border accreditation frameworks, and adoption of cutting-edge educational technologies, all of which are critical for elevating the global stature of Lagos State's higher education institutions. Benedict (2016) opined that higher education is the education given after secondary education in universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and monotechnics including those institutions offering correspondence courses.

## **Transformational Leadership Style and Management of Higher Education in Lagos State**

The historical evolution of higher education in Lagos State is an intricate tapestry of colonial legacies, post-independence aspirations, policy reforms, and global integrations. From its origins in Yaba Higher College to the establishment of globally competitive universities and

research centers, Lagos State has solidified its role as Nigeria's academic nerve center. In the contemporary knowledge-driven economy, higher education institutions serve as catalysts for innovation, economic development, and social transformation. To remain competitive in an increasingly globalized world, universities and other tertiary institutions must align with global best practices that foster academic excellence, research productivity, industry relevance, technological integration and leadership. The most progressive higher education systems around the world have adopted adapted transformational leadership style through research-intensive frameworks, internationalization strategies, digital transformation, and sustainable funding mechanisms to enhance institutional competitiveness. Leadership plays a pivotal role in ensuring the efficiency, quality, and sustainability of higher education institutions.

Globally, leading universities operate within governance frameworks that balance institutional autonomy with regulatory oversight, allowing them to be innovative while maintaining accountability. Perhaps, the transformation of higher education in requires a transformational leadership style and well-coordinated approach that integrates policy reforms, institutional restructuring, capacity building and provides a roadmap for achieving global competitiveness. The transformation of higher education is a global phenomenon driven by technological advancements, changing workforce demands, and increasing competition (Altbach, 2015). Universities worldwide are under pressure to adapt, innovate, and demonstrate their relevance (Marginson, 2018). Transformational leadership is a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems (Damirch, et. al. 2011). Transformational leaders are described as holding positive expectations for followers; it increases levels of motivation and morality (Johnson, 2015). Transformational leadership is a style of leadership where the leader works with employees to identify the needed change, creating a vision to guide the change, and executing the change (Business Dictionary, 2016). Transformational leader's main objective is to work to change or transform his or her followers' needs and redirect their thinking. It needs charismatic leadership with individualized consideration and intellectual stimulation (Schultz and Schultz, 2016).

More so, higher institutions have governing councils headed by Pro-Chancellors appointed by the Proprietor (President or Governor) of the state with some internal representatives of the institution as members. However, the polytechnics and colleges of education have governing councils or board headed by Chairmen appointed by the President or Governor of the state with some internal representatives of the institution as members. These councils generally govern the affairs of the public tertiary institutions on behalf of the government with various leadership styles. The management of each institution is headed by a chief executive officer which is the vice-chancellor in the universities, Rector in the polytechnic and Provost in the colleges of education. The federal government has established supervisory and coordinating agencies for universities which is the National Universities Commission, National Board for Technical Education for polytechnics and National Commission for Colleges of Education (Mohammed, Shittu & Lawal, 2019). However, with respect to Lagos State, most public tertiary institutions are bedeviled with various leadership and management crises which most times lead to closure of higher institution. Tertiary institutions are the highest level of educational system designed to produce high-level

manpower and are recognized as centers of knowledge where ideas are not only acquired, but also disseminated to those who require it.

The Lagos State Government established Lagos State University (LASU) in 1983. Unlike UNILAG, LASU was conceived as a state-funded, multi-campus institution aimed at providing affordable, high-quality education to indigenes and non-indigenes alike. Over the years, LASU expanded its faculties, research capabilities, and postgraduate programs, evolving into one of Nigeria's premier public universities. The 1970s and 1980s witnessed the proliferation of polytechnics and monotechnics, aimed at bridging the gap between academia and industrial needs. The establishment of institutions such as Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH) and the Lagos State Polytechnic (LASPOTECH, now Lagos State University of Science and Technology, LASUSTECH) signaled a shift towards technical and vocational education, reflecting a broader national emphasis on industrialization. This era was characterized by governmental commitment to educational access, infrastructural expansion, and the diversification of higher education offerings. However, challenges such as funding constraints, political interference, and curriculum rigidity began to emerge, foreshadowing later institutional difficulties.

### **The Way Forward**

Moving forward, higher education in Lagos must embrace technological disruption, international collaboration, and governance restructuring to remain at the forefront of global academic competitiveness. By leveraging its strategic position as Nigeria's economic hub, investing in research-driven education, and fostering industry partnerships, Lagos State can transform its higher education system into a globally recognized beacon of knowledge and innovation. The global best practices in higher education emphasize cross-border academic partnerships, student and faculty mobility, and international accreditation to enhance institutional reputation and knowledge exchange. Higher education institutions in Lagos State face significant challenges that hinder their ability to compete globally, produce employable graduates, and brain drain.

Many factors contribute to the brain-drain problem in Nigeria's higher education institutions, including unpredictable academic calendars, insecure jobs, poor administration, low motivation, strike activity, and institutional corruption (Shittu, Ola & Sasa, 2023). These challenges include: Inadequate infrastructure, low rankings and limited international recognition; insufficient financial resources to support research, innovation, and quality education. Digitalization, AI, and emerging technologies require innovative pedagogies and infrastructure (Zawacki-Richter et al., 2019). Higher education leadership in Lagos State need to achieve financial sustainability, there is an urgent need to diversify funding sources, establish corporate endowments, leverage alumni donations, and explore income-generating research commercialization models. Global best practices in higher education underscore the necessity of good governance, robust research ecosystems, international collaborations, digital transformation, and sustainable financing.

To reposition Lagos State's higher education institutions for global competitiveness, policymakers must adopt a multi-pronged strategy that integrates these best practices while considering local realities and socio-economic contexts. However, to integrate Lagos State's higher education institutions into the global academic community, policies must promote student mobility, facilitate faculty exchange programs, establish international partnerships, and seek accreditation from global education bodies such as ABET (Engineering Accreditation), AACSB (Business Schools Accreditation), and UNESCO's International Institute for Higher Education. This study proposed strategies for administrative leadership to manage and transforming the higher education in order to enhance its global competitiveness. By doing so, it aims to contribute to the development of a more robust, innovative, and globally relevant higher education system in Lagos State.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, transformation higher education in Lagos State is crucial for enhancing global competitiveness, driving economic growth, and producing employable graduates. By addressing challenges, leveraging technology, and fostering industry partnerships, higher education institutions can improve quality, innovation, and societal impact. Higher institutions leadership style depends on the leader concerned, the followers and cultural values. For tertiary education particularly universities, polytechnics and colleges of education, the most suitable leadership style depends on the level of followers' education, experience, integrity, discipline and cooperation. Based on these criteria, as it applies to tertiary institutions, there are three different styles, which can be used as follows: situational leadership style among the governing council members, transformational leadership style for academicians and finally democratic leadership style for other categories of workers.

## **Recommendations**

The study recommended the following:

1. University management should foster industry-academia collaborations to drive innovation and employability.
2. University management should invest in training, motivation, and retention of academic staff.
3. lecturer development, fostering innovation ecosystems, and promoting internationalization.
4. Government should invest more on tertiary institutions infrastructure, research, and lecturer development.
5. Policy maker should promote global partnerships, student mobility, and cultural diversity.

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## QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES AS LEEWAY TO TRANSFORM RESEARCH AND INNOVATION IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES FOR GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

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### **Abstract**

*Quality Assurance practices hold the key to transforming Nigerian universities into centres of globally competitive research and innovation. In today's fast-changing world, universities must rise to the challenge of producing impactful research and ground breaking solutions, and these require a firm commitment to upholding high standards. This paper highlights how quality assurance can be a powerful tool to drive this transformation by focusing on critical areas such as enhancing research quality, modernising academic programmes, building international partnerships, and nurturing a culture of innovation. The discussion underscores the importance of ethical research practices, sufficient funding, and improved infrastructure in achieving excellence. It also stresses the need to equip faculties and students with advanced skills and fosters interdisciplinary approaches to problem-solving. By learning from global best practices, seeking international accreditations, and showcasing achievements on global platforms, Nigerian universities can strengthen their positions on the world stage. Through the adoption of quality assurance at every level, Nigerian universities can bridge the gaps between local challenges and global opportunities, positioning themselves as key players in solving pressing global issues. This transformation not only enhances their reputation but also contributes meaningfully to sustainable development and progress, demonstrating that quality assurance is the foundation of impactful research and innovation that know no boundaries.*

**Keywords:** Quality Assurance, Practices, Research, Innovation, Nigerian Universities.

### **Introduction**

The United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) (4) states quality education to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning that is to build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation. The second part of the goal (4) states that by 2030, the goal seek to make education sustainable global expansion in the number of scholarships available to developing countries, small island developing states and African countries, for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries (United Nations, 2015). This paper focuses on quality education that will foster global competitiveness. In an era where knowledge-driven economies dominate global progress, the role of universities

in research and innovation cannot be overemphasized. Nigerian universities, as centres of knowledge production, are expected to contribute significantly to national and global development through -cutting-edge research and technological advancements. Mohammed (2024) asserts that quality assurance practices is paramount for Nigeria education. What every evaluator is doing is to ensure quality life assurance for the child so that the child can also give quality life to the country. The quality of education determines the quality of a nation. However, despite the vast potentials, “in research and innovations” from Nigerian universities lag behind their counterparts in developed nations due to systemic challenges such as; inadequate funding, poor research infrastructure, low publication quality, and weak industrial linkages Ekpol and Asuquo (2020).

**Quality Assurance Practices (QAP)** refer to the systematic activities and processes implemented within an organisation to ensure that products, services, or processes meet defined quality standards and are continuously improved. These practices involve planning, monitoring, evaluation, and feedback mechanisms to maintain and enhance quality across operation **Smith and Lee (2023) explained that** setting quality standards and objectives, implementing standard operating procedures, conducting regular audits and assessments, providing training and capacity building, using feedback for continuous improvement. The key elements of quality assurance include internal and external evaluation mechanisms, accreditation and benchmarking processes, curriculum review and development, student assessment and feedback and staff development and performance appraisal. Quality assurance practices serve as a critical mechanism for addressing for transforming Nigerian universities research for global competitiveness. Quality assurance in Universities involves policies, standards, and procedures aimed at ensuring that teaching, learning, and research activities meet international benchmarks. This paper explores the role of quality assurance practices as leeway to improving the quality of research and innovation in Nigerian universities. It examines existing gaps, identifies best practices from globally competitive institutions, and proposes strategies for strengthening quality assurance mechanisms. The ultimate goal is to position Nigerian universities as key players in the global knowledge economy through sustainable research excellence and innovation.

### **Quality Assurance in Research and Innovation.**

Quality assurance in research refers to strategies and policies for ensuring that data integrity, quality, and reliability are maintained at every stage of the project. Mohammed and Iwuno (2025) affirm that Quality Assurance in research is an essential ingredient to ensure that the standard, validity and reliability are maintained for reliable research outputs. Hence, adhering to the laid down rules for a positive feedback. Innovation in universities refers to the creation, application, and dissemination of new knowledge, technologies, or solutions that address societal challenges academic innovations such as new teaching methodologies and learning models entrepreneurial, initiatives that translate research into market-ready products. Integration of technology such as Artificial Intelligence (AI) should be explored to the fullest to improve Quality Assurance integrated Enuka (2024) advocates for a fundamental shift in

how engineering is taught at universities worldwide with her proposal emphasised the need for more practice based learning approaches that better prepare Students for real-world challenges. Quality Assurance in Nigerian Universities: are designed to maintain and improve academic standards, ensure regulatory compliance, and create enabling learning environment for students and lecturers. Okechi and Nwuke (2025) noted that while addressing challenges in universities, these strategies help institutions to align with their programmes with global best practices.

There are several agencies responsible for regulating and overseeing university education such as: National University Commission (NUC), Joint Admission and Matriculation Board (JAMB), National Board for Technical Education (NBTE), Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), Professional Regulatory Bodies that are disciplines-specific agencies that ensures that universities programmes align with industries and professional standards, Medical and Dental Council of Nigeria (MDCN), Institute of Chartered Accountants of Nigeria (ICAN), Chartered Insurance Institute of Nigeria (CIIN), Council for the Regulation of Engineering in Nigeria (COREN), Town Planners Registration Council of Nigeria (TOPREC) and Internal Quality Assurance Units (IQAU). Ogunde and Musa (2023) explained that internal quality assurance units are vital to sustaining academic excellence by evaluating internal processes and recommending improvements based on performance metrics.

Global Competitiveness: refers to a country's ability to provide higher levels of prosperity to its citizens by efficiently utilising available resources. This encompasses the quality of institutions, infrastructure, microeconomics, stability, health and education, market efficiency and innovation capacity. In Nigeria, the world Economic Form's Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) assesses these factors to determine a nation's productivity and long-term economic growth and potential. (Wikipedia, 2025). Obioha (2024) agrees that the back bone of any digital economy is reliable infrastructure. Universities should invest in modern research laboratories, digital libraries, and high-speed internet to facilitate global collaborations. Government and private sector stakeholders should support the development of innovation hubs and technology parks within universities.

### **Building Quality Assurance into Nigeria's Universities Research**

For Nigerian universities to achieve global competitiveness in research and innovation, quality must be embedded into every aspect of the research process. This requires a comprehensive approach that involves policy reforms, capacity building, funding improvements, and strategic collaborations.

1. Strengthening Research Policies and Governance: The Federal Ministry of Education (2023) released the National Education Quality Assurance Policy and Implementation guidelines aiming to standardized Quality Assurance processes across educational institutions in Nigeria. Universities must develop and enforce clear research policies that promote originality, ethical standards, and global best practices.
2. Modernising academic programmes: Akinsuroju (2025) discussed leveraging artificial intelligence AI for data-driven decision making in Nigerian higher education, analyses institutional data, identify trends, and provides actionable insights for improving academic performance and governance. Odetunde (2024) agrees that the domestication of AI to fit

the learning environment to be able to do something better that can fit into the Nigeria environment by doing this, it allows for the students to think out of the box. Okeke (2024) examined Quality Assurance mechanisms among STEM lecturers, highlighting the use of self-review, peer review, external assessments and plagiarism detection tools like Turnitin and Quetext to ensure research integrity.

3. Building International Partnership: Developing international collaborations has become increasingly vital for universities, seeking global relevance and academic growth. To attract reputable foreign partners, Nigerian institutions must ensure that they meet widely accepted international benchmarks. Obasi (2021) explains that global partners are more inclined to collaborate with institutions that maintain internationally recognised academic standards.
4. Fostering a culture of Excellence: Requires strategic leadership, inclusive participation, technological advancement and a continuous improvement. Effective leadership is fundamental to nurturing a culture centered on quality. Adeseko at al. (2024), Suggested that visionary leaders who integrate quality principles into the institutions core activates create a foundation for excellence. Ekphoh and Asuquo (2020) stress the importance of involving academic staff, students, and external regulatory bodies in quality assurance activities. Also, institutional accreditation and transparency.
5. Local Challenges and global opportunities: The government should create an enabling environment for foreign investors. Collaborations with foreign universities, research institutes, and industries for partnerships so as to have access to resources, peer learning, joint publication and exchange programmes as performance metrics. Magda and Kunjumuhammed (2022) suggest that institutions participating in global Quality Assurance networks gain visibility, attract international partnerships and improve academic.

### **Factors to Measure in Quality Assurance Practices**

1. Curriculum implementation and review: The curriculum contents should comply with basic minimum academic standard as prescribed by the regulatory bodies, also the introduction of new programmes or major curriculum review should be accomplished. Programmes across the Universities should be meaningfully structured and organised.
2. Instructional Supervision and Teaching Effectiveness: Equip and encouraging lectures to deploy ICT facilitates and relevant social media in teaching and learning as well as monitoring and appraisal of teaching and learning process to be carried out by the appropriate bodies. “The” outcome of teachers’ service delivery assessment by students’ be made available for improvement.
3. Governance and Administrative process: Institutionalisation of good governance practices and administrative system that will promote excellences in order to pursue global comparative and competitive standard of governance and administration.
4. Faculty Development and capacity Building/ Infrastructural development. Training and retraining of lectures especially on the use of Artificial Intelligent tools (AI), modern facilities such as lecturer theatres, laboratories, office equipment, sports and recreational

facilities and state of the art research equipment should be provided in specialised research centers for cutting edge scientific and technological researches.

The culture of excellence can be obtained by focusing on the following:

Teaching and learning resources: The best teaching candidate should be attracted by conducting transparent interview in line with global best practices and deployed to the appropriate area of specialisation. Adequate instructional materials also support equity and inclusiveness in education, particularly in resource- constrained environments. Oni (2022), (World Bank, 2021).

Students and Staff evaluation: Students' admission process and requirements should be in line with the local and international standard. Training and development needs should be identified for effective teaching. Consistent access to up-to-date learning resources significantly influences teaching effectiveness and student achievement.

Quality Assurance should ensure these centres have measurable outputs: patents filed, products launched, collaborations formed. Government and private sector partnerships should be encouraged to increase research funding, universities should explore international grants, research endowments, and industry sponsored projects. Establishment of university-based research funding schemes to support innovative projects.

Global opportunities: Nigeria universities can tap into global opportunities with strong Quality Assurances such as International research grants and fund, Digital Collaboration Platforms, Partnership with Diaspora Academics, Double-Degree and Exchange Programmes, Ranking and Visibility Platforms as well as Rising Demands for African Solutions such as Global interest in African research on renewable energy, climate change, public health etc.

### **Challenges Facing Quality Assurance as Leeway to Transform Nigeria's University Research**

1. Inadequate Infrastructure
2. Research Funding
3. Limited use of ICT and data for decision making
4. Brain drain and shortage of qualified Teachers
5. Capacity building for research
6. Inconsistent policy and Bureaucracy

Our institutions have great potential but many still face challenges that hinder their ability to compete globally. Implementing effective Quality Assurance practices can provide a structured and sustainable approach to improving research output and fostering innovation will launch Nigerian universities in the rather than viewing Quality Assurance as a mere regulatory requirement, this study positions it as a strategic tool for institutional transformation. By stringing internal processes and aligning with global standard, Nigerian universities can elevate their research capabilities and contribute more meaningfully to international academic and development goals.

## **Leeway to Quality Assurance Practices**

1. Government and private sector partnerships should be encouraged to increase research funding.
  - a. Universities should explore international grants, research endowments, and industry sponsored projects.
  - b. Establishment of university-based research funding schemes to support innovative projects.
  - c. Establishment of institutional research ethics committees to ensure compliance with ethical guidelines and implementation of transparent research assessment frameworks to measure research impact and relevance.
2. Adequate and Sustainable Research Funding
  - a. Government and private sector partnerships should be encouraged to increase research funding.
  - b. Universities should explore international grants, research endowments, and industry sponsored projects.
  - c. Enhancing Research Infrastructure and Facilities
  - d. Develop institutional funding schemes at the university level to support research.
  - e. Invest in modern laboratories, digital repositories and research centers to promote quality academic inquiry.
  - f. Provide access to advanced data based, research tools, computational facilities for researchers, ensure consistent maintenance and upgrades of existing research infrastructure.
3. Researchers Capacity Development
  - a. Organise regular training sessions, workshops and mentoring programme to improve research capabilities and motivate academic staff to attend international conferences, fellowships and engage in research partnerships.
4. Strengthening Research-Industry Collaboration
  - a. Encourage interdisciplinary research to tackle complex societal problems.
  - b. Form partnerships with industry to ensure that research has practical applications.
  - c. Support industry-funded research that addresses national development challenges.
  - d. Graduate Employability and Entrepreneurial Output:
  - e. Employment rate of graduates in research-intensive and innovation-driven sectors.
5. Enhancing Research Visibility and Dissemination
  - a. Promote space publications in high-quality, peer-reviewed international journals.
  - b. Create and support university journals with strong editorial and peer-review standards.
  - c. Facilitate open-access research repositories to increase global reach and visibility of Nigerian research.
6. Introducing Performance-Based Research Evaluation
  - a. Develop key performance indicators to assess the quality and impact of research outputs.

- b. Rewarding outstanding researchers through grants, awards, and promotions.
- c. Conduct regular audits to ensure research quality aligns with international benchmarks.

7. Quality Assurance Measuring Innovation for Global Competitiveness

Innovation drives economic advancement and global relevance. Universities serve as competitive innovations, quality assurance (QA) systems must be monitor, assess, and enhance research outcomes. To ensure Nigerian universities contribute to global competitiveness, innovation must be assessed through measurable indicators, such as:

- a. Research Output and Impact: The volume of high quality, peer-reviewed publications. citation indexes and the global rankings of university based research.
- b. Relevance to national and global needs: The extent to which research addresses pressing national and international challenges.
- c. Intellectual Property and Innovation: Number of patents applied for and granted. Commercial licensing of technologies developed within universities.
- d. Industry Collaboration partnerships with the industrial sector to ensure practical, market oriented application on research.

8. International Collaboration and Global Visibility:

- a. Participation in global research collaborations and academic exchange initiatives.
- b. Position of Nigeria universities in international innovation and research rankings.

### **Implications of the Study**

The implication of the study are justified by the pressing need to reposition Nigeria's higher education system to meet international standards of quality, research, integrity and innovation. Over the past decade, Nigerian universities has faced challenges such as inconsistent quality assurance practices, limited research funding, inadequate industry linkages and declining global rankings. Addressing these issues requires systemic reform driven by evidence based findings such as those provided in the research.

1. Policy and Strategic Reform: There is a strong justification for comprehensive policy reforms in Nigeria's higher education sector. Sustainable quality assurance requires institutional frameworks that promote ethical research conduct, infrastructural adequacy, and adherence to international academic standards. (Federal Ministry of Education, 2023; Smith & Lee, 2023).
2. Global Competitiveness: Enhancing global competitiveness is justified as universities worldwide are evaluated based on research visibility, innovation output, international, collaborations. Quality assurance does not only improve internal performance; it also enhances institutional reputation and visibility. When Nigerian universities align their processes with global benchmarks they can improve their international rankings, attract foreign students and faculty, and foster cross-border research partnerships (Obasi, 2021; Magda and Kunjumuhammed, 2022).

3. University-Industry Linkages: Improving university industrial-linkage lies in the growing need to bridge the gap between academic research and national development needs. The study implies that effective quality assurance system can encourage mutual trust, promote relevant research, and enhance graduate employability. Stronger linkages also facilitate innovation transfer and commercialization, which are vital for national development. When research outcomes align with industrial applications, they create social value and economic transformation (Ekpoh and Asuquo, 2020; Campbell, 2025).
4. Economic and Sustainable Development: Improved research quality and academic performance extend beyond institutional benefits to influence national progress. The findings justify that higher education, when guided by effective quality assurance, directly supports Nigeria's economic diversification and innovation agenda. Enhance research output can stimulate industrial development, create employment, and accelerate progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations; Mohammed, 2024). Strong quality assurance frameworks can ensure that research is not just academic but socially and economically relevant.

## Conclusion

Quality assurance practices enhance Nigerian university research quality, global standards and innovation, through challenges like poor funding and week infrastructure hinders progress.

## Recommendations

The study recommends that among other things that:

1. Government and private sector partnerships should be encouraged to increase research funding. Universities should explore international grants, research endowments, and industry sponsored projects.
2. Establishment of university-based research funding schemes to support innovative projects. Develop and enforce minimum operational standards for Internal Quality Assurance Units across institutions, ensuring uniformity in monitoring teaching, research, and community engagement.
3. Universities should institutionalize structured mentorship systems where senior academics guide early-career researchers on methodology, publishing, and grant application.

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## CAPACITY BUILDING AND RESEARCH OUTPUT IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*The Research Output (RO) in Colleges of Education (CoEs) has been low as many lecturers are no longer involved in conducting quality publication that could be used to solve societal problems. Previous studies on RO emphasised online technologies and capacity development strategy without considering Capacity Building (CB- training, conferences, seminars, and mentoring). The study, therefore, examined CB and RO in CoEs, Oyo State, Nigeria. A descriptive survey research design of correlational type was adopted, while the sample size consisted of 391 lecturers in the selected three institutions. Three first generation CoEs were purposively selected. The proportionate to size sampling technique was used to sample 60% of the lecturers. The instruments used were the CB Questionnaire with a reliability coefficient of 0.79 and a Publication Checklist. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The RO was high ( $\bar{x}=4.52$ ), and training (48.7%) was the most CB exposed by lecturers, followed by seminar (21.5%). The CB relatively and significantly contributed to RO (7.0%, 38.0%, 31.0%, 9.0%;  $P < 0.05$ ). The CB jointly contributed to RO,  $F_{(4, 389)} = 1.310$ ;  $p < .05$ . Management of CoEs should sustain their RO. The CB should be maintained in CoEs, Oyo State, Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Research output, capacity building, training, conferences, seminars, mentoring

### **Introduction**

Colleges of Education (CoEs) in Nigeria produce Nigeria Certificate of Education (NCE) holders, unlike other Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), through three main functions: teaching, research, and community service. Essentially, CoEs are to provide full-time courses in teaching, instruction, and training, and conduct courses in education for qualified teachers. In order to achieve these functions, lecturers are expected to impart knowledge and skills to students, carry out quality research that would provide solutions to societal problems, and provide community services for the growth and development of the nation. However, observation showed that lecturers in the CoEs have not met the expectations of societal needs due to their low research output and this is giving education stakeholders serious concern.

Research plays a significant role in the developmental process of every nation in the world. It is very important to note that a nation cannot develop without research, and that is why governments are expected to invest in research to bring the desired quality of life to their citizens. If well conducted in a country, the research could bring revolutionary societal changes

and make lives more pleasant. Research output appeared to be a major source of happiness for lecturers as they would prefer to spend more of their time on research (Raji and Oyedeleji, 2021). Despite the importance of research to the nation, the research output in CoEs has been low as many lecturers in Nigerian CoEs are no longer involved in groundbreaking research activities that could be used to generate new concepts and solve societal problems.

Nwakpa (2015) indicated that the quality of research in Nigerian CoEs is of a low standard compared to university lecturers. This implies that most CoE studies are not acceptable in Nigerian universities. For instance, lecturers' research output in journals domiciled in CoEs is not accepted for promotion at the University of Ibadan. However, such research output could only be taken in the CoEs for the promotion of lecturers. Research output in this paper means the quantity and quality of publications of lecturers in CoEs, such as publications including books, journal articles, chapters in books, conference papers and proceedings, technical reports, patents, scientific peer-reviewed bulletins, occasional pieces, monographs, among others. It appears that many of such research published by lecturers in Nigerian colleges of education are locally based, as very few of them are published in global journals. Many factors appeared to have contributed to the ugly research outputs of lecturers in CoEs. One of the factors that seems to contribute to low research outputs is capacity building. Capacity building is how individuals, organizations, and societies obtain, strengthen, and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their development objectives over time (United Nations Development Programme- UNDP, 2009). Capacity building of lecturers is essential for making a sustainable contribution to addressing research output's challenges. Capacity building includes workshops, seminars, mentoring, conferences, and training. All the elements of capacity building are expected to enhance the research output of lecturers and promote research culture in CoEs. Akuegwu, Nwi-ue, and Etudor-Eyo (2013) stated the indicators of capacity building in CoEs are participation in conferences, seminars, workshops, ICT training, and mentoring. However, this study will use training, conferences, seminars, and mentoring as indicators for capacity building.

Training is a component of capacity building that could influence research output in CoEs. Training among CoE lecturers enables them to be systematic and logical in the discharge of their duties in research and writing quality articles for publication. Newly recruited lecturers are expected to be trained on how to write effective papers for publication, win research grants, and conduct institutional-based research, while experienced ones require retraining to keep up with the demands and challenges of their present job. Akonjom, Ishaje, and Njok (2024) believed that a computer software training workshop for academic staff in higher institutions may improve their research output by using computer software in the analysis of their data and other research activities. The conference is another index of capacity building in CoEs that influences research output. Chase (2005) reported that lecturers feel that their result is greatly affected by the freedom to attend conferences as this enhances the quality of research outputs. Conference enhances lecturers' growth and development in their chosen careers, which immensely contributes to their research outputs. Lecturers are expected to access a broad range of ideas through conferences to improve their productivity.

The seminar is another way through which lecturers' capacity can be built and capable of enhancing research output. It is a group meeting led by an expert that focuses on a specific topic or discipline. The seminar is designed to enhance and teach lecturers new methodology, knowledge, and the right attitudes that will propel them to conduct quality research, which will eventually lead to an accepted publication. Seminars can be seen as a formal arrangement for lecturers' development that needs to be supported by informal practices like team teaching, co-authorship in research publications, co-supervising students, and sharing of experiences among themselves, which significantly contribute to their productivity. Perez and Ortega-Dela Cruz (2024) observed that the seminar greatly improves the research output of lecturers in CoEs. They added that the seminar improved effective research writing among the faculty members, especially those newly hired or inexperienced in research. Seminars provide opportunities for lecturers of the College of Education to acquire new knowledge and skills related to effective research writing.

Mentoring is also considered one of the indicators of capacity building that seems to affect the research output of lecturers. Mentoring is an effective method of helping inexperienced lecturers improve their research methodology and writing skills, and enhance quality research output. Abiodun-Oyebanji and Oyedele (2021) stated that mentoring will make new lecturers more experienced and well-grounded in research methodology and facilitate the quality of research output in Nigerian colleges of education. However, the lack of effective mentoring for newly employed lecturers in CoEs has resulted in a low level of research output (Ekpoh and Ukot, 2018). Previous studies used different variables to address low-quality research output in colleges of education by considering the availability and utilization of ICT facilities, utilizing online technologies, and capacity development strategy, but this problem persists (Anyor and Clement, 2013; Soetan and Coker, 2018; Odigwe and Owan, 2020; and Nanang, Sumarto, Abubakar, and Budhi, 2020). This study, therefore, attempts to fill this lacuna by examining the capacity building and research output in colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of Problem**

Research output in colleges of education in Nigeria appears to be low. It seems that lecturers in colleges of education are not committed and dedicated to research. The level of lecturers' publications in some colleges of education has been reduced as many of them are no longer involved in conducting quality research that could be used to solve societal problems. It also appears that some of these lecturers could not publish in high-impact journals, while some could not feature on Google Scholar, Research Gate, and Academia, among others. This has become worrisome to stakeholders.

The implications of this low research output of lecturers include; poor recognition of lecturers, promotion of lecturers to the next cadre being denied, low ranking of their institution, depriving of research grants and institutional-based research, among others. This low research output could be attributed to a lack of capacity building for Nigerian colleges of education lecturers. Past studies focused on the availability and utilization of ICT facilities, online technologies, and capacity development strategies. However, these studies appear not to have

considered capacity building and research output. This study therefore examined capacity building and research output in CoEs in Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between capacity building and research output in CoEs in Oyo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study investigated the level of research output; examined the most common capacity building adopted by colleges of education management; and found out the relative and joint contribution of capacity building to research output in CoEs in Oyo State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions were raised:

1. What is the level of research output in CoEs in Oyo State, Nigeria?
2. What types of capacity building are mostly adopted by CoEs Management in Oyo State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated in this Study:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relative contributions of capacity building to research output in CoEs in Oyo State, Nigeria

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant joint contribution of capacity building to research output in Colleges of Education in Oyo State, Nigeria

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Background**

Capacity building is a process, focused on strengthening the abilities of individuals, groups and organizations, or systems to achieve goals and perform better. It develops and enhances skills, knowledge, and resources to address challenges and effectively contribute to institutional goal. The capacity building term has strong connections with human, educational, and training aspects of people's life (Ahmed, 2022). Capacity building refers to the process of participation in conferences, seminars, workshops, ICT training, and mentoring to ensure that the quality of lecturers meets the needs of society. Meaning that, a lecturer in Nigerian colleges of Education needs to be empowered if research output is of a high standard. Research output is a major index of lecturers' productivity and increases the social prestige of the academic staff status to the rank of chief lecturers irrespective of his or her gender. Low research output has been reported in some studies like (Anyor and Clement, 2013; Soetan and Coker, 2018; Odigwe and Owan, 2020; and Nanang, Sumarto, Abubakar, and Budhi, 2020; Raji and Oyedeleji, 2021; and Oyedeleji, 2025).

The quality of research publication (expressed through the h-index) is the measure of achievement and distinction among academics, while the number of publications serves as proxy for productivity (Raji and Oyedeleji, 2021). Therefore, the reason for research output of lecturers in colleges of Education as the measure of their productivity in evaluations for promotions to

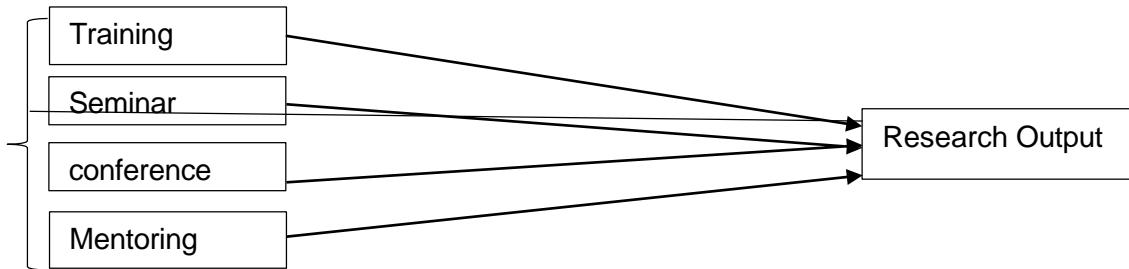
higher career status and research grants. Thus, research output, which is considered as the whole of studies carried out by lecturers over a specified time frame, is a primary source of joy for lecturers as they would prefer to spend more of their time on research to teaching (Raji and Oyedeffi, 2021).

However, Rwothumio, Mbirithi, and Itolondo (2021) and Lawal and Soyemi (2020) in their separate studies suggested that there is a weak positive relationship between staff training and research output. Mulyani (2019) submitted that education and training had a positive and significant influence on motivation, while Ollor (2021) reported that attendance in workshops and conferences is very significant and vital in enhancing quality instructional delivery. Ekpoh and Ukot (2019) revealed that research mentoring, administrative mentoring, and mentor-mentee relationships were significantly related to lecturers' effectiveness in terms of lesson presentation, teaching method, and students' assessment.

The theory that anchors this study is Herzberg's Two Factor Theory of Motivation. This theory was developed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959. In terms of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, factors that make employees feel good about their work, are different from factors that make them feel bad about their work. According to Herzberg, employees who are satisfied at work attribute their satisfaction to internal factors, while dissatisfied employees ascribe their behaviour to external factors. Factors that play a role in contributing to the satisfaction of employees are called motivators. Motivators are inherent to work. According to Herzberg, the hygiene factors are not motivators. The hygiene factors contribute to job dissatisfaction. These two factors are also called the intrinsic (internal) and extrinsic (external) factors.

These factors motivate lecturers to improve in research output. They are factors involved in achieving a high level of research output. Lecturers find these factors intrinsically rewarding. These motivational factors include: recognition, sense of achievement, growth and promotional opportunities, responsibility, and a meaningful job. In other words, motivation to work is internally generated and is propelled by intrinsic variables (motivators) to the work, which include achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement (in terms of capacity building such as seminars, training, conferences, and mentoring), and growth. The hygiene factors (extrinsic variables) do not motivate staff, but can minimize dissatisfaction if handled properly. Research output of lecturers will not be at its optimum if they are dissatisfied and the hygiene factors are mishandled. Herzberg opines that once the hygiene factors are addressed, the motivators will improve research output.

The conceptual model shows the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The independent variable of the study is capacity building, while the dependent variable is research output. The indicators of capacity building are training, conference, seminars and mentoring, all these indicators have direct link with research output as shown in the model. Regular capacity building of lecturers in CoEs is expected to improve their research output.



**Conceptual model describes relationship between capacity building and research output**

Source: Researcher's Concept, 2025

## Method

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design of correlational type. The population of this study comprised 560 lecturers in four Colleges of Education (Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, College of Education, Lanlate, Oyo State, Delar College of Education, Ibadan, Oyo State and Mufutau Lanihun College of Education, Ibadan, Oyo State) in Oyo State, Nigeria. The sample size consisted of 391 lecturers in selected three institutions out of the four public colleges of education in Oyo state, Nigeria. The purposive sampling technique was used to select three institutions (Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo, College of Education, Lanlate, Oyo State, and Mufutau Lanihun College of Education, Ibadan, Oyo State) out of the five institutions in Oyo State, Nigeria. These three institutions were chosen because they are first-generation colleges of education in Oyo State. The proportionate to size sampling technique was used to sample 60% of the lecturers in the sampled institutions.

S/N	Location	Colleges of Education	Number of Lecturers	Sample size (60% of Lecturers)
1	Oyo	Federal College of Education (Special), Oyo	350	210
2	Oyo	College of Education, Lanlate, Oyo State,	326	196
3	Oremeji	Mufutau Lanihun College of Education, Ibadan, Oyo State	40	24
<b>Total</b>			<b>756</b>	<b>430</b>

Source: Registrar of the institutions, 2025

The instruments used were the Capacity Building Questionnaire (CBQ) and Publication Checklist (PC). The CBQ was developed by the researcher and it was scrutinized by the experts. The CBQ contained two sections. Section A was designed to collect information about the lecturers sampled in the study and the type of capacity building exposed by lecturers. Section B focused items on 'Capacity Building Scales (CBS) divided into 3 sub-scales, namely; the Training scale had 6 items, the conference scale had 6 items and mentoring had 6 items while the seminars scale had 7 items with a four-point Likert rating scale as follows; Very

Often (VO) – 4, Often (O) – 3, Sometimes (S) -2 and Rarely (R)-1. The PC is another instrument that measures the level of research output and was administered to lecturers of colleges of education only. This instrument contains 10 items on publications with responses varying from Nil, 1-5, 6-10, 11-15, 16-20, and Above 20 in the last 5 years. However, 390 (90.7%) copies of instruments were successfully filled and found useful for analysis. The Cronbach alpha statistical tool for reliability analysis was adopted to determine the reliability coefficient of 0.79 for CBS. Research question I and 2 were answered using descriptive statistics of frequency counts, simple percentages, and mean and standard deviation. Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression were employed to test hypotheses 1 and 2.

## Result

**Research Question 1:** what is the level of research output in CoEs in Oyo State, Nigeria?

**Table 1: Level of research output in the last 5 years**

S/N	Publication	Nil	1-5	6 – 10	11-15	16-20	Average
1	Numbers of articles in learned journals	94 (24.1)	194 (49.7)	95 (1.3)	5 (1.3)	2 (0.5)	3.70
2	Number of chapters in books	46 (11.8)	224 (57.4)	107 (27.4)	11 (2.8)	2 (0.5)	4.37
3	Number of monographs	107 (27.4)	176 (45.1)	68 (17.4)	21 (5.4)	18 (4.6)	4.27
4	Number of lecture manuals	76 (19.5)	162 (41.5)	85 (21.8)	47 (12.1)	20 (5.1)	5.47
5	Number of books published	46 (11.8)	326 (83.6)	6 (1.5)	11 (2.8)	1 (1.3)	3.04
6	Number of edited books	21 (5.4)	78 (20.0)	138 (35.4)	151 (38.7)	2 (0.5)	8.53
7	Number of books	211 (54.1)	48 (12.3)	78 (20.0)	41 (10.5)	12 (3.1)	3.88
8	Number of chapters in books	186 (47.7)	58 (14.9)	91 (23.3)	44 (11.3)	11 (2.8)	4.78
9	Number of articles accepted for publication	186 (47.7)	83 (21.3)	57 (14.6)	49 (12.6)	15 (3.8)	5.55

<b>10</b>	Number of journal articles that you set a target for in the next six months	171 (43.8)	86 (22.1)	60 (15.4)	64 (16.4)	9 (2.3)	4.43
	<b>Weighted Average</b>		<b>4.80</b>				

Figures in parentheses are percentages. (Field work, 2025)

Table 1 shows that the level of research output in colleges of education in Oyo state was high ( $\bar{x}= 4.82$ ). The table further indicates that most of the lecturers had between 1 and 5 numbers of articles in learned journals ( $n=194$ , 49.7%), number of chapters in books ( $n=224$ , 57.4%), number of monographs ( $n=176$ , 45.1%), number of lecture manuals (162, 45.1%) and Number of books published ( $n=326$ , 83.6%). A greater proportion of the respondents had published 6-10 papers in several edited books ( $n=138$ , 35.4%). However, a large proportion of respondents did not have several books ( $n=186$ , 47.7%), some chapters in books ( $n=186$ , 47.7%), and several journal articles that you set a target for in the next six months ( $n=171$ , 43.8%). Based on this result, it can be inferred that emphasis is placed on these four publication outlets (that is, articles in learned journals, chapters in books, monographs, lecture manuals, books published, and edited books). This indicates that the research output of lecturers in colleges of education was high.

**Research Question 2:** what type of capacity building is mostly exposed by lecturers in colleges of education, Oyo State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Type of Capacity Building is Mostly Exposed by Lecturers**

Type of Capacity Development	Frequency	Percent
Training	190	48.7
Conferences	67	17.2
Seminar	84	21.5
Mentoring	49	12.6
Total	390	100.0

Table 2 presents the type of capacity building that lecturers in colleges of education are exposed to. 190 (48.7) of the respondents used for the study confirmed that they were exposed to training, 67 (17.2) of the respondents believed that they were exposed to conferences, 49 (12.6) of the respondents stated that they attend to seminars while 84 (21.5) of the sampled lecturers are to mentoring. Based on this finding, the study revealed that training was the most capacity building exposed by lecturers, followed by seminars in colleges of education, Oyo State, Nigeria.

### Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis 1:** There are no relative contributions of capacity building to research output in colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria

**Table 3: relative contribution of capacity building to research output**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	29.068	1.990		14.609	.000
Mentoring	.859	.090	.427	9.535	.000
Training	-.243	.120	-.115	-2.029	.043
Conference	-.092	.181	-.029	-.507	.612
Seminar	.410	.092	.221	4.466	.000

Dependent Variable: Research Output

The results in Table 3 indicated that with all the independent variables (mentoring, training, conference, and seminar) are shown to have significant contribution to research output( $p<0.05$ ). mentoring and seminar had relative significant contribution to research output ( $\beta = 0.427; 0.221; t = 9.535; 4.466; p<0.05$ ). Interestingly, training and conference did not have relative significant contribution to research output ( $\beta = -0.115; -0.029; t = -2.029; -0.507 p>0.05$ ). Therefore, hypothesis mentoring and seminar is rejected while null hypothesis for training and conference is retained. This indicates that indicators of capacity building (mentoring and seminar) relatively and significantly contributed to research output in CoEs in Oyo State, Nigeria. However, the mentoring is a potential contributor to research output ( $\beta = 0.427; t=0.221; p<0.05$ )

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no joint contribution of capacity building to research output in colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria.

**Table 4: Joint Contribution of Independent Variables to research output**

R =0.489

R Square =0.239

Adjusted R square =0.231

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6790.598	4	1697.650	30.279	.000
Residual	21585.761	385	56.067		
Total	28376.359	389			

Dependent Variable: research output

Predictors: (Constant), mentoring, training, conference and seminar

Table 4 shows that independent variables (mentoring, training, conference, and seminar), when taken together with research output yielded a coefficient of multiple regression  $R = 0.489$  and an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.239. This implies that 48.9% of the total variance in research output is accounted for by the combination of all the capacity building. The table also indicates that the analysis of variance of the multiple regression data produced an F-ratio value significant at 0.05 alpha level ( $F_{(4, 389)} = 30.279$ ;  $p < .05$ ) which shows that the predictive of the independent variable did not occur by chance. Based on this finding, hypothesis two was therefore rejected. This showed that there was a joint contribution of capacity building (mentoring, training, conference, and seminar) to research output in colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria.

## Discussion

Based on this result, it can be inferred that emphasis is placed on these four publication outlets (that is, articles in learned journals, chapters in books, monographs, lecture manuals, books published, and edited books). This indicates that the research output of lecturers in colleges of education was high ( $\bar{x} = 4.82$ ). This finding agreed with the finding of Ayeni (2020), who found that teachers maintained a high level of productivity in secondary schools. However, the result is against the finding of Nwakpa (2015), who indicated that the quality of research in Nigerian CoEs is of a low standard compared to university lecturers.

The study revealed that training was the most capacity strategies that lecturers are exposed, followed by seminars in colleges of education, Oyo State, Nigeria. The finding of this study is consistent with the finding of Sola (2018), who revealed that mentoring that exists in Nigerian tertiary institutions is mostly informal, but has a significant influence on the career development of academics.

This indicates that capacity building (mentoring, training, conference, and seminar) relatively and significantly contributed to research output in colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria (7.0%, 38.0%, 31.0%, 9.0%;  $P < 0.05$ ). However, the conference is a potential contributor to research output ( $\beta = .038$ ;  $t = 0.592$ ;  $p < .05$ ). The finding of this study is tantamount to the submission of Mulyani (2019) showed that education and training had a positive and significant influence on motivation. The finding also indicated that education and training had a positive and significant influence on lecturer productivity. The finding of this study is similar to the submission of Ollor (2021) who found that attendance in workshops and conferences is very significant and vital in enhancing quality instructional delivery by teachers in secondary school due to their ability to develop teaching methods, knowledge, and skills.

This showed that there was a joint contribution of capacity building (mentoring, training, conference, and seminar) to research output in colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria. This finding corroborates with finding of Ekphoh and Ukot (2019) who revealed that research mentoring, administrative mentoring, and mentor-mentee relationships were significantly related to lecturers' effectiveness.

## Conclusion

This study concluded that lecturers in colleges of education are highly productive in quality research output. Interestingly, the conference is a major contributor to the research output of lecturers in colleges of education in Oyo State, Nigeria.

## Recommendations

Management of Colleges of Education should sustain and maintain their research output. Training should be sustained and be frequently used for lecturers in colleges of education, Oyo State, Nigeria. Institutions should continue to prioritize the capacity building of their lecturers and institutions should continue to approve lecturers' conferences for the enhancement of research output.

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## MANAGING EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITIES

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### Abstract

*Managing equality, diversity, and inclusion presents various challenges in South African universities. Though various legislative measures have been put in place, they have not completely translated into a transformation towards inclusivity. This study critically explores the management of equity, diversity, and inclusion in South African universities, drawing on a qualitative research approach within a critical research paradigm, whilst employing a desktop research design. The study systematically reviews and analyses existing literature to address the following objectives. 1. To explore South African universities' challenges in implementing adequate equity, diversity, and inclusion. 2. To identify best practices and propose contextually relevant strategies for strengthening equity, diversity, and inclusion management in South African universities. Grounded in the principles of transformative leadership theory, the study interrogates the structural and systemic barriers that continue to affect historically marginalized groups in university spaces. The study aims to expose persistent inequalities, amplify voices of the underrepresented, and advocate for transformative policies that support social justice and inclusive excellence in higher education. It further reflects on the role of institutional culture, curriculum transformation, and leadership in advancing inclusive practices. The findings underscore the need for sustained institutional commitment, culturally responsive frameworks, and participatory governance to manage equity, diversity, and inclusion effectively.*

**Keywords:** diversity; equality; inclusion; management; South African universities

### Introduction

This conceptual paper critically explored the efficacy of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) management in South African universities, focusing on the challenges, institutional responses, and strategies for improvement. Since the advent of democracy in 1994, EDI management has become central to the transformation agenda of higher education in South Africa (Batisai et al., 2022; Kanyopa, 2023). The country's apartheid history necessitated systemic reforms to dismantle exclusionary practices and promote inclusive, equitable access and participation in all facets of university life. As such, implementing EDI management principles in higher education is a moral and educational imperative and a constitutional one (Sitoyi & Buthelezi, 2025).

The literature affirms that integrating and including individuals from diverse racial, ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic backgrounds significantly enriches teaching and learning environments (Kanyopa et al., 2024). Inclusive university contexts foster adaptability, intercultural understanding, and global competence among students and academic staff (Batisai et al., 2022; Kanyopa, 2023). In a society that is increasingly multicultural and multiracial, the role of university management in advancing culturally responsive policies and practices is more important than ever (Makhanya et al., 2025). This includes embedding inclusive pedagogies, legislative frameworks, and institutional cultures that promote equity and belonging for all students and staff.

Several studies emphasise that the effective management of EDI in South African higher education institutions is intrinsically linked to improving educational access and outcomes for historically marginalised and disadvantaged groups, particularly those affected by apartheid-era exclusion (Makoelle & Mosito, 2025). However, the persistent challenges facing South African universities, such as racial tensions, xenophobia, class divisions, and gender-based violence, signal a disconnect between EDI management policies and their practical implementation. Ruggunan et al. (2022) highlight that the complexity of institutional cultures in South African universities contributes to recurring conflicts and systemic resistance to change.

Despite the proliferation of EDI management frameworks, the lack of committed and sustained managerial action has limited the impact of such initiatives (Wolbring & Lillywhite, 2021). This paper, therefore, seeks to examine the structural, cultural, and operational challenges that hinder the implementation of adequate EDI management in South African universities. At the same time, it aims to identify best practices and propose contextually relevant, actionable strategies for strengthening institutional capacity and leadership commitment toward achieving EDI in higher education.

### **Theoretical Framework: Transformative Leadership Theory**

The study is underpinned by the transformative leadership theory, which, according to Bass (1999), highlights that an effective change process depends on how the leaders facilitate an environment of support and care for all. Transformational leaders move others beyond self-interest to strong values and care (Bass & Riggio, 2006). The change process in South African universities is driven by a quest towards EDI, key to the transformation agenda espoused by the Constitution of South Africa (Batisai et al., 2022). The expectation is that transformational leaders in universities will empower stakeholders to participate in implementing the transformation agenda. The empowerment of stakeholders prevents resistance to change and upholds ethical and inclusive behavior.

According to Burns (1978), there are four components of transformational leadership theory namely: idealised influence (the leader is seen as a role model), inspirational motivation (the leader has a vision that inspires), intellectual stimulation (the leader pushes for innovation and creativity to challenge the status quo), and individual consideration (leader gives attention to personal needs). These components are relevant in that they assisted in unpacking the opportunities and challenges faced by universities because of the complex effects and legacy

of apartheid. These complexities and the legacy of apartheid are characterised by racial segregation, inequities in access, funding, governance, and representation. Transformative leadership theory has contextual flexibility that addresses deep-seated, systematic legacies such as apartheid (Van Zyl & Stander, 2013). Besides, transformative leadership theory helped the researchers to understand and identify best practices that engender transformation towards managing equity, diversity, and inclusion in South African universities.

Central to transformative leadership theory is ethical leadership. The management of EDI is no longer limited to transaction leadership. However, it is modeled by acts of integrity that show ethical behaviour and create a culture of trust and fairness (Chibaya, 2021). Considering this, the transformative leadership theory highlights how leaders challenge their followers to higher levels of morality.

## **Literature Review**

Drawing from global perspectives, it is evident that higher education institutions worldwide are increasingly operating in competitive and culturally diverse environments. As a result, many universities have begun to embrace the values, norms, and principles of EDI as essential components of institutional excellence. Research by Hoffman et al. (2019) argues that, globally, the success of universities is closely tied to the effectiveness with which their leadership manages diversity within the institution. This implies that EDI management is a moral obligation and a strategic imperative that shapes institutional culture, climate, and performance outcomes (Verkerk, 2023).

In the South African context, the literature emphasises that EDI practices are particularly significant, as they shape the way students and staff interact with one another and experience the university environment (Makhanya et al., 2025; Wolbring & Lillywhite, 2021). The three concepts falling under EDI are transformative elements that influence interpersonal relationships, institutional culture, and collective behaviour. They purify and enrich learning institutions' climate by fostering mutual respect, acceptance, and positive social engagement (Ruggunan et al., 2022).

Importantly, authors of the current study agreed that the values, beliefs, and competencies of university leadership and management deeply influence these components. When institutional leaders prioritise the well-being of all stakeholders and commit to inclusive practices, they contribute significantly to creating an equitable and just academic environment (Luvalo, 2024). Adequate EDI management offers numerous benefits, including promoting social integration, creating psychologically safe learning spaces, and enhancing institutional reputation (Batisai et al., 2022). Further, the success of EDI strategies can often be observed in the behaviours, policies, and daily practices of university leaders and staff, who are responsible for setting a tone of respect and inclusion across the institution (Hoffman et al., 2019).

For this study, it is argued that EDI management strategies should be comprehensive and address not only student-related inequalities but also staff inequities. As Makoelle and Mosito (2025) emphasise, effective inclusion involves fostering a culture where all individuals, students, academic staff, and administrative personnel recognise and respect one another's unique identities, experiences, and contributions. Managerial practices must therefore aim to

create institutional environments that are safe, welcoming, and empowering, where everyone is supported to realise their full potential (Bonti-Ankomah, 2020). This study maintains that cultural and identity differences should be tolerated and actively embraced and leveraged to enhance institutional innovation, relevance, and resilience in an increasingly diverse and interconnected world.

### **Research Methodology**

A systematic literature review was utilised to find existing research on managing equity, diversity and inclusivity in South African universities. Systematic literature review is a tool that improves transparency, reproducibility, and methodological rigour (Czakon, 2015). This study utilised the interpretivist paradigm to understand a social phenomenon (management of transformation in South African universities) through its different meanings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In the context of universities in South Africa, the management, policies and cultures were interpreted in terms of the implementation of EDI from the data. Therefore, interpretivism is aligned with the focus of the study.

Using the qualitative desktop study, non-numerical data from the literature, such as university transformation policies, Ministry of Higher Education EDI frameworks, scholarly literature from 2015 to 2025, were gathered and analysed. The keywords in the title of this study were used to search for literature from comprehensive databases of peer-reviewed journals such as Google Scholar, EBSCO and Research Gate in order gather data on concepts, opinions, beliefs, behaviour and experiences managing of EDI in South African universities (Creswell & Creswell, 2022). The collected data were analysed using thematic analysis (McAllum et al., 2019). Appropriate literature was selected using the comprehensive databases mentioned earlier to meet the research goals and answer the research question. In the initial search, “equality, diversity and inclusivity” and “South African university” were searched in the publications on the databases. To identify the articles used for this review, the following steps were used for the sampling process.

**Table 1.** Results of the article sampling process (Researchers' survey)

S/N	Step in the selection process	Articles
1	Articles identified through searching on Google Scholar	22
2	Articles identified through searching on EBSCO	18
3	Articles identified through searching on ResearchGate	12
4	Articles identified through searching in the three databases	52
5	Articles identified after removing duplicates	25
6	Articles rejected as not sufficiently relevant after reviewing	8
7	Articles included in the study	17

In essence, 54 articles from the databases, 27 were repeated in more than one database. Therefore, 27 remained after the duplicates were removed. Articles irrelevant to the study were also removed, and the remaining sample provided sufficient data that could be reviewed for this study. The sample was limited to literature on EDI in South African universities, excluding

publications in schools and TVET colleges. Articles used are published in peer-reviewed journals containing current debates on implementing EDI strategies. Eight articles were rejected for insufficient information; 16 publications were finally used in the final research sample.

**Table 2.** Management of EDI systematic literature review sample (Researchers' survey)

S/N	Key area of Publication research		Contribution to understanding the management of equity, diversity and inclusion in South African universities
1	Disparities in Rural Universities Transformation	Damoah et al. (2023)	Transformation can be hindered by inequality, poor infrastructure, and a lack of ICT. Recommend a policy change and support for students will
2	Research Hotspots and Trends in Digitalisation in Higher Education	Zhao and Zhou (2024)	Digitalisation enables broader access to learning. Identifies that the digital divide and unequal access are critical issues in promoting equity in universities
3	Practices, Challenges and Opportunities of Inclusive Curriculum Implementation	Pillay (2022)	COVID-19 revealed gaps in inclusivity. Advocates for the curriculum design to address learner diversity that highlights the needs of the students and social justice.
4	Inclusivity and Diversity: A Systematic Review in Higher Education Marketing	Riedel et al. (2023).	The practical strategies include using tech to support inclusion. Diversifying the curriculum and including diversity-focused projects and activities.
5	Study on the Impact of Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace	Shivani Wadhwa and Parth Aggarwal (2023)	Indicates tangible effects of diversity and inclusion in organisations. Emphasise the need for strategic diversity policies and inclusion at the decision-making level.
6	Equity/Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Universities: The Case of Disabled People	Wolbring and Lillywhite (2021).	Limited focus on disabled people in EDI strategies. Expose systemic oversight Calls for intersectional and inclusive policy and academic engagement with disability in universities.
7	Reimagining Institutional Culture for a Socially Just University	Luvalo (2024)	The institutional culture is shown to reflect often historic inequalities that hinder transformation. Culture ought to be inclusive by recognising diverse values essential for equity.

8	Exclusion, diversity and inclusion. Inclusion in Southern African education: Understanding, challenges and enablement	Kanyopa (2023)	Explores the historical and systematic roots of exclusion in Southern African education systems Critiques diversity that is superficially addressed without structural reform Emphasises management of equity, diversity and inclusion
9	Managing and regulating commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion in higher education.	Scott (2020)	Analyses how higher education institutions respond to the policy framework on equity, diversity and inclusivity, showing tension between performative compliance and genuine transformation. Recommends transition beyond policy rhetoric through active leadership, resource allocation and a relook at the core strategic and governance processes
10	The Heterosexualised University Cultures: Exploring Strategies of Inclusive Higher Education Environments for LGBTQIA+ Students.	Makhanya, Ngubane and Sithole (2025).	Proposes strategies for fostering inclusive academic and social environments Emphasise the importance of curriculum reform, inclusive policies, sensitisation training and safe spaces to support LGBTQIA+ equity and belonging.
11	Educational leadership for equality, diversity and inclusion in curricula design.	Tsapayi and Samuel (2023)	Explore the role of educational leadership in embedding equity, diversity and inclusivity principles in curriculum design. Strategies include co-creation, contextual relevance and transformative pedagogy. Recommends inclusive curriculum design as a key for addressing inequalities
12	Leadership Strategies for Ensuring Equity and Inclusion in Digital Learning Environments.	Ngqunguza, Seleke and Makhoba (2024).	Examines how digital transformation can widen or bridge the equity gap in higher education. This depends on leadership strategies, infrastructure and support Recommends inclusive digital leadership
13	Equality, diversity and inclusion in the South African workplace: the	Ruggunan, Pillay and Dayaram (2022)	Look at the gap between legislation and implementation on EDI and show how compliance often overrides transformation. Show the limitations of relying on legal frameworks only

	paradox of legislation.		Advocates for an organisation culture that has authentic inclusion, accountability and transformation
14	Who will save diversity? Ethics and effectiveness in EDI implementation	Okoli (2024)	Investigates the ethical dilemmas that organisations face when implementing equity, diversity and inclusion policies Emphasise ethics, accountability and context-sensitive strategies Encourages institutional self-evaluation on policy
15	EDI in new student enrolment: Transforming undergraduate university admissions.	Verkerk. (2023)	Investigate how traditional universities' admissions often reinforce structural inequalities. Recommends reimagining admissions to counter systemic biases Advocates for context-based assessments and holistic reviews
16	HE Curriculum and Inclusion. In Inclusive Education in South African Further and Higher Education: Reflections on Equity, Access, and Inclusion	Sitoyi and Buthelezi (2025)	Analyse how curriculum design in higher education influences access and inclusion and identify barriers. Emphasise inclusive curricula for promoting equity and diversity Recommended contextualised teaching strategies that have culturally responsive content

## Discussion of Findings

### Challenges South African universities face in implementing adequate EDI strategies.

Findings revealed that most South African universities face multiple challenges in implementing adequate EDI strategies. Reviewed literature stipulated challenges such as inadequate funding, historical inequalities, resistance to change, and poor management of transformation within institutional cultures, which bring difficulty in implementing adequate EDI of students and staff (Damoah et al., 2023; Luvalo, 2024; Ngqunguza, 2024). It was mentioned that funding constraints impact resource allocation and the ability to implement targeted interventions for adequate EDI in South African universities (Kanyopa, 2023; Scott, 2020). Additionally, deeply entrenched administrative structures and a lack of diversity at leadership levels hinder inclusive decision-making (Hoffman et al., 2019; Wadhwa & Parth Aggarwal, 2023; Tsapayi & Samuel, 2023).

In congruence, some South African scholars argue that historical inequalities and the legacy of apartheid are the leading causes of ineffective EDI in South African universities (Ngqunguza et al., 2024; Scott, 2020). Further, the findings of this study revealed a lack of resources and insufficient stakeholders' preparation, which are other challenges in implementing EDI strategies in South African universities. The findings of this study also

affirm that these factors continue to affect access and success rates for historically disadvantaged students who face financial challenges, poor academic preparations, and exclusionary institutional cultures in higher education contexts.

On the other hand, this study also found resistance to change in implementing EDI strategies, which requires addressing deeply ingrained institutional values, norms and cultures that may resist change. This resistance can manifest in various ways, including a lack of leadership commitment, resistance to challenging established hierarchies, and prioritising efficiency over inclusive decision-making (Ruggunan et al., 2022; Strydom & Fourie, 2018). Additionally, findings of this study revealed administrative and structural inefficiencies as another challenge in implementing EDI strategies in South African universities. It was mentioned that administrative structures prioritising compliance and hierarchy can slow decision-making and hinder the implementation of EDI strategies (Luyalo, 2024; Sitoyi & Buthelezi, 2025). This can lead to a misalignment between administrative structures and the needs of higher education institutions, leading to challenges in effectively addressing issues of EDI. A possible means of mitigating this is the application of transformational leadership (Bass & Riggio, 2006), which entails empowering stakeholders and upholding ethical and inclusive behaviour.

Managing the transformation agenda, especially in the prevailing context of digital transformation and focusing on EDI, becomes critical. Transformation management in the digital age must focus on equitable access to technology so that no student population is marginalised (Ngqunguza, 2024). This requires intellectual stimulation and inspirational motivation, characterising transformative leadership, and providing innovation, vision, and inspiration. Furthermore, management of EDI would include embedding these principles in curriculum design through co-creation, contextual relevance and transformative pedagogy (Tsamayi & Samuels, 2023). These authors recommend that university leaders use inclusive curriculum design through participatory practices and integration of diverse content to address inequalities.

In essence, findings from this study also suggested that a lack of diversity at leadership levels contributes to the challenges of implementing EDI in South African universities, because the absence of diverse representation in leadership positions limits the effectiveness of EDI efforts. Okoli (2024) mentioned that most decision makers at leadership levels may lack the diverse lived experiences and perspectives necessary to understand and address the needs of diverse student and staff populations. This study's findings affirm that conflicting priorities in balancing competing priorities, such as quality, equity, and access, can be challenging for South African universities in implementing EDI strategies. Prioritising one over the other can have unintended consequences in any efforts made, as others may embrace negativity towards diversity and inclusion whilst, uphold prejudices and negative attitudes towards equity, diversity and inclusion which results to the hostile environment for marginalised groups, making it difficult for them to feel included and supported (Bonti-Ankomah, 2020; Tsapayi & Samuel, 2023).

## **Theme two: Best practices and proposed contextually relevant strategies for strengthening EDI management in South African universities.**

To strengthen and effectively manage EDI in South African universities, this study emphasises that institutions must adopt intentional, sustained, and context-specific strategies that address historical legacies and current systemic inequalities. This can be achieved by being inclusive in decision-making structures, as espoused by Shivani Wadhwa and Parth Aggarwal (2023). Findings from this theme revealed best practices and strategies that account for the country's historical, social, and institutional context. This study's findings stipulate that universities' leadership should enhance their commitment and accountability, establishing strong, visible management to EDI principles in their daily practices (Ruggunan, Pillay & Dayaram, 2022). The leadership become role models that provide idealised influence as defined in transformational leadership (Burn, 1978). This implies that South African university leadership should consistently articulate and model inclusive values in institutional policies, public engagements, and decision-making by embedding EDI policy goals in the performance contracts from the highest level of Chancellors, vice-chancellors, deans, senior managers and lecturers (Okoli, 2024; Tsapayi & Samuel, 2023). By so doing, this will develop accountability frameworks that measure leadership performance on transformation indicators and create management systems and leadership positions with authority to influence institutional planning and evaluation of EDI daily.

Furthermore, this study's findings assert that data-driven decision-making is the best practice in managing EDI in South African universities. This study affirmed on using disaggregated data to inform planning, track progress, and identify inequity, discrimination and inclusion in higher education contexts. It is argued that this would develop and strengthen institutional dashboards that track EDI in aspects such as race, gender, ethnic groups, language and nationality representation across all levels (Damoah et al., 2023; Pillay, 2022). Contextually, conducting regular climate surveys to gauge issues on equity, diversity, and inclusivity will address issues such as racism, xenophobia, and gender-based violence, whilst institutions will be able to use critical evidence from monitoring tools to inform budgeting, staffing, and student support initiatives (Verkerk, 2023).

This study also revealed that curriculum transformation and inclusive pedagogy as another strategy for effectively managing EDI in South African universities. It is believed that this will contribute to the national efforts on decolonising and diversifying the higher education curriculum to reflect multiple knowledge systems and lived experiences. This study's findings emphasise the importance of reviewing higher education curricula and including South African indigenous knowledge, epistemologies and critical perspectives on race, gender, and class in South African society. This goes hand in hand with the provision of training to academic staff in implementing inclusive teaching methods that consider multilingualism, learning disabilities, and socio-economic backgrounds, also to encourage participatory curriculum development with students and marginalised stakeholders (Zhao, 2024; Zhao & Zhou, 2024).

More importantly, this study articulates that developing comprehensive and coherent inclusive policies that intentionally promote EDI across all university functions will ease the implementation and management of its' strategies in South African universities. It is believed

that reviewing and revising existing policies to eliminate apartheid legacies will eliminate implicit biases and systemic exclusion (Batisai et al., 2022; Govender, 2024). As evidenced in research by Makoelle and Mosito (2025) that promotion of inclusive university events, cultural days, and dialogues that celebrate diversity and challenge prejudice not only strengthen reporting mechanisms and protection for well-being on issues of racism, sexual harassment, and bullying, but also it establishes safe learning environment, particularly for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and intersex (LGBTQI+) students, survivors of violence, and international students (Makhanya et al., 2025; Sitoyi & Buthelezi, 2025).

## Conclusion

In conclusion, managing EDI in South African universities is both a national imperative and a moral responsibility rooted in the broader transformation agenda. Despite progress, deep-rooted structural and systemic challenges persist, hindering meaningful change. This study highlighted the need for committed leadership, context specific strategies, and a shift from symbolic compliance to transformative practice. Effective EDI management must move beyond policy to focus on implementation, accountability, and institutional culture change. By embedding EDI at the core of their mission, universities can foster inclusion, advance social justice, and position themselves as globally competitive and socially responsive institutions.

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## SCHOOL COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP AND ACADEMIC STAFF PRODUCTIVITY IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, LAGOS STATE

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### **Abstract**

*The study examined the school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos state tertiary educational institutions, Lagos, Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions, three hypotheses were formulated which were tested at 0.05 level of significance, using Pearson product moment correlation analysis (SPSS) version 24.0. The theoretical anchorage of the study is system theory. The research design adopted was descriptive research design of correlation type. The population of the study was 1664 Academic staff of three institutions. The sample was selected using multi-stage sampling procedure and simple random sampling technique. A self-structured questionnaire was used to collect data. The findings revealed that the school community relationship existing in Lagos state tertiary institutions was inadequate, biased and unfavourable to staff productivity. The study therefore, recommended among others that there should be adequate good rapport between the community leaders, parents and the academic staff and management of the institutions. There should be more effort geared towards community involvement and engagement in the affairs, which will enhance academic staff productivity.*

**Keywords:** school community, academic staff productivity, school community relationship

### **Introduction**

The school is a formal organisation, established for the primary purpose of imparting knowledge and changing individual's orientation, perception about issues and life also acquiring skills, values and promoting personal and societal development. It is of utmost importance, that the school ranging from primary, secondary to tertiary should have cordial interpersonal relationship with its host community. Having good interpersonal relationship with people or groups at places of work, family, community is crucial to human functioning and cohabitation. A good interpersonal relationship fosters mutual understanding, trust, respect, empathy and successful communication. This relationship play a significant role in our emotional, well-being, social support and overall quality of life and perhaps, enhance productivity.

The school- community relations, however, could be viewed as a meaningful interaction via the school and its host community, with a view to ensuring its promotion and sustenance as well as achieving necessary goals for mutual benefits. In other words, it is the

relationship that must exist among the school as a social system and its immediate and larger communities of its external environment (Etor in Gideon, 2020). Such relationship nevertheless, involves maintaining healthy links between the school personnel, students, teachers and administrators, including people within the immediate and larger community such as Community Leaders, Local Associations, Businesses, Parents, and other stake-holders in the education sector (Gideon, 2020). The relationship between the school and the community is of mutual benefits, the community has the land where the school is located and the school helps to improve the community and its people, thereby making it a symbiotic relationship. Ogbonna as cited by Okosun, Isabu and Asemhokhai (2023) defines the school-community relationship as a set of pre-planned activities and media that the school uses to understand its community, inform it about its goals, programs, issues, and needs, and interpret them when necessary. It also involves the community in the development of school policies and in assessing its performance. Its performance will be hinged on the community's readiness to partner with the school in a peaceful and friendly environment. In the same vein, a cordial community relation affects the academic staff positively, while a hostile community relation, affect the academic staff negatively, it is when there is peace in the community where the institution is located, that academic activities can take place. This is directly linked with how productive the academic staff are.

The academic staff productivity is the rate at which academic staff achieve individual given objectives in-line with the institution goal achievement (Ifenaike, 2023). Ifenaike (2023), asserts that productivity contains key elements which include continuous improvement of performance, measurability of improvement, efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, productivity is the output of goods and services per unit of resources used in the production process or optimizing employee outputs to the goals of the organisation by managing talents and abilities simultaneously with job environment and employee morale.

Despite the importance and positive effect that a symbiotic relationship between the school community and the educational institutions may contribute towards enhancing academic staff productivity, there is a perceived loophole in some institution's relationship with their host community. In a situation where an educational institution's leadership fail to put in place modalities and strategies to foster partnership and cordiality with the surrounding communities, where recognition is not accorded to the leadership of the community or the lack of involvement of the community in the institution's activities such as convocation ceremonies, awards of honorary degrees and so on, thereby, leading to a breakdown in the academic activities, consequently, academic staff productivity.

### **Research Questions**

- i.** What is the correlation of school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos state tertiary educational institutions?
- ii.** What are the different strategies that can be employed to improve school community relationship in Lagos state tertiary educational institutions, Lagos state?

## **Hypotheses**

The following null research hypotheses have been formulated to serve as guide to the study

H0<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant correlation of school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos state tertiary educational institutions, Lagos state.

H0<sub>2</sub>: There are no significant correlation between strategies that can be employed to improve school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos state tertiary educational institutions, Lagos state.

## **Theoretical Anchorage**

The study was anchored on the system theory also known as general system theory (GST), it provides a framework for understanding complex entities by viewing them as interconnected parts within a larger system. The school as a system is complex with interconnected components (staff, students, school administrators and the community). The community as an external component influences the school system either positively or negatively. A strong community relationship can enhance staff morale, motivation and productivity.

## **School Conceptualised**

To Okosun et al (2023) a school is described as a structured setting where academic programs are applied. It is regarded as a structured organization that acts as a bridge between the family and society. In Nigeria, there are three major stages of education: elementary schools, secondary schools, and postsecondary institutions. These three levels of education are where children are educated to act as adults in society. Also, Mishra (2017), sees school as a training centre which helps develop pupils into an efficient social being and train them to further educate the backward members of their society. The school will serve as a society in miniature, a small but ideal community. It will be a model for the society around. It will be the peoples' school, but at the same time, it will give new direction to the people and community. It will also act as a watchdog against social degeneration, it will enhance the community as a whole (Sidhu, 2017).

## **What is a Community?**

A community is a term used to describe a group of people who reside in a certain location, region, or nation and who share the same culture, traditions, religion, and occupation. Examples of communities include those that are related to schools, ethnic groups, and farming. It may also be described as a group of individuals with a desire to cooperate, who have a shared cultural and historical history and who reside in the same area (Anugwom 2010 in Okosun, 2023). Bray (2023), posits that community is a collection of people who have common agenda, interest, who collaborate by sharing ideas, information and other resources with the school for mutual benefits, for instance: school's host community, non-governmental organisations, parents-teachers' associations, individuals and security agencies etc. There is no common definition of community and its function in education of developing countries. If there is a school within a walking distance for most people, school community is likely to overlap with the geographical community. However, this is hardly the case in many developing countries.

### **Concept of School Community Relationship**

Nwankwo, Nwokafor, Ogunsan & Ighalo (2015) assert that School is an open system and a social organisation which thrive on the effective interrelationship within it and with its relevant communities. What happens in a school affects the community and what happens in the community affects school. To Okorie, Ememe & Egu (2019), school community relationship is a complementary arrangement through which the school and the community collaborate with each other for the realisation of goals of the community and vice versa. It is the degree of understanding and goodwill, which exists between the school and the community.

School too is a part of the community, it is created by the community and it exists for serving the community. A school is thus epitome of society. It reflects the community itself. All the students enrolled in a school come from the community and form a community. The student community is created by a large community consisting of homes and parents and school is entrusted with the responsibility of all round development and socialization of children so that they can become socially useful and responsible members of the emerging community. The school can thus be taken as an organised and compact community. You might have observed that one characteristic of community is that it is not static but dynamic, it is always changing. Traditional practices which stand in the way of development need to be modified or changed and the community keeps on changing them. That is why we say that habits, beliefs, practices and attitudes of people change over time. For example, our ideas about the caste system in India have changed a lot. School too brings about changes in attitudes, habits, ideas and thinking of the students. School also promotes and supports positive social change. Usually, school does not initiate change, it rather interprets change. It can, through its various activities, create awareness about the need for change and measures to be taken to affect it (School Community Relationship, n.d.).

School-community relationship can be utilized to:

1. expose the student to actual work situations in the community.
2. help students develop positive attitudes and values in their relationship with community.
3. correlating and supplementing theoretical learning with real life experiences.
4. enabling students to develop skills of observation, investigation, learning by doing etc.
5. developing communication skills among students.
6. develop qualities of cooperation, self-help, helping others, adjustment, tolerance, democratic values etc. among the students.

### **Concept of Productivity in the Tertiary Educational Institutions**

Darra in Ifenaike (2023), asserts that in studying productivity, it is important to measure output directly and not make assumptions about what the case must be. For any measurement of productivity, administrators need to decide what level or levels of the organisation's productivity should be measured. For example, is it the productivity of an individual, say a professor or an administrative assistant, or the productivity of an academic department or a university as a whole? Tertiary education's productivity is crucial at many levels. At one level, it is about the realisation of individual potential and personal success and achieving that in an

appropriate time frame. At another level, it is achieving government investment plan and distribution on education. At a third level, Productivity in tertiary education may be related to government achieving a peaceful and cohesive social structure. Education Fast Forward (2012). Also, measuring productivity in tertiary education requires a measure of both efficiency and effectiveness. Efficiency is often measured using ratios, such as physical output relative to an input or money cost of an input relative to an output. Efficiency ratios such as enrolment per section or contact hours per faculty member are reasonable and useful. Measuring effectiveness can be difficult, though not impossible. One way to measure effectiveness is to assess community or client conditions and benchmark them to community standards or those standards of other institutions of higher learning. An example could be the number of graduates who find a job within three months of graduation. Another option is to measure accomplishments, such as the number of graduates or the percentage of students taking a class that requires relatively advanced work, such as technical research paper. The number of graduates going on to receive advanced degrees is an alternative measure. Finally, client satisfaction is a third avenue to measure effectiveness. Clients can include alumni or businesses that frequently hire a university's graduates.

### **Correlation of School Community Relationship and Academic Staff Productivity**

According to Nakpodia (2013), a community can learn about the school's strengths and weaknesses and find ways to strengthen the areas where the school is deficient for the achievement of educational objectives through a positive working relationship with the school manager and the entire school community. Monday (2019), asserts that since schools are designed to meet social requirements, a positive connection between the school and the community it is essential. It is believed that the school cannot advance without the support of its community based on the contribution of the communities and the National Policy on Education provision for community engagement in secondary school management. School-community relationship has as its central focus on the enhancement of teaching and learning. All the activities of the school in relation to significant such as the host community, PTA, public, the ministry of education or the professional staff refer to this relationship which should ultimately contribute to educational growth (Lumsdane & Lumsdane, 2000; Ejieh, 2007).

### **Some Strategies to Improve School Community Relationship Hence, Academic Staff Productivity**

School should have basic information about the community. This should include factual data about population, living conditions, recreational facilities, available economic conditions, industries, community beliefs, value, tradition, customs.

The school should also know how the community reacts to new ideas; it should have, information about people, their competence to participate in various educational and welfare oriented programmes, their aspirations, leadership or power structure, relationship among formal groups; mass media and various means of communication that serve the community. Knowledge of areas of ignorance between school and community too can be quite helpful in building up meaningful school-community relationship.

The needs of the youth and adults may be studied to develop suitable need-based programmes for them. This task can be accomplished over a long period and needs to be revised and updated periodically as changes occur in society and the community. Moreover, this information has to be more elaborate and comprehensive than what the school needs because it has a bearing on the teacher's understanding of the pupils and on the process of developing a programme to meet their needs.

Educational institutions need to have frequent and consistent two-way communication with families and community members. Standard methods include website information, text messages, written notes, e-mails, phone calls, printed materials, and face-to-face meetings. Additionally, families and community members should have access to multiple platforms (e.g., school websites and hotlines) where they can ask questions, provide comments and concerns, and suggest improvements to school administrators with rapid response time. (School Community Relationship, n.d)

## **Methodology**

The study adopted a descriptive survey design of correlation type. The population of the study consist of all Academic staff of the Lagos state tertiary educational institutions, Lagos. These Institutions are Lagos State University, Ojo (LASU); Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Michael Otedola College of Education now Lagos State University of Education, Oto-Ijanikin (LASUED); Lagos State Polytechnic now Lagos State University of Science and Technology, Ikorodu (LASUSTECH).

Five faculties\schools were selected from each Institution using simple random sampling technique. Also, purposive sampling technique was used to select 20 academic staff and 5 HODS from each of the selected Faculties, graduate assistants were purposively exempted from the selection because they may not have stayed long in the system. Thus, the respondents from these faculties\schools were 375 Lecturers. However, 346 administered questionnaires were retrieved and used for the study. The research instrument used for this study is a self-structured questionnaires titled: school community relationship and academic staff productivity (SCRASP). The Likert rating scale was adopted for both Questionnaires with 4 points for the option strongly agree (SA), 3 points for Agree (A), 2points for Disagree (D), 1point for Strongly disagree (SD). The research instrument were subjected to test- retest reliability test

## **Results and Findings**

### **Hypothesis One:**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant correlation of school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos state tertiary educational institutions, Lagos state.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Analysis was conducted between school community relationship and academic staff productivity. The scores of responses of items on school community relationships were computed and used as a single

variable to correlate the sum of scores of items on academic staff productivity. The result is presented in Table 2.

**Table 1: School Community Relationship and Academic Staff Productivity in Lagos State Tertiary Educational Institutions**

			School community relationship	Academic staff productivity
School relationship	community	Pearson Correlation	1	.015
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.914
		N	294	52
Academic productivity	staff	Pearson Correlation	.015	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.914	
		N	52	52

The result of the test performed indicates that there is a very weak, positive and non-significant correlation between school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos State Tertiary Educational Institutions ( $r = 0.015$ ,  $N = 346$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). The implication of this is that there is a positive influence of school community relationship on academic staff productivity. This shows that school community relationship do correlate to academic staff productivity to a very low extent though the correlation is not significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is not rejected, hence, there is no significant correlation between school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos State Tertiary Educational Institutions.

### **Hypothesis Two**

$H_{02}$ : There are no significant correlation between strategies that can be employed to improve school community relationship and academic staff productivity in Lagos state tertiary educational institutions, Lagos state.

In order to test the hypothesis, Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Analysis was conducted between school community relationship strategies and academic staff productivity. The scores of responses of items on school community relationship strategies were computed and used as a single variable to correlate the sum of scores of items on academic staff productivity. The result is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Correlation between Strategies that can be Employed to Improve School Community Relationship and Academic Staff Productivity in Lagos State Tertiary Educational Institutions, Lagos State.**

			School community relationship strategies	Academic staff productivity
School community relationship strategies		Pearson Correlation	1	-.242
		Sig. (2-tailed)		.085
		N	294	52
Academic staff productivity		Pearson Correlation	-.242	1
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.085	
		N	52	52

Table 2 shows that there is a negative and non-significant correlation between school community strategies and academic staff productivity in Lagos State Tertiary Educational Institutions ( $r = -0.242$ ,  $N = 346$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). This implies that school community relation strategies do not significantly influence academic staff productivity in Lagos State Tertiary Educational Institutions, Nigeria. Therefore, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between school community relation strategies and academic staff productivity in Lagos State Tertiary Educational Institutions is hereby not rejected.

## Conclusion

The relationship between the school and the community is a symbiotic one, as such the school is situated in the community and both benefit a lot from each other. The school should as much as possible imbibe the culture of the community, have information about the beliefs, traditions, and way of life of the people, the dos and don'ts, the rulers and important members of the community and so on. This in effect will assist the school to develop a robust curriculum which will take into cognisance all the above thereby leading to a peaceful co-existence, more investment from the community such as endowment funds from influential members of the community to the school, supports of the community to the school programmes and so on, these would make academic staff to have confidence and boost their morale which in turn will enhance their productivity, cumulating in production of seasoned graduates who will enhance the cultural, political, social and economic development of the community.

## Recommendations

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

- vi. Effective communication should be established between the community and the tertiary institutions to facilitate mutual understanding, thereby assisting in motivating academic staff to be more productive.
- vii. The school and community should have representatives who will be meeting regularly to resolve conflicts and exchange ideas on social and academic needs of the community.

viii. The school should involve the community in town and gown occasions of the school such as matriculations, convocation ceremonies, inaugural lectures, visitation of the visitor and so on, this help create better understanding of roles of the school to community and vice versa.

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## EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG CAPACITY BUILDING, EQUAL OPPORTUNITY, AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF UNIVERSITY NON-TEACHING STAFF IN SOUTH WEST, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*This study examines how capacity building and equal opportunity influence Job Performance of University Non-teaching staff in South West, Nigeria. A total of 631 senior non-teaching staff were randomly selected. Job Performance Questionnaire and Human Resource Management Practices Questionnaire were used to collect data. In Section 'A', respondents' gender, educational background, type of institution attended, years of work experience, job title, department, and rank were listed. Section B addresses capacity building and equal opportunity, while section C has 20 questions on items including mastery of job topic, output quality, promptness in responding to official affairs like emails and memoranda, and promptness in addressing staff and student requests. To analyse quantitative data collected, Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) and Multiple Regression Analysis were used to answer the research questions at 0.05 level of significance. Results indicated that job performance of the senior non-teaching staff of the universities is rated to be very good. There is positive significant relationship between capacity building and job performance ( $r = 0.069$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). There is a significant relationship between equal opportunity and job performance ( $r = 0.149$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). It was recommended that public universities should pay attention to these practices with the aim of continual improvement of job performance of senior non-teaching staff.*

**Keywords:** Capacity Building, Equal Opportunity, Job Performance, University Non-teaching staff

### **Introduction**

Employee job performance plays a crucial role in determining any organization effectiveness, it is a key factor that determines its success and overall outcomes, as it directly contributes to the organization's ability to achieve its stated goals and objectives. As a result, the most effective method for achieving overall performance in any organization is to consistently work toward improving the performance of its employees on their jobs. Regardless of the services that are offered, it is essential for any organization that has the objective of achieving optimal performance and remaining a key player in its field for an extended period of time to pay sufficient attention to performance.

When it comes to job performance, it has been described as a measurement of how well organizations are managed, as well as the value that they provide to consumers and other stakeholders (Charles, 2015). Therefore, the performance of employees on the job is a representation of the value of the organization by utilizing the individual contributions produced by the organization's efficient and effective management of all of its resources. Similarly, according to Magnus and Popoola (2016), performance is considered to be investigated based on the behaviors and attitudes that an employee engages in as a means of contributing to the accomplishment of organizational or institutional objectives. As a consequence of this, the actions and attitudes that an employee exhibits in the course of his or her work are the obvious dispositions that are pertinent to the goals and objectives of the organization or the institution.

Work performance is a multi-faceted concept that can be measured. In accordance with the assertion made by Jayeola, Faloye, Owoeye, Olatunji, and Yahaya (2021), performance is examined based on task performance, which is being referred to as the capability of an employee to carry out core particular activities as outlined in their job description. That is, official actions and activities that are undertaken in order to accomplish the primary task, which consists of fulfilling assigned responsibilities, completing assigned duties, and carrying out tasks that are expected of employees (including administrative, executive, professional, and technical official duties for senior non-teaching staff). The term "contextual performance" refers to activities that contribute or support organizational outcomes in ways that are not related to core job functions. Some examples of contextual performance include demonstrating commitment and cooperation with co-workers, providing selfless service outside of job specifications, and working with others to complete organizational tasks. Adaptive performance, on the other hand, refers to the ability of employees to adapt to changes with and within the workplace that result in positive outcomes and enhance career success (Park and Park, 2018).

According to Wachira (2016), capacity building is a process that facilitates the provision of employees with the proper knowledge and adequate skills necessary to achieve the objectives of the organization. Employees would be able to make the essential positive contribution to the success of the organization in terms of good job performance if they were given the opportunity to participate in appropriate capacity development activities. Increasing performance, productivity, knowledge, loyalty, and contribution are just some of the characteristics that may be improved by providing employees with the appropriate training at the appropriate time which are of advantage to the organization at the long run. According to the research conducted by Shanti et al. (2012), capacity development is seen to be an ongoing endeavour that is designed to enhance the competency and performance of employees. Within this framework, employees are provided with the opportunity to update their knowledge and abilities while also utilizing their creativity to enhance the organization. This is applicable to the non-teaching staff which, if they were to master their tasks or duties through regular training, on-the-job training, and retraining, can result in improved performance and the accomplishment of the general aims and objectives of the university.

According to Prakash (2011), when employees take pleasure in capacity building, there is a consistent improvement in their performance. As a result, the scholar suggested that capacity building should be a primary emphasis of any organization that intends to improve the performance of its employees, including universities. Additionally, Nwankwo, Olabisi, and Onwuchekwa (2017) found that there is a favorable correlation between capacity building and the performance of employees. When the senior non-teaching staff is not provided with the required capacity development to learn, relearn, and unlearn on the job, it is quite likely that this will result in low morale, stagnation, and under productivity, all of which are symptoms of a lack of performance. As a result of the aforementioned, it is thought that every university has to concentrating on and enhancing the capacity building of senior non-teaching staff which can possibly result in the expected result of enhanced performance.

Workplace Gender Equality Agency (2013), there is a growing trend in the research that implies that organizations that respect and place importance on diversity are in a better position to attract and retain high-performing employees, as well as increase performance. In order to achieve success in any organization that is competitive, it is essential for such organization to provide equal opportunities among all of its employees, regardless of their gender, in order to improve the overall performance. It is possible to attain equality when individuals are able to gain access to and take use of the same opportunities, resources, and rewards. The senior non-teaching staff is comprised of both male and female employees, and they should be granted equal rights to the resources and possibilities offered by the university, including welfare package options, incentives, opportunity for seminar, conferences or workshop among other things. This would foster love, unity, and team-work among them, which might ultimately lead to improved job performance. When senior non-teaching staff in universities are subjected to a situation in which there is a preference for one staff member over another on the basis of sex, age, colour, religion, and other factors, it is anticipated that their job performance will be put in jeopardy. Lack of performance on the part of senior non-teaching staff could pose a threat to the advancement of any university. This is because when senior non-teaching staff perceives that a particular staff or some sets of staff are being preferred, this can lead to feelings of envy, bitterness, and strife, all of which are serious threats to job performance.

The performance of employees would invariably improve if a university's policy focus was favourable towards experience, expertise, and qualification. This would be accomplished by putting the appropriate peg in the appropriate hole, regardless of factors such as gender, age, colour, religion, or political attitude. The performance of employees is shown to improve when equal opportunities are encouraged in organizations (including universities), according to the findings of a number of research that have developed evidence suggesting this. According to Forth and Rincon-Aznar (2008), the performance of employees was increased when they were given equal opportunities in their organizations. Despite the fact that it appears that there is no specific work that has been conducted to investigate how the promotion of equal opportunity at work would affect the job performance of senior non-teaching staff of universities, this researcher is of the opinion that if equal opportunity is promoted among senior non-teaching

staff of Nigerian universities, particularly in terms of their advancement on the job among other things, there would be an improvement in their job performance.

### **Research questions**

Research Question 1: What is the level of job performance of senior non-teaching staff in public universities in Southwestern Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated and tested in this study:

$H_01$ : There is no significant relationship between capacity building and job performance of senior non-teaching staff of public universities in southwestern Nigeria.

$H_02$ : There is no significant relationship between equal opportunity and job performance of senior non-teaching staff of public universities in southwestern Nigeria.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design of correlational type to sought and establish the relationship that exist between the independent and dependent variables. The study sample was drawn across public universities in southwestern states of Nigeria. This sample, thus drawn, formed the respondents in the study on which the research instruments were administered. The independent variables in this study are capacity building and equal opportunity while the dependent variable is job performance of senior non-teaching staff which is measured by mastery of job content, output of work, quality of work, prompt responses to official matters, and prompt responses to staff and students' official requests. The instruments covered all the identified variables in the study. The target population of the study consisted of 10,348 senior non-teaching staff of both the federal and state universities in southwestern Nigeria. This population was in focus because of the significant role the senior non-teaching staff plays in the achievement of university goals and objectives. Again, in most universities, the population of the non-teaching staff are often more, thus, this population cannot be underplayed in the attainment of universities' vision and mission. The study adopted the multi-stage sampling procedure. In the first stage, the simple random sampling technique was adopted to select of five out of six states which represented eighty percent (80%) of states in Southwestern Nigeria. In the second stage, stratified random sampling technique was used to group federal and state universities into strata. Four federal universities were selected out of six and six state universities out of ten universities which represented sixty percent (60%) of universities in Southwestern Nigeria. The third stage involved the selection of senior non-teaching staff in each sampled university using proportionate to size sampling technique. A total of 631 respondents were selected out of 6,315 which represented 10% of total numbers of senior non-teaching staff. Three research instruments were constructed for this study: Human Resources Management Practices Questionnaire (HRMPQ) was adapted from literature to elicit responses from senior non-teaching staff members. Contains items on capacity building, and equal opportunity. HRMPQ is in four-point scale format consisting of responses of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD) which are ranked

4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Senior Non-Teaching Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (SNTSJPQ) is the second instrument which was adapted from the harmonised annual performance evaluation reports of sampled public universities to elicit responses from senior non-teaching staff. Contains 20 items on the job performance of senior non-teaching staff in terms of their display of mastery of job content, output of their work, quality of work, prompt responses to official matters such as mails, memos, and prompt responses to both staff and students' requests. SNTSJPQ is in five Likert scale format with five options of responses: Excellent (E), Very Good (VG), Good (G), Fair (F) and Poor (P), ranked 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The instruments were subjected to Cronbach's Alpha reliability test, which yielded the following results: Human Resource Management Practices Questionnaire (HRMPQ) on Capacity Building scale indicated ( $r = 0.951$ ); Equal Opportunity scale showed ( $r = 0.919$ ) and Job performance showed ( $r = 0.927$ ). To measure the relationship between the independent and dependent variables, analyse for quantitative data collected, simple percentage and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were used to answer the research questions and test the hypotheses  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

## Results

**Research Question 1:** What is the level of job performance of senior non-teaching staff in public universities in Southwestern Nigeria?

To answer this research question, descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and weighted average was used. Table 1 presents the summary of the analysis.

**Table1: Level of Job Performance of Senior Non-teaching Staff in Public Universities in Southwestern Nigeria**

S/N	Items	N	Mean	Std. D.	Remark
1.	Staff members under me are committed to doing quality work in my university	631	4.25	0.785	Excellent
2.	Senior non-teaching staff under my supervision have mastery of their job content	631	4.08	0.897	Excellent
3.	Performance of the senior non-teaching has made it possible for my university to achieve its goals and objectives	631	4.04	0.808	Excellent
4.	Performance is not a problem of senior non-teaching staff members because they are up to their tasks in my University.	631	3.99	0.869	Very good
5.	Senior non-teaching staff in my university are outstanding in their performance	631	3.99	0.874	Very good
6.	Senior non-teaching staff performance in my University encourage teamwork	631	3.98	0.890	Very good
7.	Senior non-teaching staff in my university are of good character	631	3.98	0.938	Very good

8.	The senior non-teaching staff are quick in attending to students requests	631	3.97	0.884	Very good
9.	Senior non-teaching staff in my university have determination to carry task through to the end	631	3.97	0.836	Very good
10.	The senior non-teaching staff are competent in taking minutes of meetings	631	3.93	0.813	Very good
11.	Senior non-teaching staff carry out their duties timely	631	3.93	0.914	Very good
12.	Senior non-teaching staff easily accept responsibility	631	3.93	0.906	Very good
13.	Senior non-teaching staff are accurate in interpretation of university laws and policies	631	3.92	0.897	Very good
14.	Senior non-teaching staff members in my university have good relationship among themselves	631	3.92	0.930	Very good
15.	Staff under my supervision are very prompt in discharging their duties	631	3.90	0.917	Very good
16.	I am satisfied with the performance of senior non-teaching staff in my university	631	3.90	0.850	Very good
17.	Senior non-teaching staff under me provide solutions to anticipated problems areas on their job	631	3.87	0.846	Very good
18.	Senior non-teaching staff are punctual at work in my university	631	3.86	0.995	Very good
19.	Senior non-teaching staff are goal driven in my university	631	3.85	0.926	Very good
20.	The senior non-teaching staff under me perform even in the face of pressure	631	3.83	0.981	Very good
		<b>Weighted Average</b>	<b>3.76</b>	<b>Very good</b>	
			<b>(75.2%)</b>		

Mean range: 0.00- 1= poor; 1.1- 2.0= Fair; 2.1- 3.0= Good; 3.1- 4.0= Very good; 4.1- 5.0= Excellent

Table 1 shows that job performance of the senior non-teaching staff of the universities is rated to be very good. The weighted average gotten on the scale is 3.76 which can be graded as 75.2%. Some of the item analysis reveal the rating given to the staff as; Excellent (Mean = 4.25) in committed to doing quality work in their universities; Excellent (Mean = 4.08) in mastery of their job content; Excellent (Mean = 4.04) in performances that made it possible for their universities to achieve its goals and objectives; Very good (Mean = 3.99) in being up to their tasks in their universities; Very good (Mean = 3.99) in being outstanding in their performance; Very good (Mean = 3.98) in encouraging teamwork; Very good (Mean = 3.98) in being of good character; Very good (Mean = 3.97) in attending to students requests. The senior non-teaching staff members were rated to be very good most of the items in the table. Therefore, the answer to the research question is that the job performance of the senior non-teaching staff of the universities is rated to be very good.

## Test of Hypotheses

**Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation matrix involving all the Independent and Dependent Variables**

Variables	Mean scores	Job. P	Cap. B	Equ. Op
Job. P	3.76	1.000		
Cap. B.	3.07	0.069*	1.000	
Equ. Op	2.75	0.149*	0.555*	1.000

\*denotes significant at  $p<0.05$  level of significant

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between capacity building and job performance of senior non- teaching staff in public universities in southwestern Nigeria. To test this hypothesis, the correlation matrix involving all the variables is created. This is presented in Table 2:

Table 2 shows that there is significant relationship between capacity building and job performance ( $r = 0.069$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) of senior non- teaching staff in public universities in southwestern Nigeria. Therefore,  $H_{01}$  is rejected. The job performance of senior non-teaching staff members and capacity development in public universities in southwestern Nigeria are significantly correlated ( $r = 0.07$ ;  $p>0.05$ ) This shows that improving capacity development will help workers perform better at work.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is no significant relationship between equal opportunity and job performance of senior non- teaching staff in public universities in southwestern Nigeria.

Table 2 shows that there is a significant relationship between equal opportunity and job performance ( $r = 0.149$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) of senior non- teaching staff in public universities in southwestern Nigeria. Therefore,  $H_{02}$  is rejected. This implies that an increase in equal opportunity will bring about an increase in job performance of the staff.

### Discussion

Based on the results of this study, it was discovered that the degree of job performance of senior non-teaching staff members working in public universities in Southwestern Nigeria was found to be extremely good ( $\bar{x} = 3.76$ ). It can be inferred from the fact that the majority of the senior non-teaching staff members have a mean score of 3.76 that they have a strong belief in the concept of teamwork. This is a clear sign that they have utilized collaborative efforts in their work, as they have demonstrated a willingness and corporation that ensures everyone's efforts are valued. Also, they are interdependent individuals that collaborate in order to accomplish a common objective, which is something that can only be accomplished through the

establishment of positive working relationships among themselves. This finding is in line with the research reports of Inuwa and Muhammad (2016), which indicated a high level of job performance by non-teaching staff at Bauchi State University, Gadau, Nigeria, with a value of ( $\bar{x} = 3.82$ ). Additionally, Mendis and Weerakkody (2017) reported a high level of job performance among employees working in the Telecommunication Industry which is in line with the findings of this study.

According to the findings of the study, there exists a noteworthy correlation between capacity building and the job performance of senior non-teaching staff in universities located within the study area ( $r = 0.07$ ;  $p < 0.05$  respectively). The findings of the study conducted by Saifalislam, Osman, and AlQudah (2014), which demonstrated that capacity building has a substantial link with work performance, are in agreement with this interpretation. However, the findings of the current study contradict the findings of Naftal and Busienei (2015), who found that capacity building did have a substantial association with job performance in public universities in Kenya.

According to the findings of this study, there is a noteworthy correlation between equal opportunity and the job performance of senior non-teaching staff ( $r = 0.15$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). This finding is in agreement with the findings of Isaiah, Ojiabo, and Alagah (2017) as well as Alii, Yusoffii, and Ali (2019), which demonstrated that there is a strong significant association between equal opportunities and the dimensions of equal compensation, equal training, and recruitment selection on the performance of employees. The findings provided support for an organizational culture that encourages equal opportunities and in which there is no discrimination of any kind on the part of any of the employees. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that the senior non-teaching personnel will attain job performance as they embrace equal opportunity.

## Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of human resource management practices of capacity building and equal opportunity on the job performance of senior non-teaching staff in public universities in Southwestern Nigeria. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that capacity building and equal opportunity are important for effectiveness and efficiency in the job performance of senior non-teaching staff in public universities in Southwestern, Nigeria. The findings also indicated that significant relationship exist among human resource management practices and job performance. Hence, management of public universities in South West Nigeria should continuously engage the senior non-teaching staff in capacity building practices by periodic on-job training, seminars and workshops. lastly, the practices of equal opportunity among staff should be encouraged and uphold so as to strengthen unity and teamwork.

## Recommendations

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

The level of job performance of senior non-teaching staff should be sustained as it was found from this study that the job performance of senior non-teaching was very good, public universities should incorporate and strengthen the use of human resource management

practices as identified in this study to further enhance job performance of senior non-teaching staff. As referred from the study that equal opportunity had positive relative contribution to job performance, public universities should pay attention to this practice with the aim of continual improvement of job performance of senior non-teaching staff.

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## ACADEMIC STAFF TRAINING AND QUALITY ASSURANCE PRACTICES IN LAGOS STATE-OWNED UNIVERSITIES, NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR GLOBAL EDUCATION RANKING

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigates the relationship between academic staff training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria, and its implications for global education ranking. The study anchored on the Total Quality Management (TQM) theory which emphasizes continuous improvement and satisfaction that aligns with quality assurance practices in higher education. Three research questions were raised, and three null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a correlational design. The population of this study consisted of all 1,598 academic staff in Lagos State owned universities, Nigeria. A sample size of 300 academic staff was selected using disproportionate and simple random sampling technique. Two research instruments titled 'Academic Staff Training Questionnaire' (ASTQ) and 'Quality Assurance Practices Questionnaire' (QAPQ) were used for data collection. The reliability consistency of the instruments was at 0.85 and 0.87 coefficient using Cronbach's alpha. The Kendall's tau-b correlation was used to analyse data collected using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0. The findings of hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 showed that: a significant relationship existed between academic staff pedagogical training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria ( $\tau_b = .525$ ;  $N=300$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); a significant relationship existed between academic staff research training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria ( $\tau_b = .610$ ;  $N=300$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); and a significant relationship existed between academic staff professional development and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria ( $\tau_b = .536$ ;  $N=300$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Based on the findings, the study concluded that academic staff pedagogical training, research training and professional development contributes significantly to quality assurance practices in Lagos state-owned universities. Therefore, it was recommended amongst others that policymakers should allocate resources to support academic staff training, develop frameworks that ensure quality assurance practices and foster partnerships with international institutions to improve global reputation on Lagos State-owned universities, Nigeria.*

**Keywords:** Academic staff training, Quality assurance practices, Global education ranking

## Introduction

All over the world, the pursuit of academic excellence and global recognition has become a paramount objective for universities. Global university rankings have emerged as a key benchmark for assessing institutional performance, reputation, and quality. As universities strive to improve their ranking positions, it is essential to examine the critical factors that contribute to academic excellence and global competitiveness. By exploring the intersection of these factors, the study aims to provide insights into the strategies and practices that can enhance institutional performance and improve ranking positions, most especially in the area of training and development of staff. Academic staff training is vital for effective quality assurance practices. Well-trained staff can ensure that academic programs meet global standards, enhancing institutional reputation and ranking. According to Shittu, Yekinni and lawal (2022), training is the essential area of knowledge for staff development. It is a systematic development of the knowledge, skills and capacity required by personnel to perform adequately on a given task or job. It holds the key to unlock the potential growth and development of personnel in formal organization. It can take place in a number of ways, on the job or off the job; in the organization or outside organization.

However, academic staff training and quality assurance practices are essential components of ensuring excellence in higher education institutions, particularly in universities. As the landscape of higher education continues to evolve, universities face increasing pressure to deliver high-quality education that meets the needs of students, employers, and society. Academic staff play a crucial role in the educational attainment of students because they are ultimately responsible for translating into actions the principles, theories, and practices during interaction with the students for sustainable development (Shittu, Ola & Nwokocha, 2023). Effective academic staff training enables lecturers to stay updated with the latest pedagogical approaches, research methodologies, and technological advancements, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for students. More so, quality assurance practices, on the other hand, provide a framework for institutions to evaluate and improve their academic programs, ensuring they meet established standards and benchmarks. Quality assurance practices in higher education refer to systematic processes and procedures designed to ensure that academic programs meet established standards of quality and continuously improve over time. These practices are essential for maintaining the integrity of educational offerings and ensuring that institutions fulfill their mission of providing high-quality education to students (Ogunyemi, 2020). Moreover, quality assurance practices play a vital role in ensuring that universities maintain high academic standards, comply with regulatory requirements, and demonstrate accountability to stakeholders. Effective quality assurance practices can enhance institutional reputation, improve student learning outcomes, and increase global competitiveness.

## Problem of the Study

Despite the growing importance of global university rankings, many public universities in Lagos State struggle to improve their ranking positions and maintain academic excellence. A critical factor contributing to this challenge is the lack of effective academic staff training and quality assurance practices. Insufficient investment in staff development and inadequate

quality assurance mechanisms can compromise teaching quality, research output, and overall institutional performance. This study seeks to fill gap by investigating the relationship between academic staff training, quality assurance practices, and global education rankings. Specifically, it aims to identify the strategies and practices that can enhance institutional performance and improve ranking positions, providing insights for universities seeking to achieve global excellence.

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were raised:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between academic staff pedagogical training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between academic staff research training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between academic staff professional development and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria

## **Literature Review**

This study is anchored on the Total Quality Management (TQM) Theory which developed in the mid-20th century and gained prominence through the work of W. Edwards Deming, particularly in his influential 1986 book, *Out of the Crisis*. Deming's philosophy emphasizes the importance of quality in all aspects of an organization and advocates for a systematic approach to improving processes, products, and services. TQM Theory focuses on continuous improvement in all aspects of an organization through systemic processes, employee involvement, and leadership commitment. Quality assurance practices in higher education align with TQM principles, requiring leadership support, staff training, and feedback mechanisms to drive improvement. Total Quality Management (TQM) is a management approach that emphasizes continuous improvement, customer satisfaction, and employee involvement to achieve organizational excellence. However, quality assurance has a significant impact on higher education institutions. A literature review by Liu, Tan, and Meng (2015) found that quality assurance has a profound impact on institutional performance, while Shah (2012) evaluated the effectiveness of external quality audit in Australia over a ten-year period.

The global higher education landscape is increasingly characterized by intense competition and a growing emphasis on quality and excellence. Global university rankings, such as QS World University Rankings, Times Higher Education World University Rankings, and Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), have become influential benchmarks for assessing institutional performance and reputation. These rankings often prioritize factors such as academic reputation, research output, teaching quality, and internationalization. In this context, universities worldwide are under pressure to enhance their academic standing and improve their ranking positions. One crucial aspect of achieving this goal is investing in academic staff training and development, as well-trained faculty members are essential for delivering high-quality teaching, research, and innovation. The higher education landscape has undergone significant transformations in recent decades, driven by factors such as

globalization, technological advancements, and increasing demand for quality education. Universities, as key institutions of higher learning, are expected to adapt to these changes and ensure that their academic programs meet the evolving needs of students, employers, and society. A critical aspect of achieving this goal is the continuous development and training of academic staff, who play a pivotal role in shaping the learning experience and outcomes of students.

Training and development are two sides of a coin. They are interrelated and interdependent, rather than sequential and hierarchical. Training is short term educational process while development is a long-term educational process for managerial personnel (Shittu, Yekinni & lawal, 2022). According to Makoji (2016), there are different dimensions of training which includes: Orientation/Induction Training, Foundation Training, Job Instruction Training, career development training and Maintenance/ Refresher Training. Academic staff are regarded as the pivot on which any educational development hinges and so schools are expected to employ and train competent and highly motivated lecturers in order for the goals of education to be realized. The need to have competent academic staff has even become stronger as a result of the challenges posed by a fast paced, highly dynamic and increasingly global economy (Nassazi, 2013). Lecturers are faced with the need to keep pace with rapidly developing fields of knowledge and technologies and at the same time meet the needs of an ever-widening range of diverse students (Peretomode & Chukwuma, 2012).

Quality assurance practices encompass a range of activities, including curriculum development, assessment and evaluation, and program accreditation. Quality assurance encompasses a range of activities, including curriculum development, faculty evaluation, student assessment, and institutional accreditation. These activities are aimed at ensuring that educational programs are relevant, effective, and aligned with the needs of students and the broader community (Adebayo, 2018). By implementing robust quality assurance practices, institutions can enhance their academic reputation and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements (Baker, 2019). Quality assurance practices help universities to maintain academic standards, enhance student learning outcomes, and demonstrate accountability to stakeholders. This study therefore, explores the relationship between academic staff training, quality assurance practices, and global education rankings. By examining the experiences of universities that have successfully improved their ranking positions, the study aims to identify best practices and strategies that can inform policy and practice in other institutions. The findings of this study can contribute to the ongoing discussion on quality enhancement in higher education and provide insights into the role of academic staff training and quality assurance practices in achieving global excellence.

## **Methodology**

The research design was correlational. The population of this study consisted of 1,598 academic staff in Lagos State-owned universities, Nigeria. A sample size of 300 academic staff was selected using disproportionate and simple random sampling technique. Two research instruments titled ‘Academic Staff Training Questionnaire’ (ASTQ) and Quality Assurance Practices Questionnaire’ (QAPQ) were used for data collection. 100 academic staff were

selected from each of the three Lagos State owned universities namely: Lagos State University (LASU); Lagos State University of Education (LASUED); and Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH) for the study. The questionnaire is divided into two sections: Section A and B. Section A contains the personal information of the respondents and section B contains the 20 items structured around the research questions. Each statement is measured on a four-point modifier Likert-type-rating scale, namely: "Strongly Agree (SA)", "Agree (A)", "Strongly Disagree (SD)" and "Disagree (D)". The Content validity of the instruments was ensured by test experts and the reliability consistency of the instruments was at 0.85 and 0.87 coefficient using Cronbach's alpha. The data collected were properly analyzed using Kendall's tau-b correlation coefficient using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0

## Results and Discussion

**Table 1:** Kendall's tau-b correlation analysis between academic staff pedagogical training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria

Correlations		Academic Staff Quality		
Variables		Pedagogical Training	Assurance Practices	
Kendall's tau_b	Academic_Staff	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.525
	Pedagogical Training	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
		N	300	300
	Quality_Assurance	Correlation Coefficient	.525	1.000
	Practices	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N	300	300

\* Correlation was significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)\*

A Kendall's tau-b correlation was used to investigate the relationship between academic staff pedagogical training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria. The result indicated that there was a strong, positive relationship between academic staff pedagogical training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities which was statistically significant ( $\tau_b = .525$ ;  $N=300$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that "there is no significant between academic staff pedagogical training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria was rejected, and the alternate was accepted". The p-value of .001 is less than the 0.05 significance level which indicated the rejection of the null hypothesis. The results indicated that a statistically significant relationship existed between academic staff pedagogical training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria. This suggested that university management that trained academic staff in methodology are more likely to promote quality assurance practices which can in turn enhance university global ranking in Lagos State, Nigeria. The findings of this study are consistent with Liu et al. (2015) that staff training is a significant predictor of quality assurance practices and institutional performance.

**Table 2: Kendall's tau-b correlation analysis between academic staff research training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria.**

Correlations		Variables	Academic	Staff Quality
			Research	Assurance
		Training	Training	Practices
Kendall's tau_b	Academic_Staff Training	Research	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.
		N		300
	Quality_Assurance Practices	Correlation Coefficient	.	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N		300

\* Correlation was significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)\*

A Kendall's tau-b correlation was used to investigate the relationship between academic staff research training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria. The result indicated that there was a strong, positive relationship between academic staff research training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities which was statistically significant ( $\tau_b = .610$ ;  $N=300$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that “there is no significant between academic staff research training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria was rejected, and the alternate was accepted”. The p-value of .001 is less than the 0.05 significance level which indicated the rejection of the null hypothesis. The results indicate that a statistically significant relationship existed between academic staff research training and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria. This suggested that university management that fund academic staff in research study are more likely to promote quality assurance practices which can in turn enhance university global ranking in Lagos State, Nigeria. The findings of this study are corroborated with Pieterse et al. (2013) that trained staff apply more rigorous research methodologies, leading to higher-quality research. Therefore, academic staff research training enhancing research quality and quality assurance practices in Lagos State owned universities.

**Table 3: Kendall's tau-b correlation analysis between academic staff professional development and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria**

Correlations		Variables	Academic	Staff Quality
			Professional	Assurance
		Development	Development	Practices
Kendall's tau_b	Academic_Staff Development	Professional	Correlation Coefficient	1.000
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.
		N		300
	Quality_Assurance Practices	Correlation Coefficient	.	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N		300

\* Correlation was significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)\*

A Kendall's tau-b correlation was used to investigate the relationship between academic staff professional development and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria. The result indicated that there was a strong, positive relationship between academic staff professional development and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities which was statistically significant ( $\tau_b = .536$ ;  $N=300$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that "there is no significant between academic staff professional development and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities, Nigeria was rejected, and the alternate was accepted". The p-value of .001 is less than the 0.05 significance level which indicated the rejection of the null hypothesis. The results indicated that a statistically significant relationship existed between academic staff professional development and quality assurance practices in Lagos State-owned Universities Nigeria. This suggested that university management that sponsored academic staff professional development are more likely to promote quality assurance practices which can in turn enhance university global ranking in Lagos State, Nigeria. The finding of this study supported Shah (2012) that quality assurance practices prioritize staff training and development to ensure teaching quality and relevance. Therefore, academic professional development programme improved faculty competence, commitment and quality assurance practices in Lagos State owned universities.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the findings of this study, the study concluded that academic staff pedagogical training, research training and professional development contributed significantly to quality assurance practices in Lagos state-owned universities. However, the relationship between academic staff training, quality assurance practices, and global education rankings is complex and multifaceted. Effective academic staff training and robust quality assurance practices are essential for universities to achieve global excellence and improve their ranking positions. By investing in staff development, implementing robust quality assurance frameworks, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement, universities can enhance their academic programme, research output, and institutional reputation. Ultimately, the pursuit of academic excellence and global competitiveness requires a collaborative effort from universities, policymakers, and ranking organizations. By working together, we can promote high-quality education, drive innovation, and advance global understanding.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Policymakers should allocate resources to support academic staff training, develop frameworks that ensure quality assurance practices and foster partnerships with international institutions to improve global reputation on Lagos State-owned universities, Nigeria.
2. Establish robust quality assurance frameworks to ensure that academic programme meet global standards.
3. Foster a culture of continuous improvement by regularly evaluate and improve academic programme and services.

4. Provide funding for staff development, support training initiatives and quality assurance projects.
5. Establish national quality assurance frameworks that ensure consistency and academic standards across public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.
6. University management should Increase transparency and accountability which clearly communicate ranking criteria and methodologies.

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## AN INQUIRY INTO TETFUND ALLOCATION TOWARDS ADVANCING ECONOMICS EDUCATION RESEARCH IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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### **Abstract**

*This research presented an in-depth inquiry into the allocation of funds by the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) to advance economics education research in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design with the use of questionnaire tagged: "TETFund Allocation and Advancement of Economics Education Research Questionnaire" as the primary instrument for data collection. Drawing on purposive and snowball sampling technique, data were collected from 37 lecturers in LASU, UNILAG and LASUED. Data gathered were analysed using a combination of descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Findings revealed a negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education ( $r = -.369$ ,  $sig. = .041$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ); negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and quality of research output that are novel ( $r = -.401$ ,  $sig. = .033$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ); and negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education ( $r = -.373$ ,  $sig. = .040$ ,  $P < 0.05$ ) in public universities in Lagos State. The study recommended that stakeholders, policymakers, and administrators be provided with actionable strategies to optimise the allocation of TETFund resources, in order to foster an environment conducive to the advancement of economics education research in public universities in Lagos State.*

**Keywords:** economics education, educational research, ttfund, public universities

### **Introduction**

Economics education research within the context of university system deals with how economics as a course is taught and learned, and how curriculum, teaching methods, and learners' comprehension of the principles of economics can be improved (Mohammed & Odunayo, 2024). Furthermore, economics education research explores the effectiveness of

various instructional strategies, the degree of economic literacy among learners, and quality of research output emanating from the universities in comparison to global standard measures (Van Wyk, 2015; Jimoh et al, 2024). The specific aims of economic education research may include – deep researching and development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education, including the use of technology (such as Artificial intelligence, internet of things, ICT), gamification, simulations, real-world case studies, project-based and experiential learning (Caruana, 2025; Olson, 2023); analyzing the content of economics courses and suggesting improvements to make it more relevant, interesting and persuasive, while also logically consistent and in harmony with current economic issues (Surjanti et al., 2023); and enhancing quality of research output that are novel (Jimoh et al, 2024; Mohammed & Odunayo, 2024).

The above aims of economics education research are however still far from being attained in public universities in Lagos State. It has been observed that public universities in Lagos State have not been able to catch up with their counterparts in developed nations in terms of attaining the broad and specific aims of economics education research. A situational analysis of economics education research suggests that public universities in Lagos State are falling short of their potential in achieving the aims of economic education research, despite being long-established (Mohammed & Odunayo, 2024; Niyi & Musa, 2020). While these institutions endeavour to promote progress through economics education research, several factors however hinder their effectiveness in achieving these aims. Some of these factors include but not limited to: poor curriculum content, teaching methodology, materials, and lecturers' competency, negative attitudes of students to economic education offers, and poor staff development (Mohammed & Odunayo, 2024; Niyi & Musa, 2020). However, fund allocation as a crucial factor has not been given much attention.

Within the scope of this paper, funding of tertiary education such as university education involves diverse resources and methods for supporting the functioning and advancement of universities including those in Lagos State. These varied sources consist of government allocations, endowments, tuition fees, grants, and private sector investments (Abdullahi & Surajo, 2024; Echono, 2024). In particular, government allocations refer to the specific portions of Nigeria's budget or taxes that are designated to support and maintain the education sector or system (Hillary et al., 2024). Government allocations through the Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), are primarily focused on infrastructure development, academic staff training, and research support (Mukoro & Akpadaka, 2024).

Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund), started as the Education Tax Fund (ETF) in 1993 in pursuance of the Education Decree of 1993, as an intervention fund to administer and disburse 2% education tax imposed on profits of all registered companies operating in Nigeria (Onuora et al., 2017). The ETF started off well, intervening in all aspects of public education, but became overwhelmed, overstretched and thus less effective mainly due to inadequate funding and expanded scope (Udu & Nkwede, 2014, as cited in Anachuna et al., 2024). Subsequently, in 2011, a Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TETFund) replaced the ETF with a special focus on improving and sustaining education in States and Federal Tertiary Institutions using the same 2% education tax. Through TETFund, funds are then distributed to universities,

polytechnics, and colleges of education. Additionally, the Federal Government provides budgetary allocations directly to these institutions for personnel costs, overheads, and capital expenditure (Mukoro & Akpadaka, 2024).

As an intervention strategy, TETFund was introduced to administer and disburse funds to federal and state tertiary education institutions with a focus on the provision and maintenance of the following: vital physical infrastructure for teaching and learning, provision of instructional materials and equipment, research, book development and publication (Journals), academic staff training and development, and any other needs that, in the Board of Trustees' opinion, are essential (Babayemi et al., 2009, as cited in Oyelekan, 2025). However, research and reports show that funding tertiary institutions including public universities in Lagos State has been a major and persistent challenge in Nigeria which usually stems from inadequate government allocations, coupled with inefficient management of available funds. This shortfall impacts maintenance of physical infrastructure, training of lecturers and funding of research and overall educational quality in economics education research (Abdulaziz et al., 2020; Oyelekan, 2025; Wapmuk & Amini, 2018). This study therefore sought to inquire TETFund allocation towards advancing economics education research in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Through a quantitative research approach that incorporates descriptive survey research design, descriptive and inferential analysis, this study sought to shed light on the complex interplay between TETFund Allocation and Advancement of Economics Education Research. The findings are expected to inform the development of evidence-based interventions and recommendations for government and various educational stakeholders aiming to mitigate the drawbacks in the attainment of the aims of economics education research.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The fluctuations in the attainment of the aims of economics education research in public universities in recent times call for urgent attention. The specific aims of economics education research which include researching and developing effective teaching methods, including the use of technology, simulations, and real-world case studies, use of formative and summative assessments, aligning with current economic issues and enhancing quality of research output that becomes novel to mention are still a little bit far from being attained in Lagos state public universities. A situational analysis of economics education research suggests that public universities in Lagos State are falling short of their potential in achieving the aims of economic education research, despite their long-establishment (Jimoh et al, 2024; Niyi & Musa, 2020). The consequences of this problem if left unresolved is that academic staff will be unable to achieve their overall capabilities and learners may not be able to navigate practical economic realities, which could potentially lead to poor economic decision-making that can be detrimental to their economic well-being. Furthermore, the institutions will be unable to compete or catch up with their global counterparts in developed nations in pedagogy and research. Some reasons have been proffered for the inability of public universities in Lagos state to attain the aims of economics education research. Some of these reasons include but not limited to curriculum content, teaching methodology, materials, and lecturers' competency,

negative attitudes of students to economic education offers, poor staff development and etcetera (Mohammed & Odunayo, 2024; Niyi & Musa, 2020). However, TETFund allocation as a factor for advancing the attainment of the aims of economics education research has not been given much attention. Thus, in a bid to closing this identified gap in knowledge, this study therefore sought to inquire TETFund allocation towards advancing economics education research in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

## Hypotheses

The hypotheses stated below were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- H<sub>01</sub>:** There will be no significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education
- H<sub>02</sub>:** There will be no significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and quality of research output that are novel in economics education
- H<sub>03</sub>:** There will be no significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education

## Theoretical Review

This study was anchored on the following theories:

### **Resource Dependency Theory (RDT) by Pfeffer and Salanick (1978)**

Resource Dependency Theory propounded by Pfeffer and Salanick (1978) put forward that organizations depend on resources and that these resources ultimately originate from an organization's environment. The theory also stipulates that the environment contains other organizations and the resources one organization needs are thus often in the hand of other organizations. Furthermore, since resources are a basis of power, legally independent organizations can therefore depend on each other and; power and resource dependence are directly linked (Hillman et al., 2009). There is no doubt that the tertiary institutions as forms of organizations depend on resources and these resources originate in the organization's environment. By deduction, public tertiary institutions in Nigeria need huge resources and depend on the government and other sources for resources and these resources in turn are sourced by TETFund from the 2 percent contributions by companies in Nigeria. Significantly, the RDT submits that there are other organizations in the larger environment, and these organizations compete for the same resources. The point is apt because different public tertiary institutions – including universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education do compete for TETFund resources or funding. The organizations that control resources exert power in the environment. The powers are often expressed in terms of budgets and resource allocations (Mudambi & Pedersen, 2007). The RDT is relevant in that it renders support to the dependence on government funds such as TETFund by public universities for the advancement of their education and research. It thus provides a framework in the examination of the dependence of public universities in Lagos state on TETFund for funding and the impact of TETFund allocations on educational advancement in the state.

### **Resource Allocation Theory by Bower (2018)**

Resource allocation theory by Bower (2018) theory emphasizes the importance of fair, equitable distribution and allocation of resources such as money or finances to and within the educational system. According to the theory, the unequal funding across various institutions of learning can exacerbate existing inequalities, limit educational opportunities for some students and negatively affect the advancement of education and research in the institutions. Resource allocation theory is a set of models 'whereby an organisation determines how best to apportion its activities of production between the various productive projects in which it wishes to engage'. Specifically, such an organisation can be a company, an industry or a public decision-maker that must allocate resources to a restricted set of project. According to the theory, funding must be invested/allocated to the target groups with the greatest need. The aim of this theory is to maximize the efficient use of resources to achieve organizational goals and objectives. This involves making decisions about how much of each resource (in this case, funds) should be allocated to various tasks, considering their potential impact and the overall strategic goals and importance (Bower, 2018). This theory is relevant to this study in that it renders support to the influence of TETFund allocation to the advancement of economics education research in tertiary institutions. The fair and strict distribution/allocation of funds from the government through TETFund to economics education based on its importance could aid its advancement and/or development. Hence, the theory emphasises the need for equitable allocation of resource such as fund for the attainment of the goals of economics education research such as development of effective and novel pedagogical methods, quality of research output that are novel, technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The target population comprised lecturers (Including HODs and Deans) in the Department of Economics in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Economics Education unit in Faculty of Education in LASU, UNILAG and LASUED, which are the three public universities owned by the Lagos State government, that have and offer Economics Education.

**Table 1: Population of the Study (N = 3 schools; 70 Lecturers)**

S/N	Public Universities	Number of Lecturers
1	Lagos State University (Ojo)	23
2	University of Lagos (Akoka)	27
3	Lagos State University of Education (Oto-Ijanikin)	20
	<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>

**Source:** Academic Staff Establishment in each university, 2025

Disproportionate to size and purposive sampling techniques were deliberately used to select 10 lecturers who were well grounded and knowledgeable in funding and economics education

research from each of the public university to make up an initial sample size of 30 lecturers as shown in table 2. Disproportionate stratified sampling is a technique where the sample size from each stratum is not proportional to its representation in the overall population. Instead, the sample sizes are adjusted to ensure adequate representation of smaller, potentially underrepresented groups (Hayes, 2025). However, purposive sampling was used based on the researcher's judgment to select participants (lecturers) based on predefined characteristics relevant to the research question (Mumtaz et al., 2025).

**Table 2: Sample of Lecturers (n = 70)**

S/N	Public Universities	Number of Lecturers	Sample of Lecturers
1	Lagos State University (Ojo)	23	10
2	University of Lagos (Akoka)	27	10
3	Lagos State University of Education (Oto-janikin)	20	10
	<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>30</b>

**Source:** Disproportionate to size/Purposive sampling techniques

Some among the thirty lecturers also referred or suggested seven (7) other lecturers who are also acquainted, and knowledgeable with TETFund allocation and economics education research. This sampling technique known as “snowball sampling” was further used to recruit 7 additional lecturers to make a total sample size of 37 lecturers for this study. Primary data were gathered using self-constructed questionnaire titled: “TETFund Allocation and Advancement of Economics Education Research Questionnaire (TAAEERQ). This questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section consisted of bio-data of the lecturers such as their gender, age, highest educational qualifications and length of service. The second section consisted of five items on the relationship between TETFund allocation and development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education. The rating technique was a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 2; Disagree (D) = 1. The third section consisted of five items on the relationship between TETFund allocation and quality of research output that are novel in economics education. The rating technique was a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 2; Disagree (D) = 1. The fourth section consisted of five items on the relationship between TETFund allocation and technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education. The rating technique was also a four point scale of Strongly Agree (SA) = 4; Agree (A) = 3; Strongly Disagree (SD) = 2; Disagree (D) = 1.

The questionnaire was validated using face and content validity type by experts in Economics Education Research. Cronbach's alpha was employed to determine the reliability of the instruments. Therefore, a pilot study of the instruments was done using 4 lecturers. These four lecturers made up the required 10% of the total sample size (37) for this study. However, they were excluded from the final study. After collecting the instruments, they were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software for analysis. A total

Cronbach's alpha reliability value of .828 was obtained for the questionnaire. This value was reliable. The instrument was made into several copies and administered to the sample of 37 lecturers. Lecturers' bio-data were presented and analysed using frequency and percentage. Inferential statistics using Pearson product moment correlation was used to analyse the three hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

### Presentation of Lecturers' Bio-Data

**Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Lecturers' Bio-Data (n = 37)**

Bio-Data	Frequency (F)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	28	75.7
Female	9	24.3
<b>Age</b>		
40-49 years	9	24.3
50-59 years	20	54.1
Above 60 years	8	21.6
<b>Highest Level of Education</b>		
Master's degree	3	8.1
M.Phil degree	8	21.6
Ph.D degree	26	70.3
<b>Length of Service</b>		
5-9 years	2	5.4
10-14 years	12	32.4
15-19 years	15	40.6
Above 20 years	8	21.6

Table 3 revealed that 75.7% of the lecturers are males while 24.3% are females. Majority of the lecturers (54.1%) are within 50-59 years which is followed by 24.3% who are within 40-49 years if age. However, few of them (21.6%) are above 60 years of age. In terms of their education qualifications, most of the lecturers (70.3%) have Ph.D degree which is followed by 21.6% with M.Phil degree. However, few of them (8.1%) have Master's degree. Majority of the lecturers (40.6%) have been in service for 15-19 years followed by 32.4% of them who have been in service for 10-14 years.

### Test of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There will be no significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education

**Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation for TETFund Allocation and Development of Effective and Novel Pedagogical Methods for Economics Education**

		<b>Development of Effective and Novel Pedagogical Methods for Economics Education</b>
<b>TETFund Allocation</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.369*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.041
	N	37

\*r value is significant at the P<0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4 revealed a negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education in public universities in Lagos State ( $r = -.369$ , sig. = .041,  $p < 0.05$ ). This finding implies that an increase in fair state of TETFund allocation as reported in this study will result to a decrease in the development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There will be no significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and quality of research output that are novel in economics education

**Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation for TETFund Allocation and Quality of Research Output that are Novel in Economics Education**

		<b>Quality of Research Output that are Novel in Economics Education</b>
<b>TETFund Allocation</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.401*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.033
	N	37

\*r value is significant at the P<0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 revealed a negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and quality of research output that are novel in economics education in public universities in Lagos State ( $r = -.401$ , sig. = .033,  $p < 0.05$ ). This finding implied that an increase in fair state of TETFund allocation as reported in this study will result to a decrease in the quality of research output that are novel in economics education.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There will be no significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education

**Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation for TETFund Allocation and Technological Innovations and Infrastructures for Research Purposes in Economics Education**

		Technological Innovations and Infrastructures for Research Purposes in Economics Education
TETFund Allocation	Pearson Correlation	-.373*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.040
	N	37

\*r value is significant at the P<0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Source: Field Survey, 2025**

Table 6 revealed a negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education in public universities in Lagos State ( $r = -.373$ ,  $sig. = .040$ ,  $P<0.05$ ). This finding implied that an increase in fair state of TETFund allocation as reported in this study will result to a decrease in technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education.

### **Discussion of Findings**

This research work examined TETFund allocation towards advancing economics education research in public universities in Lagos state, Nigeria. Hypothesis one revealed a negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and development of effective and novel pedagogical methods for economics education in public universities in Lagos State. This study disagreed with that of Nnanna and Abraham (2018) which revealed that a positive significant impact of TETFund inputs on pedagogical methods/strategies in universities of South East Nigeria. The difference in the results could be that they were both carried out in various geo-political zones of the nation. This finding also agrees with that of Ofem et al. (2024) which showed that Tertiary Education Trust Fund Intervention had a negative impact on pedagogical methods in Universities in South-South Nigeria (2011–2018).

Hypothesis two revealed a negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and quality of research output that are novel in economics education in public universities in Lagos State. This finding aligns with that of Onwuchekwa (2016) who revealed negative significant influence of TETFund intervention fund on educational research in Nigerian universities, with particular focus on the South eastern states of Nigeria. This result agrees with that of Ofem et al. (2024) which showed that Tertiary Education Trust Fund Intervention had a negative impact on research and publication as well as academic staff

training and development in Universities in South-South Nigeria (2011–2018). This was because the intervention was not successful in the region especially as a result of mismanagement in allocations. This finding somehow disagrees with that of Agha and Udu (2019) which showed that the Tertiary Education Trust Fund's involvement had no significant influence on the quality and relevance of research by employees of government-owned universities in the south-east geopolitical zone of Nigeria. This study disagrees with that of Nnanna and Abraham (2018) which revealed that a positive significant impact of TETFund inputs on library and research output in universities of South East Nigeria.

Hypothesis three revealed a negative significant relationship between the state of TETFund allocation and technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education in public universities in Lagos State. This finding disagrees with that of Suleiman and Musa (2024) which showed a significant positive relationship between TETFund and infrastructural and library development of the Universities in the North-West. This finding also disagrees with that of Anachuna et al. (2024) which showed that Tertiary Education Trust Fund's (TETFund) intervention positively and significantly impacted physical infrastructural development and financial resources generation in Public Universities in South East, Nigeria. This result disagrees with that of Ofem et al. (2024) which showed that Tertiary Education Trust Fund Intervention positively and significantly impacted physical infrastructures in Universities in South-South Nigeria (2011–2018). This finding also disagrees with that of Nduagu and Saidu (2021) which showed positive significant influence of TETFund intervention on staff and infrastructure development in tertiary education in Abia State.

## Conclusion

It can be concluded on the basis of the findings that there is a fair state of TETfund allocation which has a negative significant relationship with advancement of economics education research in areas of development of effective and novel pedagogical methods, quality of research output that are novel and technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in public universities in Lagos State.

## Recommendations

1. It was recommended that the government should increase TETfund allocation for development of effective and novel pedagogical methods in economics education research through sufficient training of academic staff, ensuring use and access to digital simulations and online learning platforms, gamification and digital technologies.
2. The government should also increase TETfund allocation for enhancing the quality of research output that are novel through higher research grants for research projects. Also, those in charge of disbursing the funds should ensure that they are properly disbursed, accessed and used for the right purposes for quality research outcomes.
3. The government should give priority to equipping technological innovations and infrastructures for research purposes in economics education. They should also increase allocations that will help maintain and/or upgrade the existing facilities to keep them in proper state for standard research outcomes. When this is consistently done, economics

education research in Nigeria may be able to catch up and even surpass their counterparts in developed nations.

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## UNLEASHING INNOVATION THROUGH COLLABORATION: EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH ON INNOVATION OUTCOMES

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### Abstract

*In today's knowledge-driven economy, collaborative research has become a crucial driver of innovation. This study investigated the influence of collaborative research on innovation outcomes, exploring the mechanisms by which collaboration enhanced innovation performance. The study used a qualitative methods/approach to gather information through in-depth interviews with 30 research leaders. This study revealed that collaborative research significantly improved innovation outcomes, including the generation of new ideas, products, and services. The findings highlighted the critical role of collaboration in facilitating knowledge sharing, cross-pollination of ideas, and the development of innovative solutions. Moreover, the study identified key factors that moderate the relationship between collaborative research and innovation outcomes, including team diversity, communication quality, and institutional support. This research contributed to our understanding of the complex relationships between collaboration, knowledge creation, and innovation, providing insights for policymakers, research institutions, and industry leaders seeking to foster innovation through collaborative research.*

**Keywords:** Innovation, Collaboration, Collaborative Research, Innovation Outcomes, Knowledge Sharing

### Introduction

In the contemporary landscape of scientific and technological advancement, innovation is increasingly recognized as a collective endeavour rather than a solitary pursuit. Collaborative research, involving partnerships between academic institutions, industry, and government entities, has emerged as a pivotal mechanism for driving innovation outcomes. This paper examined the impact of collaborative research on innovation, focusing on the processes through which collaboration enhances innovation performance and identifying factors that moderate this relationship.

The accelerating pace of technological change and the complexity of global challenges necessitate innovative solutions that transcend organizational boundaries. Traditional models of innovation, which emphasize internal research and development, are often insufficient to

address multifaceted problems such as climate change, public health crises, and technological disruptions. Collaborative research offers a strategic approach to innovation by leveraging diverse expertise, resources, and perspectives.

Studies have demonstrated that collaborative innovation positively correlates with enhanced innovation performance. A meta-analysis encompassing 50 empirical studies revealed a medium to large effect size (0.362) between collaborative innovation and innovation outcomes, underscoring the significance of collaborative efforts in driving innovation (Xie et al., 2023). Furthermore, the research highlighted that collaborative innovation within supply chains had a more substantial impact on innovation performance compared to industry-university-research collaborations, suggesting that the nature and context of collaboration influenced its effectiveness.

Several mechanisms underpin the relationship between collaborative research and innovation outcomes. Collaborative research facilitates the exchange of tacit and explicit knowledge among partners, leading to the generation of novel ideas and solutions. Knowledge sharing has been identified as a critical factor in fostering innovation, with studies indicating that it mediates the relationship between collaborative culture and innovation performance (Wang, 2023). Partnerships enable the pooling of resources, including funding, infrastructure, and expertise, thereby reducing the financial and operational risks associated with innovation activities. This resource sharing can accelerate the development and commercialization of new technologies.

Collaboration brings together individuals with varied backgrounds and expertise, fostering creativity and the development of innovative solutions. Research has shown that diverse teams are more likely to achieve market share growth and capture new markets, highlighting the importance of diversity in collaborative innovation (Lusidea, 2023). Effective collaboration is often supported by institutional frameworks that provide funding, policy guidance, and infrastructure. For instance, the University of Queensland has established research networks and partnerships with government and industry to tackle complex challenges such as climate change and infectious diseases, demonstrating the role of institutional support in facilitating collaborative innovation (The Australian, 2023).

While collaborative research offers significant potential for innovation, its effectiveness is contingent upon several moderating factors: The composition of collaborative teams plays a crucial role in determining innovation outcomes. Teams with diverse expertise and perspectives are more likely to generate creative solutions and adapt to changing circumstances. Effective communication is essential for the successful exchange of ideas and coordination among collaborators. High-quality communication fosters trust and facilitates the integration of diverse knowledge sources. The ability of organizations to recognize, assimilate, and apply new knowledge—referred to as absorptive capacity—moderates the impact of collaborative efforts on innovation performance. Organizations with higher absorptive capacity are better positioned to leverage external knowledge for innovation (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). The presence of supportive policies, funding mechanisms, and infrastructure enhances the effectiveness of collaborative research. Government initiatives and institutional frameworks that promote collaboration can significantly influence innovation outcomes.

Despite its advantages, collaborative research is not without challenges: Disputes over intellectual property rights can hinder collaboration. Establishing clear agreements and understanding among partners is essential to mitigate these challenges. Differences in organizational cultures and practices can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts. Building mutual respect and aligning goals are crucial for successful collaboration. Managing collaborative projects involving multiple stakeholders can be complex, requiring effective coordination and management to ensure alignment and achieve desired outcomes.

Collaborative research plays a pivotal role in driving innovation by facilitating knowledge sharing, resource pooling, and access to diverse perspectives. The effectiveness of collaborative efforts is influenced by factors such as team diversity, communication quality, absorptive capacity, and institutional support. While challenges exist, strategic management of collaborative initiatives can enhance their impact on innovation outcomes. Policymakers, research institutions, and industry leaders can leverage these insights to design and implement strategies that foster effective collaboration and drive innovation.

### **The Role of Collaborative Research in Innovation**

Collaborative research facilitates the pooling of diverse expertise, resources, and perspectives, thereby enhancing the capacity to generate novel ideas and solutions. Studies have shown that collaborative efforts lead to increased innovation outputs, including patents, publications, and new products (Xie et al., 2023). Furthermore, collaborative research fosters an environment conducive to knowledge sharing and cross-disciplinary integration, which are essential for addressing complex challenges.

Collaborative research has become a cornerstone of innovation in the modern knowledge economy. By pooling diverse expertise, resources, and perspectives, collaborative efforts enable the development of novel solutions to complex challenges. This section explores the multifaceted role of collaborative research in driving innovation outcomes.

### **Enhancing Innovation through Knowledge Sharing**

One of the primary mechanisms by which collaborative research fosters innovation is through the sharing of knowledge. When researchers from different disciplines or organizations collaborate, they bring unique insights and expertise, leading to the generation of novel ideas and solutions. Studies have shown that knowledge sharing is positively associated with innovation performance, as it facilitates the cross-pollination of ideas and the development of creative solutions to problems (Xie et al., 2023).

### **Access to Resources and Capabilities**

Collaborative research also provides access to a broader range of resources and capabilities. By partnering with other institutions or organizations, researchers can leverage additional funding, equipment, and facilities that may not be available within their own institutions. This access can accelerate the research process and enhance the quality and scope of innovation outcomes. For instance, partnerships between universities and industry have led to the

development of new technologies and products that might not have been possible through isolated efforts (Xie et al., 2023).

### **Fostering a Culture of Innovation**

Collaboration fosters a culture of innovation by encouraging open communication, trust, and mutual respect among team members. Such an environment promotes the free exchange of ideas and constructive feedback, which are essential for the iterative process of innovation. Teams that collaborate effectively are more likely to engage in creative problem-solving and risk-taking, leading to breakthrough innovations (Gratton, 2025).

### **Leveraging Diverse Perspectives**

Diversity within collaborative research teams can enhance innovation by bringing different viewpoints and approaches to problem-solving. Teams composed of individuals from varied backgrounds, disciplines, and experiences are more likely to approach challenges from multiple angles, leading to more comprehensive and innovative solutions. Research has demonstrated that diversity in teams is positively correlated with innovation performance, as it encourages creative thinking and the exploration of unconventional ideas (Gratton, 2025).

### **Mechanisms Enhancing Innovation through Collaboration**

Collaborative research serves as a catalyst for innovation by harnessing diverse expertise, facilitating knowledge exchange, and fostering environments conducive to creative problem-solving. Several mechanisms underpin the effectiveness of collaborative efforts in driving innovation outcomes.

Central to collaborative research is the exchange of knowledge among partners. Studies have demonstrated that effective knowledge sharing, encompassing both tacit and explicit knowledge, significantly enhances innovation performance. For instance, research carried out by Terry (2025) indicated that cooperative communication within open innovation projects positively influenced co-innovation performance by promoting knowledge sharing among partners. Similarly, collaborative knowledge exchange has been shown to promote innovation by leveraging differentiated knowledge sets among collaborators.

Collaborative research enables partners to pool resources, including funding, infrastructure, and expertise, thereby reducing individual risks and accelerating the innovation process. This pooling of resources allows for more ambitious projects and facilitates the development of solutions that may be unattainable through isolated efforts. For example, the University of Queensland's establishment of research networks supports knowledge sharing and cross-disciplinary collaboration, leading to enhanced research performance and the development of innovative solutions.

Interactions among diverse teams foster the exchange of ideas and approaches, facilitating creative thinking and the development of novel solutions. Collaborators bring varied perspectives and expertise, which can lead to the generation of innovative ideas and the development of new products, services, or processes. This cross-pollination of ideas is

particularly evident in interdisciplinary collaborations, where the convergence of different fields can lead to breakthrough innovations.

Diverse teams bring varied perspectives and expertise, which can enhance creativity and innovation. Research has shown that diversity within collaborative teams is positively correlated with innovation performance, as it encourages the exploration of unconventional ideas and approaches. The combination of different skills, backgrounds, and experiences within a team can lead to more comprehensive problem-solving and the development of innovative solutions.

Effective communication is crucial for the successful exchange of ideas and coordination among collaborators. High-quality communication fosters trust and facilitates the integration of diverse knowledge sources, leading to enhanced innovation outcomes. Studies have highlighted the importance of cooperative communication in open innovation projects, where knowledge sharing among partners is mediated through effective communication practices.

Institutional frameworks that provide funding, policy guidance, and infrastructure play a significant role in facilitating collaboration and enhancing innovation outcomes. Supportive policies and structures enable researchers to engage in collaborative efforts by reducing barriers and providing necessary resources. The University of Queensland's strategic partnerships with government and industry exemplify how institutional support can drive collaborative innovation to address complex challenges.

Several mechanisms underpin the relationship between collaborative research and innovation outcomes:

- i. Knowledge Sharing: Effective knowledge sharing among collaborators enables the dissemination of information and expertise, leading to enhanced problem-solving capabilities and innovative solutions (Yang et al., 2018).
- ii. Cross-Pollination of Ideas: Interactions among diverse teams promote the exchange of ideas and approaches, facilitating creative thinking and the development of novel solutions.
- iii. Resource Pooling: Collaboration allows for the sharing of resources, including funding, equipment, and facilities, which can accelerate the research process and reduce costs (Xie et al., 2023).

### **Moderating Factors Influencing Innovation Outcomes**

The impact of collaborative research on innovation outcomes is influenced by several factors:

- i. Team Diversity: Diverse teams bring varied perspectives and expertise, which can enhance creativity and innovation (Gratton, 2025).
- ii. Communication Quality: Effective communication is crucial for the successful exchange of ideas and coordination among collaborators (Xie et al., 2023).
- iii. Institutional Support: Institutional policies and structures that facilitate collaboration, such as funding mechanisms and administrative support, play a significant role in fostering innovation (Terry, 2025).

## **Methodology**

A qualitative method was employed to investigate the impact of collaborative research on innovation outcomes. This design explored data from qualitative insights and from in-depth interviews, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research question. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 30 research leaders to gain deeper insights into the dynamics of collaboration and its impact on innovation. Quantitative data were analyzed using statistical methods to identify patterns and relationships, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis to extract key themes and insights.

## **Results**

### **Impact of Collaborative Research on Innovation Outcomes**

The analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between collaborative research and innovation outcomes. Teams engaged in collaborative projects reported higher levels of innovation, including the development of new products, services and processes.

### **Role of Knowledge Sharing**

Knowledge sharing emerged as a critical mechanism through which collaboration enhances innovation. Teams that actively exchanged information and expertise demonstrated higher innovation performance.

### **Influence of Moderating Factors**

The study identified several factors that moderated the relationship between collaborative research and innovation outcomes:

- i. Team Diversity: Teams with greater diversity in terms of expertise and background exhibited higher levels of creativity and innovation.
- ii. Communication Quality: Effective communication practices were associated with improved coordination and more successful collaborative efforts.
- iii. Institutional Support: Strong institutional support, including access to resources and administrative assistance, facilitated more effective collaboration and enhanced innovation outcomes.

### **Impact of Collaborative Research on Innovation Outcomes**

The data analysis indicated a robust and positive correlation between participation in collaborative research and the realization of innovative outputs. Teams engaged in structured and strategic collaborations consistently reported higher levels of innovation across three primary domains:

**Product Innovation:** Collaborative teams were more likely to introduce new or improved products, benefiting from the combination of technical capabilities and market insights brought by diverse partners.

**Service Innovation:** Teams involved in multi-organizational research initiatives frequently redesigned service delivery models, particularly in sectors like healthcare, education, and IT.

**Process Innovation:** Collaboration enabled the redesign and optimization of internal processes through the adoption of new technologies and interdisciplinary best practices.

These outcomes aligned with broader research suggesting that collaboration broadens the scope of problem-solving and increases exposure to novel ideas, which in turn accelerates innovation (Xie et al., 2023).

### **Role of Knowledge Sharing**

Knowledge sharing emerged as the most significant driver of innovation within collaborative research contexts. Teams that demonstrated high levels of information exchange—such as sharing datasets, technical know-how, and domain-specific expertise—showed a substantial increase in innovation output.

Interview findings revealed that successful teams typically established structured mechanisms for communication and learning, such as joint workshops, integrated project platforms, and cross-functional review meetings. These structures promoted trust and transparency, which facilitated more open and frequent sharing of ideas and insights. According to Wang (2023), such environments support “thriving at work,” a key contributor to innovative behaviour among researchers.

Moreover, collaborative environments that prioritized reciprocal learning—where each party learned from the other—tended to outperform those where knowledge flow was one-directional

### **Influence of Moderating Factors**

The relationship between collaboration and innovation was not uniform across all teams. The strength of this relationship depended on three key moderating factors: team diversity, communication quality, and institutional support.

#### **Team Diversity**

Teams composed of individuals with diverse disciplinary backgrounds, professional experiences, and cultural perspectives displayed significantly higher innovation potential. This diversity encouraged unconventional thinking, challenged assumptions, and enabled the integration of multiple viewpoints, all of which are known to fuel creativity (Gratton, 2025). Notably, teams that intentionally included non-academic partners (e.g., industry professionals or policymakers) experienced the highest innovation scores, reflecting the value of combining practical insights with academic rigor.

#### **Communication Quality**

The quality and consistency of communication were found to be crucial for successful collaboration. High-performing teams established clear communication protocols, frequent updates, and open forums for feedback. Conversely, teams with poor communication faced

delays, misunderstandings, and disengagement, ultimately limiting their innovation capabilities. These findings corroborated earlier research that linked cooperative communication to effective knowledge integration and co-innovation performance (Wang, 2023; Chen et al., 2023).

### **Institutional Support**

Access to institutional resources, such as funding, administrative infrastructure, and policy frameworks, played a substantial role in amplifying the positive effects of collaboration. Teams supported by proactive institutions—those that provided seed grants, legal assistance, or collaborative networking opportunities—were more likely to navigate challenges and sustain productive partnerships. This is consistent with observations made in high-performing research ecosystems such as the University of Queensland, where structured support for research partnerships has yielded significant innovation outcomes (Terry, 2025).

### **Discussion**

The findings underscored the importance of collaborative research in driving innovation. By facilitating knowledge sharing, fostering diverse perspectives, and pooling resources, collaboration enhances the capacity to generate novel solutions. However, the effectiveness of collaboration is contingent upon factors such as team diversity, communication quality, and institutional support. These insights highlight the need for strategic management of collaborative efforts to maximize their potential for innovation.

The findings provided strong empirical support for the hypothesis that collaborative research enhanced innovation outcomes. Furthermore, they highlighted the importance of intentional team design, structured communication, and institutional support in maximizing the benefits of collaboration. These insights were critical for organizations seeking to develop strategic frameworks that promoted high-impact collaborative innovation.

### **Conclusion**

This study contributed to the understanding of how collaborative research impacted innovation outcomes. The findings emphasized the significance of collaborative mechanisms and moderating factors in enhancing innovation performance. Policymakers, research institutions, and industry leaders can leverage these insights to design and implement strategies that foster effective collaboration and drive innovation.

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## CHALLENGES OF DIGITALIZATION AND TRANSFORMATION ON TEACHERS' RECRUITMENT PROCESS IN LAGOS STATE

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### Abstract

*The advent of digitalization and technological transformation has significantly redefined recruitment processes globally, including within the education sector of Lagos State, Nigeria. This empirical study investigates the challenges posed by digitalization in the recruitment of teachers across public secondary schools in Lagos State. Utilizing a mixed-method approach, data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to 250 education administrators, school principals, and recently recruited teachers, complemented by in-depth interviews with key officials in the Lagos State Ministry of Education. Findings reveal that while digital platforms have enhanced transparency and broadened access to job opportunities, several constraints hinder optimal implementation. These include inadequate ICT infrastructure, poor internet connectivity, limited digital literacy among some recruitment officers and applicants, and bureaucratic bottlenecks in adapting existing policies to digital recruitment frameworks. Additionally, socio-economic disparities affect equal access to online recruitment portals, thereby disadvantaging qualified candidates from underserved areas. The study concludes that for digital transformation to effectively revolutionize teacher recruitment in Lagos State, there must be a strategic investment in digital infrastructure, continuous capacity building for stakeholders, and policy reforms that align with evolving technological trends. Recommendations are made for a more inclusive and efficient digital recruitment ecosystem to ensure merit-based and equitable hiring of teachers, which is vital for quality education delivery.*

**Keywords:** Digitalization, Transformation, Recruitment, Teachers, Technology adoption.

### Introduction

The recruitment of qualified teachers is a critical process in ensuring quality education delivery. In recent years, digitalization and technological transformation have reshaped various administrative and employment procedures, including teacher recruitment. Lagos State, being Nigeria's economic hub, has embraced digitalization in many aspects of governance, including education. The transition to digital recruitment processes is aimed at improving efficiency, transparency, and accessibility.

However, despite the advantages, digital transformation in teacher recruitment has introduced various challenges. Issues such as limited digital literacy, inadequate infrastructure, and cyber security concerns have affected the smooth implementation of online recruitment platforms. Many aspiring teachers, particularly in underserved communities, face difficulties due to a lack of internet access and digital devices. Additionally, concerns about the reliability of automated screening systems and online assessments raise questions about fairness and credibility in the selection process. This study examines the challenges associated with the digitalization of teacher recruitment in Lagos State. By identifying key issues and evaluating their impact, the study aims to provide recommendations for improving the effectiveness of digital recruitment processes in the education sector.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The introduction of digital platforms for teacher recruitment in Lagos State was meant to enhance efficiency and transparency. However, various challenges have emerged, making it difficult for all candidates to participate fairly. Problems such as poor internet connectivity, technical glitches, and inadequate knowledge of digital systems have excluded some qualified individuals from successfully applying for teaching positions.

Additionally, cyber security threats and concerns over the accuracy of automated screening systems pose risks to the credibility of the recruitment process. There is also the challenge of assessing applicants' teaching competencies through digital platforms, as online tests may not fully capture the practical skills required for effective teaching. These challenges, if not addressed, could undermine the quality of teachers recruited into Lagos State schools, affecting the overall educational system.

### **Research Questions**

1. How has digitalization impacted the teacher recruitment process in Lagos State?
2. What are the key challenges faced in the digital recruitment of teachers?

### **Review of Literature**

This study reviews existing literature on digitalization and its impact on teacher recruitment. It explores key concepts, theoretical frameworks, and previous research on the challenges and opportunities of digital transformation in hiring processes, particularly in the education sector.

### **Concept of Digitalization in Recruitment**

Digitalization in recruitment refers to the integration of technology into the hiring process to improve efficiency, transparency, and accessibility. Online applications, automated screening tools, virtual interviews, and digital assessment platforms are some of the technologies used in modern recruitment processes (Kumar & Sharma, 2020). In the education sector, digitalization enables school authorities to streamline teacher recruitment by reducing paperwork, eliminating biases, and speeding up the selection process.

## **Digital Transformation in Teacher Recruitment**

The digital transformation of teacher recruitment has been widely adopted in many countries, including Nigeria. Digital platforms allow for online job postings, electronic applications, and remote assessments. According to Johnson & Brown (2021), digital recruitment reduces administrative burdens and enhances objectivity in selection. However, despite these benefits, digital recruitment presents significant challenges, particularly in regions with limited digital infrastructure.

## **Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on two key theories:

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by Davis (1989) explains how users accept and use technology. It suggests that two key factors influence technology adoption:

Perceived Usefulness (PU) – The extent to which individuals believe a system will enhance job performance.

Perceived Ease of Use (PEOU) – The degree to which a person finds a technology easy to use. In the context of teacher recruitment, if applicants and recruiters find digital platforms useful and easy to navigate, they are more likely to embrace the digitalized process.

## **Digital Divide Theory**

The Digital Divide Theory highlights inequalities in access to digital technologies due to economic, social, and infrastructural disparities. Norris (2001) argues that individuals with better access to digital resources have an advantage over those without. This theory is relevant to this study as it explains how unequal access to digital tools affects teacher recruitment in Lagos State. This outlines the research methodology used in the study, including the research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and analysis procedures. The methodology is designed to provide a structured approach to investigating the challenges of digitalization in the teacher recruitment process in Lagos State.

## **Methodology**

This study adopts a descriptive survey research design to assess the challenges faced by applicants and recruitment officers in the digital teacher recruitment process. A survey design was appropriate because it allows for the collection of data from a large population and provides an in-depth understanding of the issues under investigation. The population for this study consists of: Teacher applicants who have participated in the digital recruitment process in Lagos State. Education administrators and recruitment officers involved in teacher selection and ICT personnel managing digital recruitment platforms. A total of 200 respondents will be selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure a fair representation of different groups involved in teacher recruitment. The sample will include: 120 teacher applicants (both successful and unsuccessful candidates). 50 education administrators/recruitment officers from Lagos State Ministry of Education and Teaching Service Commission (TESCOM). 30 ICT

personnel involved in the management of recruitment platforms. This study will use both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data will be collected through questionnaires and interviews. Secondary data will be gathered from government reports, journal articles, and previous research studies on digital recruitment in Nigeria.

## Results

The data is presented in tables, charts, and figures, followed by a discussion of key trends and insights. The findings are also compared with previous studies to highlight similarities and difference Out of the 200 questionnaires distributed, 180 were returned and deemed valid for analysis, representing a 90% response rate

### Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic profile of respondents is analyzed based on gender, age, educational qualification, and occupation.

**Table 1: Demographic Data**

Variable	Frequency (n=180)	Percentage%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	95	52.8%
Female	85	47.2%
<b>Age Group</b>		
18-25 years	40	22.2%
26-35 Years	75	41.7%
36 – 45	50	27.8%
Above 45 years	15	8.3%
<b>Educational Qualification</b>		
NCE {National Certificate in Education}	65	36.1%
B.Ed./B.Sc. Education	80	44.4%
M.Ed./Postgraduate Degree	35	19.5%
<b>Occupation</b>		
Teacher Applicant	120	66.7%
Recruitment Officer	40	22.2%
ICT Personnel	20	11.1%

### Analysis of Research Questions

**Research Question 1:** How has digitalization impacted the teacher recruitment process in Lagos State?

**Impact of Digitalisation on Teacher Recruitment:** Respondents were asked whether digitalization has improved the efficiency of the teacher recruitment process in Lagos State. The responses are summarized below:

**Table 2: Impact of Digitalization on Teacher Recruitment**

Response	Frequency	Percentage [%]
Strongly Agree	60	33.3%
Agree	75	41.7%
Neutral	25	13.9%
Disagree	15	
Strongly Disagree	5	2.8%

A total of 75% of respondents (Strongly Agree + Agree) believe that digitalization has improved recruitment efficiency. However, 11.1% (Disagree + Strongly Disagree) felt that digital recruitment still faces challenges that hinder efficiency.

**Research Question 2:** What are the key challenges faced in the digital recruitment of teachers?

**Key Challenges in Digital Recruitment:** Respondents identified the most common challenges faced in the digital teacher recruitment process

**Table 3: Key Challenges in Digital Recruitment**

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage { % }
Poor internet connectivity	95	52.8%
Technical glitches in the system		
Cyber-Security concerns	50	27.8%
Digital illiteracy among applicants	70	38.9%
Bias in automated screening	60	33.3%

From the table, the most prevalent challenge is poor internet connectivity (52.8%), followed by technical system failures (44.4%). Cyber security issues and bias in automated screening were also notable concerns.

### Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study align with previous research on digital recruitment challenges in Nigeria. For example, Digital Divide Theory was confirmed, as poor internet access and digital literacy remain significant barriers. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) is relevant, as those who find the system useful and easy to use are more likely to engage with it.

Studies by Adeyemi & Olaniyan (2022) and Okeke (2023) also found technical system failures and poor digital access as key barriers in digital recruitment. The hybrid recruitment model has been successfully used in other states, reinforcing its recommendation for Lagos State.

### Summary of Findings

The study investigated the challenges of digitalization in the teacher recruitment process in Lagos State. The major findings are summarised as follows:

1. Impact of Digitalisation on Recruitment: 75% of respondents agreed that digitalization has improved recruitment efficiency by reducing paperwork, streamlining processes, and enhancing transparency. However, some applicants still face difficulties navigating digital platforms due to low digital literacy and system failures.
2. Challenges of Digital Teacher Recruitment: The most common challenge was poor internet connectivity (52.8%), followed by technical system failures (44.4%). 38.9% of respondents cited digital illiteracy among applicants as a barrier. 27.8% were concerned about cyber security risks, such as data breaches and hacking. 33.3% of respondents noted biases in automated screening systems, which may disadvantage some qualified applicants.
3. Accessibility and Fairness in Recruitment: 55.6% of respondents felt that digital recruitment made the process fairer and more accessible. However, 27.8% believed it excluded those without digital skills or reliable internet access, reinforcing the digital divide.
4. Proposed Strategies for Improvement: The most recommended solution was a hybrid recruitment model (52.8%), allowing both online and offline application options. 47.2% suggested improving digital infrastructure, such as expanding internet access 38.9% recommended digital literacy training for applicants to help them navigate the system. 41.7% advocated for upgrading recruitment platforms to minimise system failures and errors.

The digitalization of teacher recruitment in Lagos State has introduced efficiency, transparency, and convenience. However, infrastructural challenges, digital illiteracy, and cyber security risks continue to hinder a fully effective and inclusive recruitment process. While digital recruitment has improved access for many, it has also disadvantaged applicants with limited digital resources. To ensure a fair and effective teacher recruitment system, a hybrid model that combines online and offline methods should be adopted. Additionally, improving digital infrastructure, strengthening cyber security, and providing digital literacy training will help create a more inclusive and efficient recruitment process

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the study makes the following recommendations:

1. Expand internet access: The Lagos State government should collaborate with telecommunication companies to improve internet coverage, especially in underserved areas.
2. Upgrade recruitment platforms: The recruitment system should be optimized to prevent technical glitches and ensure seamless operation.
3. Strengthen cyber security: Data encryption, two-factor authentication, and other security measures should be enforced to protect applicants' information.
4. Adopt a hybrid recruitment model: Combining online applications with physical submission options will ensure inclusivity.

5. Provide digital training for applicants: Workshops and tutorials should be organized to teach applicants how to navigate digital recruitment platforms.
6. Introduce digital support centers: Help desks should be set up in local government education offices to assist applicants with their online applications.
7. Improve automated screening systems: Recruitment algorithms should be reviewed to ensure they do not unfairly eliminate qualified candidates due to rigid filtering criteria.
8. Monitor and evaluate digital recruitment processes: Regular assessments should be conducted to identify areas for improvement and policy adjustments.

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## INFLUENCE OF LECTURERS' TURNOVER INTENTIONS ON UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS ON GLOBAL RANKING TODAY AND TOMORROW

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### **Abstract**

*This study examined the influence of lecturers' turnover intentions on undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria and its implications on global ranking. Several challenges contributed to the lecturers' turnover intentions in Nigerian public universities due to inadequate funding, poor working conditions, poor remuneration package, low salaries, weak mentorship, outdated curricula, heavy workload, lack of job securities and opportunities for professional advancement with declining university education quality and global ranking scale. The study anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor and Job Embeddedness theories. The study adopted correlational design and population of the study comprised of 3,121 lecturers from the four public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Taro Yamane was used to determine sample size of 355 lecturers and selected through multi-stage sampling techniques. Two null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. Two research instruments titled 'Lecturers' Turnover Intentions Questionnaire' (LTIQ) and Records Observation format (ROF) of undergraduate student academic performance were used for data collection. The validity of the instruments was determined by test expert and Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability at 0.74 and 0.77. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment correlation to test hypotheses through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0. The findings of hypotheses 1 and 2 showed that: a significant relationship existed between lecturers' turnover intention and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria ( $r = .693$ ;  $N=355$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); and a significant relationship existed between lecturer heavy workload and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria ( $r = .733$ ;  $N=355$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Based on the findings, the study concluded that high rate of lecturer turnover intentions and heavy workload posed a significant threat to student academic performance and undermining the global ranking and competitiveness of public universities. Therefore, it was recommended amongst others that universities policymaker should employ adequate lecturers and improve their staff welfare package to reduce turnover intention toward attaining high global ranking and competitiveness.*

**Keywords:** Lecturer, Global Ranking, Turnover Intention, and Student Academic Performance

## Introduction

Over the years, the global education landscape is increasingly competitive, with many universities in Nigeria striving to maintain and improve their global rankings. Therefore, lecturer turnover intentions have become a pervasive concern public universities in Lagos State which incidentally undermine the quality of education and student academic performance. Lecturer turnover intention seems to be likelihood of academic staff leaving their academic institutions for better academic job elsewhere which can disrupt academic continuity, research and student learning experience. In the context of public universities in Lagos state including; University of Lagos (UNILAG); Lagos State University (LASU); Lagos State University of Education (LASUED); and Lagos State University of Science and Technology (LASUSTECH), Lecturer turnover intention may have significant implications for undergraduate students, institutional reputation and global ranking metrics. As a rapid growing university, understanding the dynamics of lecturer turnover intention on undergraduate students has become matter of interest, because the pursuit of academic excellence and global recognition determines the vision of public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Today, university education plays a vital role in driving economic growth, innovation, societal development and global competitiveness. Lecturers, as key stakeholders, are crucial to the success of universities due to the demanding nature of academic work, coupled with increasing pressures to publish, teach, and conduct research, can take a toll on lecturers' well-being and productivity. Therefore, lecturer turnover intention is a psychological state of mind where academic staff of institutions quit their jobs due to poor welfare package and seek for greener pasture elsewhere. However, it has become worrisome in Nigeria that lecturing profession has moved from the foreground to the background due to turnover intention, poor management of the sector, unemployment rate of professionals, retrogression, brain drain, low technological advancement, mediocrity and students' poor academic performance. According to Mogboh (2017), the long chain of all other professions like science, medicine, law and engineering even religion, originate from the teaching profession. It is widely accepted that to teach is to instruct, to impart knowledge and to guide pupils to learn properly.

Moreover, lecturer turnover intention poses a serious threat to achieving universities goals. This ugly situation caused by heavy workload, inadequate mentorship, lack of sponsorship and poor remuneration package that leads to brain-drain of lecturers and affected undergraduate student academic performance in the area of learning outcomes in public universities. According to Shittu, Ola and Sasa (2023), the term "brain-drain" describes the large-scale exodus of experts seeking better employment opportunities with better working conditions from poor to wealthy nations. The movement of Nigerian lecturers to developed countries can contribute to lecturer turnover intention due to unsatisfactory working conditions, low pay, heavy workload, inadequate mentorship and unappealing incentive packages. It is therefore observed that many academic staff members are quitting their present job at the rate of geometric progression. The frequent departure of experienced lecturers not only disrupts the academic environment but also potentially undermines the quality of education. Research has shown that lecturer turnover can lead to a decline in student academic performance, as students may experience difficulty in adjusting to new instructors, teaching styles, and curriculum

delivery (Somefingers, 2018; Oyebade, 2020). More so, a large number of lecturers are quitting public university in the middle of academic semester and seeking for better international academic job because of inadequate mentorship programme, insecurity, outdated infrastructure, and inadequate fund for lecturers in public universities. According to Shittu, Hunpegan and Adebayo (2024), mentorship programme in Nigerian universities is declining and seems to collapsed the value of academic system because some of the newly employed academic staff were unconsciously idle to perform their obligation. They avoid classroom teaching, jettisoned academic research and publication, avoiding local and international conferences due to lack of sponsorship. Shittu, Ola and Adepoju (2023) posited that a mentor is a role model, experienced person and professional expert who shares expertise knowledge, skills, and experience with a mentee or protégé about career path and provides leadership, guidance, motivation, and emotional support to increase individual effectiveness and efficiency in the organisation.

It is therefore noted that, the administration of the university education programme in Nigeria is being impacted by the large number of academic staff members, including professors and other professionals, who are departing the country for better opportunities elsewhere. However, it would be a mistake to assume that the teaching profession in Nigeria has held a relatively static position in the labour market. Over time, the teaching profession has experienced dynamic changes due to several factors such as macroeconomic developments, growing labour movements, altering political narratives, and continuous reform efforts (Kraft & Melissa, 2022). This study aims to investigate the effect of lecturer turnover intention on student academic performance in public universities in Nigeria, exploring the underlying factors that contribute to this phenomenon and its implications for educational policy and practice.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Today, the Nigerian higher education system has witnessed significant challenges in recent years, with one of the most pressing concerns being the high rate of lecturer turnover intention in public universities. In Lagos State, public universities are particularly vulnerable to lecturer turnover intention due to factors such as inadequate funding, poor working conditions, poor remuneration package, inadequate mentorship, heavy workload, and limited opportunities for career advancement which culminated to brain drain of academic staff. The frequent turnover of lecturers in public universities in Lagos State poses a significant threat to the academic performance of students, thereby undermining the global competitiveness of Nigerian graduates. Despite the critical role that lecturers play in shaping the academic experiences and outcomes of students, the high rate of lecturer turnover in public universities in Lagos State has been a persistent challenge due to inadequate mentorship, poor compensation, heavy workload in teaching and research work. Therefore, some lecturers quitting academic job at the middle of semester which affected some undergraduate student academic performance in public universities.

This phenomenon not only disrupts the academic continuity and stability needed for effective learning but also compromises the quality of education, leading to a mismatch between the skills and knowledge acquired by graduates and the demands of the global labour market. It therefore notes that, public universities in Lagos State are faced with rapid faculty exodus or brain drain. Some faculty members abandoned universities for other universities and sectors of the economy where professionals and scientists receive higher salaries and greater social recognition (Okoli, Ogbondah & Ewor, 2016). The result of the faculty exodus is observed in the quality of graduates that our universities.

## **Hypotheses**

The following Null hypotheses were raised:

$H_01$ : There is no significant relationship lecturers' turnover intention and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

$H_02$ : There is no significant relationship between lecturer heavy workload and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

This study is grounded on Herzberg two-factor theory and Job Embeddedness Theory. The theory developed by Frederick Herzberg, proposes that job satisfaction and dissatisfaction are influenced by two distinct sets of factors: motivators (e.g., recognition, achievement) and hygiene factors (e.g., salary, working conditions). In the context of lecturer turnover intention, Herzberg's theory suggests that lecturers who experience dissatisfaction with hygiene factors (e.g., poor working conditions) may experience higher turnover intentions. However, Job Embeddedness Theory developed by Mitchell, Holtom, Lee, Sablinski, and Eberly (2001), JET suggests that an individual's decision to leave an organization is influenced by their perceived links to the organization, community, and job. In the context of lecturer turnover intention, JET implies that lecturers who feel disconnected from their institution, colleagues, or students may experience higher turnover intentions. The lecturing profession observed to be endangered due to sporadic movement of some quality academic staff, graduate and professional teachers who migrated abroad in geometric progression and explored the potential of the academic staff to search for greener pastures. The frequently stated aspirational objective of upgrading the lecturing profession to the stature of more prominent vocations like those of doctors, engineers, lawyers, and accountants is made particularly difficult by the industry's size, history, and nature.

In Nigeria, public universities in Lagos State are bedeviled with unique challenges, including inadequate funding, poor infrastructure, heavy workload, and a lack of incentives for lecturers, which can contribute to high turnover intentions (Tertiary Education Trust Fund, 2020). However, teaching a large number of students in a small classroom without a public address system; poor internet facilities and use of technology to teach online; poor conducive environment for teaching due to lack of electricity, ventilation, and sitting arrangement of the students. All these culminated in excess workload and stress for academic staff (Shittu, Yekinni & Adedapo, 2022). Lecturer heavy or excess workload in the area of research work involves

the lecturer's research for academic publications for promotion; attending national and international academic conferences without sponsorship, supervision of the undergraduate project and postgraduate dissertation and PhD thesis. This is especially true for university lecturer where there is a proverb well-circulated: "publish or perish". A lecturer must publish a good number of articles in refereed journals with a good reputation; he/she should attend national and international seminars, conferences, workshops, and training programme to gather and develop up to date knowledge and information about teaching, learning, and development (Mahmood & Yaqub, 2016).

The impact of lecturer turnover intention on student academic performance in these institutions is a critical area of concern, as it can have long-term consequences for the country's human capital development and economic growth. Lecturer turnover refers to the voluntary or involuntary departure of academic staff from an institution. In Nigeria, the rate of lecturer turnover is alarmingly high, with some studies suggesting that up to 50% of academic staff leave their positions within the first five years of employment (Oyebade et al., 2017). The reasons for this high turnover rate are complex and multifaceted, including poor working conditions, inadequate compensation, and limited opportunities for career advancement. Moreover, there has been a severe lack of attention given to professional lecturers which has negatively resulted to brain-drain and poor academic performance of undergraduate students in public universities. Despite the significance of this issue, there is a dearth of research on the impact of lecturer turnover intention on student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State. This study aims to address this knowledge gap by investigating the relationship between lecturer turnover intention and student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. This trend not only affects the quality of education but also has implications for the global ranking of public universities in Lagos State which decline academic performance of undergraduate students and institutional reputation that can lead to a decrease in university rankings metrics, making it challenging for public universities in Lagos State to attract international students, faculty, and research collaborations. However, some potential implications include: Reduced academic quality because high lecturer turnover rates can disrupt the academic environment, leading to reduced academic quality and student performance; decreased research output because lecturer turnover can disrupt research projects, leading to decreased research output and a loss of academic reputation; negative impact on student enrollment and performance because high lecturer turnover rates can deter prospective students from enrolling in public universities in Lagos State, leading to poor academic performance and reduced enrollment rates; reduced global competitiveness on the cumulative effect of reduced academic quality, research output, and student enrollment can lead to reduced global competitiveness and ranking of public universities in Nigeria.

The implications of lecturer turnover intention on student academic performance in public universities in Nigeria can have far-reaching consequences on global ranking. Some potential implications include: Reduced academic quality because high lecturer turnover rates can disrupt the academic environment, leading to reduced academic quality and undergraduate student performance; decreased research output because lecturer turnover can disrupt research projects, leading to decreased research output and a loss of academic reputation; negative

impact on student enrollment and performance because high lecturer turnover rates can deter prospective students from enrolling in public universities in Lagos State, leading to poor academic performance and reduced enrollment rates; reduced global competitiveness on the cumulative effect of reduced academic quality, research output, and student enrollment can lead to reduced global competitiveness and ranking of public universities in Nigeria. In global competitiveness, limited international collaborations and partnerships can hinder lecturers' ability to engage in cutting-edge research and stay current in their field; limited research funding can hinder lecturers' ability to conduct innovative research and publish in top-tier journals; and Brain Drain. The impact of lecturer turnover intention on student academic performance can have significant implications for the global ranking of Nigerian universities. According to the Times Higher Education World University Rankings (2023), no Nigerian university is ranked among the top 500 universities globally. The high lecturer turnover rates and poor student academic performance can contribute to this poor ranking.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted correlational research design. population of the study comprised of 3,121 lecturers from the four state public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Taro Yamane was used to determine sample size of 355 lecturers and selected through multi-Stage sampling techniques. Two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Two research instruments titled 'Lecturers' Turnover Intentions Questionnaire' (LTIQ) and Records Observation format (ROF) of undergraduate student academic performance were used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A and B. Section A contains the personal information of the respondents and section B contains the 30 items structured around the research questions. Each statement is measured on a four-point modifier Likert-type-rating scale, namely: "Strongly Agree (SA)", "Agree (A)", "Strongly Disagree (SD)" and "Disagree (D)". The content validity of the instruments was ensured by test expert and reliability consistency of the instruments was at 0.74 and 0.77 using Cronbach alpha meaning that the instrument is reliable. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient through Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0.

## **Testing of Hypotheses**

### **Hypothesis One**

There is no significant relationship between lecturers' turnover intention and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Pearson's correlation analysis between lecturers' turnover intention and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria**

Variables		Lecturers' Turnover Intention	Undergraduate-Student Academic Performance
	Pearson Correlation	1	.693**
Lecturers' Turnover Intention	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	355	355
Undergraduate-Student Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.693**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	355	355

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

Table 1 indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between lecturers' turnover intention and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria ( $r = .693$ ;  $N=355$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); Hence, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between lecturers' turnover intention and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between lecturers' turnover intention and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. This finding negates with Hammond and Kutsanedzie (2015) that lecturer turnover can negatively influence student academic performance, especially if the exiting lecturer resigns in the middle of the semester. More so, lecturers in Nigerian public universities are often poorly paid, leading to dissatisfaction and turnover intention (Oyebade et al., 2017). This finding showed that lecturer turnover intention is a significant issue in Nigerian public universities and found that 71.4% of lecturers in Nigerian public universities had considered leaving their jobs.

### **Hypothesis Two**

There is no significant relationship between lecturer heavy workload and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Pearson's correlation analysis between lecturer heavy workload and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria**

Variables	Lecturers'		Undergraduate-	
	Turnover	Intention	Student	Academic
			Performance	
Lecturers' Turnover Intention	Pearson Correlation	1		.693**
	Sig. (2-tailed)			.001
	N	355		355
Undergraduate-Student Academic Performance	Pearson Correlation	.693**		1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		
	N	355		355

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

Table 1 indicates that there was a positive significant relationship between lecturer heavy workload and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria ( $r = .733$ ;  $N=355$ ;  $p<0.05$ ); Hence, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between lecturer heavy workload and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between lecturer heavy workload and undergraduate student academic performance in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. This finding was in line with Alabi et al (2012) and Otaroghene (2013) that lack of infrastructure and workload are major causes of job stress among academic staff at University of Ibadan followed by conduct of examination, time pressure, and students' indiscipline, respectively.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, high rate of lecturer turnover intentions and heavy workload posed a significant threat to student academic performance and undermining the global ranking and competitiveness of public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Lecturer turnover intention is a significant issue in Nigerian public universities, with far-reaching consequences for student academic performance and global ranking. To address this issue, Nigerian universities and policymakers must prioritize lecturer welfare, provide opportunities for career advancement, and improve working conditions. By doing so, public universities in Lagos State can improve student academic performance and enhance their global ranking metrics. Global competitiveness is critical for universities to attract international students, faculty, and partnerships. This finding highlights the significant impact of lecturer turnover intention on student academic performance in public universities in Nigeria. To improve student academic performance and global ranking, it is essential for Nigerian public universities to address the factors contributing to lecturer turnover intention, such as poor working conditions, low salaries, and lack of job security.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. universities policymaker should employe adequate number of lecturers and improve their staff welfare package to reduce turnover intention toward attaining high global ranking and competitiveness.
2. Policymaker should provide professional development opportunities and offer regular training, workshops, and conferences to enhance lecturers' teaching and research skills, increasing job satisfaction and reducing turnover intention.
3. Government should improve lecturer welfare package and provide competitive salaries, benefits, and a conducive work environment to reduce lecturer turnover intention.
4. University management should establish mentorship programme that pair senior lecturers with new junior ones to provide guidance and reduce turnover intention.
5. University management should ensure optimal lecturer-student ratio to prevent heavy workload and burnout among lecturers to reduce turnover intention.
6. University management should offer Incentives for long-service lecturers: such as promotions, awards, or additional benefits, to recognize and encouraging them to remain in their positions.
7. Government should foster collaboration between university administrators, lecturers, students, and external stakeholders to address lecturer turnover intention and improve student academic performance.
8. University governing council should develop and implement retention strategies for experienced lecturer such as flexible work arrangements, sabbatical leaves, or research grants, to reduce lecturer turnover intention.

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## UNLOCKING CREATIVE POTENTIAL: A CATALYST FOR VALUE RE-ORIENTATION AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This study investigates the role of unlocking creative potential as a catalyst for value re-orientation and sustainable development among senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Grounded in social learning and human capital development theories, the research explores how creative engagement can reshape attitudes, foster self-worth, and promote ethical behavior in youth. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative data from 300 students selected through stratified random sampling with qualitative insights from 12 in-depth interviews with teachers and guidance counselors. The findings reveal a significant positive relationship between students' participation in creativity-focused programs (e.g., visual arts, drama, and problem-solving workshops) and their shift toward values such as integrity, responsibility, and self-discipline. The study also highlights that students who engaged consistently in creative tasks demonstrated enhanced critical thinking, empathy, and a greater sense of purpose. Based on these results, the paper recommends integrating structured creative activities into the school curriculum as a strategic tool for value re-orientation. This approach may contribute meaningfully to addressing moral decline and youth disengagement in Nigerian society.*

**Keywords:** Creative potential, value re-orientation, secondary school students, youth development, moral education, Lagos State.

### Introduction

In recent years, Nigerian society has witnessed a gradual erosion of core moral values, particularly among the youth. Incidents of dishonesty, indiscipline, materialism, and a lack of national consciousness have raised critical concerns among educators, policymakers, and community leaders. This value crisis, if not addressed, threatens the development of responsible future citizens and the overall progress of the nation (Ofor-Douglas, 2023). As schools play a central role in shaping character and behaviour, Nwalado (2021) observed that there is a growing need to explore innovative approaches to value re-orientation. One promising strategy lies in harnessing the creative potential of students. Creativity, defined as

the ability to generate original ideas, think critically, and express oneself in diverse ways, has been shown to promote self-awareness, empathy, ethical reasoning, and problem-solving skills. Engaging students in creative activities such as art, music, drama, storytelling, and design can foster not only cognitive growth but also emotional and moral development (International Institute for Policy Review and Development Studies (IIPRDS), 2023).

While several studies have explored the benefits of creativity in education, limited empirical research exists on its specific impact on value re-orientation among secondary school students in Nigeria. This study seeks to bridge that gap by examining the extent to which creative engagement can influence students' attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors in alignment with socially accepted values.

The primary objective of this study is to assess whether unlocking creative potential can serve as a catalyst for positive value re-orientation. The study focuses on senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria, employing both quantitative and qualitative methods to understand how creativity-based interventions influence moral awareness and ethical conduct. The findings are expected to inform educators and policymakers on how to incorporate creativity into school programs to foster value-driven citizenship.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Despite the growing recognition of creativity as a key driver of innovation and sustainable development, many nations continue to underutilize their creative potential. Societal structures, educational systems, and cultural norms often prioritize conformity, rote learning, and traditional approaches over critical thinking, innovation, and problem-solving. This misalignment hampers the ability of individuals and institutions to adapt to emerging challenges, limiting opportunities for value re-orientation and long-term development. Furthermore, the lack of strategic frameworks to nurture creativity at the grassroots level has led to stagnation in key sectors, diminished economic competitiveness, and widening social inequalities. Without deliberate efforts to unlock and channel creative potential, nations risk falling behind in the global race for technological advancement, sustainable resource management, and equitable growth. The problem, therefore, lies in the failure to integrate creativity into the core of societal, educational, and policy frameworks. This disconnect undermines the capacity to foster a culture of innovation and adaptability that is essential for achieving sustainable national development. Addressing this issue requires a paradigm shift that emphasizes the value of creativity as a catalyst for transformation, guiding societies toward inclusive and resilient progress.

### **Research Question:**

To what extent does creativity influence students' value re-orientation and skills acquisition in secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

**H<sub>0</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between students' creative potential and value re-orientation in secondary schools in Lagos State.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Students' creative potential does not significantly influence skills acquisition in secondary schools in Lagos State.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Skills acquisition has no significant relationship with sustainable development outcomes among secondary school students in Lagos State.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** There is no significant association between creativity-driven skills acquisition and the attainment of sustainable development goals in secondary schools in Lagos State.

## **Literature Review**

### **1. Concept of Creativity in Education**

Creativity is increasingly recognized as a fundamental skill in modern education, essential for developing well-rounded, adaptable individuals. According to Robinson (2006), creativity involves the process of having original ideas that have value. In the educational context, it is not limited to artistic expression but extends to problem-solving, innovation, and critical thinking. Torrance (1995) emphasized that fostering creativity enables students to explore their personal identity, develop confidence, and generate new perspectives on societal issues. Integrating creativity into the school curriculum encourages students to think independently, take initiative, and develop a sense of ownership over their learning experiences.

### **2. Value Re-orientation and Youth Development**

Value re-orientation refers to the process of changing or strengthening individual beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors to align with societal norms and ethical standards. In Nigeria, the growing concern over moral decline among youths has prompted calls for strategic value-based education (Akinbote, 2010). Values such as honesty, discipline, empathy, patriotism, and responsibility are critical for national development and personal fulfillment. According to Oyesiku (2014), value re-orientation among youths is essential for reducing social vices and promoting civic responsibility. Schools, as formal institutions of learning, have the potential to influence value systems through both explicit instruction and hidden curriculum.

### **3. Creativity as a Tool for Moral and Ethical Development**

Emerging studies suggest that creative activities can serve as powerful tools for promoting moral and ethical awareness. Engagement in the arts, drama, storytelling, and design fosters empathy, perspective-taking, and self-reflection (Eisner, 2002). For example, participation in drama helps students explore ethical dilemmas and experience moral reasoning in simulated real-life scenarios. Craft (2005) argued that creative education nurtures not only intellectual abilities but also emotional and ethical dimensions of learners. Creative expression provides a safe space for young people to explore personal and social identity, confront challenges, and internalize values through experiential learning.

### **4. Creativity and Value Re-orientation in the Nigerian Context**

In Nigeria, few empirical studies have directly examined the link between creative potential and value re-orientation. However, existing literature points to a growing interest in integrating

skills acquisition, arts education, and youth empowerment programs into the school system (Okebukola, 2012). For instance, initiatives such as Creative Arts in the Lagos State curriculum aim to instill cultural appreciation, collaboration, and social responsibility. Despite these efforts, the implementation often lacks consistency and empirical evaluation. This study seeks to fill that gap by empirically examining how creative engagement influences value alignment among senior secondary school students.

In a nutshell, the reviewed literature underscores the potential of creativity as a transformative force in education, with implications for cognitive, emotional, and moral development. However, empirical studies specifically linking creativity to value re-orientation among Nigerian youths remain scarce. This study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge by exploring how unlocking creative potential can serve as a catalyst for value re-orientation in the secondary school context.

## **Theoretical Background**

This study is anchored on two interrelated theories: Human Capital Theory and Social Learning Theory. These frameworks provide insight into how creativity can be nurtured as a personal resource and how values can be transmitted and internalized through social experiences.

### **1. Human Capital Theory**

First developed by economists such as Schultz (1961) and Becker (1964), Human Capital Theory posits that individuals acquire knowledge, skills, and competencies through education and training, which in turn increase their productivity and societal value. In the context of this study, creativity is viewed as a component of human capital that can be developed and harnessed to promote not only economic productivity but also moral and ethical responsibility. Creative engagement enhances cognitive flexibility, problem-solving skills, and emotional intelligence, qualities that are essential for ethical decision-making and responsible citizenship. Furthermore, the development of students' creative potential can lead to self-reliance and a sense of purpose, which are central to positive value re-orientation. When students are empowered to express themselves and solve problems creatively, they are more likely to develop intrinsic motivation, resilience, and integrity, traits that contribute to social and moral transformation.

### **2. Social Learning Theory**

Proposed by Albert Bandura (1977), Social Learning Theory emphasizes that behavior is learned through observation, imitation, and modeling within a social context. This theory suggests that individuals, especially adolescents, acquire values, attitudes, and behaviors by watching others and internalizing social cues. In a school setting, creativity-based activities such as drama, storytelling, and group art projects allow students to engage with value-laden narratives and role models in an experiential way.

Through creative participation, students encounter ethical dilemmas, collaborate with peers, and reflect on the consequences of actions—thereby reinforcing socially acceptable behaviors. Bandura's concept of observational learning supports the idea that students not only

absorb values through direct instruction but also through active engagement and emotional experience, making creative methods particularly effective for value re-orientation.

### Synthesis of Theories

Together, Human Capital Theory and Social Learning Theory provide a robust foundation for this study. Human Capital Theory highlights the importance of investing in creativity as a means of developing valuable personal and social competencies. Social Learning Theory complements this by explaining how value systems are shaped through interactive, creative experiences within a community. By integrating these theories, the study positions creativity not just as a cognitive skill, but as a transformative force capable of reshaping students' value orientations and preparing them for ethical participation in society.

## Methods

This study adopted a quantitative research design to examine how creative potential influences value re-orientation among senior secondary school students. The study was conducted among senior secondary school students (SS1–SS3) in public secondary schools across Lagos State, Nigeria. The target population comprised all senior secondary school students in public schools within the state. A multistage sampling technique was employed. First, three local government areas (LGAs) were randomly selected from each senatorial district. Subsequently, two public secondary schools were randomly selected from each selected LGA, resulting in a total of six schools. Within each school, 50 students were selected using stratified random sampling based on class level and gender, yielding a total sample size of 300 students. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled Creativity and Value Orientation Scale (CVOS), developed by the researcher. The instrument consisted of three sections: Section A elicited respondents' demographic information; Section B assessed participation in creative activities such as arts, music, and drama; and Section C measured value orientation indicators including responsibility, honesty, empathy, and discipline. Responses were rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The questionnaire was subjected to content and face validation by three experts in educational psychology and measurement. A pilot study was conducted with 30 senior secondary school students in a school outside the sampled LGAs to ascertain the reliability of the instrument. The reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.82, indicating high internal consistency. Approval for the study was obtained from the Lagos State Ministry of Education and the principals of the selected schools prior to data collection. The questionnaires were administered during regular class periods with the assistance of trained research assistants, and all completed copies were retrieved for analysis. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (Pearson Product Moment Correlation and regression analysis) with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

## Results

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Student Respondents (n = 284)**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	132	46.5
	Female	152	53.5
	Total	284	100.0
Class Level	SS1	89	31.3
	SS2	101	35.6
	SS3	94	33.1
	Total	284	100.0

Out of the 300 copies of questionnaire distributed, 284 were properly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 94.7%. The sample consisted of 152 females (53.5%) and 132 males (46.5%). Respondents were fairly distributed across SS1 (31.3%), SS2 (35.6%), and SS3 (33.1%).

### Answer to Research Question

**Research Question:** To what extent does creativity influence students' value re-orientation and skills acquisition in secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria?

**Table 2: Mean Ratings of Students' Perceptions of Creativity as a Catalyst for Value Re-orientation and Skills Acquisition**

S/N	Indicator	Mean Score	Interpretation
1	Creativity promotes ethical thinking	4.21	Strongly Agreed
2	Creativity replaces negative societal values	4.05	Agreed
3	Creativity enhances civic responsibility	4.12	Strongly Agreed
4	Creative Skills Improve Employability	4.32	Strongly Agreed
5	Creativity drives innovation in skills acquisition	4.18	Agreed
6	Creative training promotes self-reliance and entrepreneurship	4.26	Strongly Agreed

Descriptive analysis of students' responses indicated that creativity exerts a substantial influence on value re-orientation and skills acquisition among secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Specifically, respondents strongly agreed that creativity promotes ethical thinking ( $M = 4.21$ ) and enhances civic responsibility ( $M = 4.12$ ), suggesting that creative engagement significantly contributes to positive moral and social value re-orientation. Similarly, students agreed that creativity helps replace negative societal values ( $M = 4.05$ ), further reinforcing its role in shaping constructive attitudes and behaviours. With respect to

skills acquisition, creativity was perceived to have an even stronger impact. Respondents strongly agreed that creative skills improve employability ( $M = 4.32$ ) and promote self-reliance and entrepreneurship ( $M = 4.26$ ), indicating that creativity equips students with practical competencies essential for economic participation and independence. In addition, creativity was agreed to drive innovation in skills acquisition ( $M = 4.18$ ), reflecting its importance in fostering adaptability and problem-solving skills. The findings suggest that creativity influences students' value re-orientation and skills acquisition to a very great extent, thereby supporting its central role as a catalyst for ethical development, employability, and sustainable development among secondary school students in Lagos State.

### Test of Hypotheses

**Table 3: Summary of Inferential Statistical Results for Hypotheses**

Test	Variable Tested	Result	Significance Level(P)	Interpretation
Pearson Correlation	Creativity ↔ Re-orientation	$r = 0.72$	$p < 0.05$	Strong Positive Relationship
Pearson Correlation	Creativity ↔ Skills Acquisition	$r = 0.75$	$p < 0.05$	Strong Positive Relationship
Pearson Correlation	Skills Acquisition ↔ Sustainable Development	$r = 0.79$	$p < 0.05$	Strong Positive Relationship
Chi-square Test	Creativity-driven Skills Acquisition ↔ Development Goals	$\chi^2 = 32.17$ (df=4)	$p = 0.000$	Significant Association (Reject Null Hypothesis)

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between students' creative potential and value re-orientation in secondary schools in Lagos State.

The Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.72, p < 0.05$ ) reveals a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between creativity and value re-orientation. This result indicates that increased creative engagement among students is strongly associated with improved ethical consciousness, civic responsibility, and positive value shifts. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, affirming creativity as a powerful driver of value re-orientation within the Lagos State secondary school context.

**Hypothesis Two:** Students' creative potential does not significantly influence skills acquisition in secondary schools in Lagos State.

The correlation result ( $r = 0.75, p < 0.05$ ) demonstrates a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between creativity and skills acquisition. This finding suggests that creative pedagogical environments substantially enhance students' acquisition of practical,

cognitive, and entrepreneurial skills. The null hypothesis is therefore rejected, underscoring creativity as a critical mechanism for skills development in secondary education.

**Hypothesis Three:** Skills acquisition has no significant relationship with sustainable development outcomes among secondary school students in Lagos State.

The Pearson correlation outcome ( $r = 0.79$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) indicates a very strong and significant positive relationship between skills acquisition and sustainable development. This implies that students equipped with relevant skills are more likely to contribute meaningfully to economic productivity, social stability, and long-term development goals. The null hypothesis is rejected, confirming skills acquisition as a foundational pillar for sustainable development.

**Hypothesis Four:** There is no significant association between creativity-driven skills acquisition and the attainment of sustainable development goals in secondary schools in Lagos State.

The Chi-square test result ( $\chi^2 = 32.17$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) reveals a statistically significant association between creativity-driven skills acquisition and development goals. This outcome demonstrates that creativity-oriented instructional practices are not merely pedagogical enhancements but are structurally linked to broader sustainable development objectives. The null hypothesis is rejected, validating creativity as a catalytic force for development-oriented educational outcomes.

### **Discussion of Findings**

The demographic distribution of respondents shows a relatively balanced representation across gender and class levels, which strengthens the generalizability of the findings within the Lagos State secondary school context. Female students (53.5%) slightly outnumbered their male counterparts (46.5%), suggesting that perspectives on creativity, value re-orientation, and skills acquisition reflect diverse gender experiences. This balance aligns with Adeyemo (2022), who emphasizes that inclusive participation of both genders in creative and leadership-oriented educational processes enhances collective value re-orientation and national development outcomes.

Similarly, the fairly even spread across SS1 (31.3%), SS2 (35.6%), and SS3 (33.1%) indicates that creativity-related perceptions cut across early, middle, and exit levels of secondary education. This suggests that creativity as a pedagogical tool is relevant throughout the secondary school cycle rather than being confined to a particular stage. Aja et al. (2017) argued that sustained exposure to creativity-oriented learning across school levels is crucial for instilling enduring values, civic responsibility, and sustainable development consciousness among learners. Thus, the demographic findings provide a solid foundation for interpreting the influence of creativity on students' value re-orientation and skills acquisition.

The research question sought to determine the extent to which creativity influences students' value re-orientation and skills acquisition in secondary schools in Lagos State. Findings from Table 2 reveal high mean ratings across all indicators, demonstrating that creativity influences students' value re-orientation and skills acquisition to a very great extent. Students' strong agreement that creativity promotes ethical thinking and enhances civic responsibility underscores the role of creative engagement in reshaping moral consciousness and social responsibility. This finding corroborates Bulus (2015), who asserts that value re-orientation in Nigeria requires educational approaches that encourage reflective thinking, originality, and ethical decision-making—core elements of creativity. Likewise, Ike and Onyia (2024) emphasize that creativity-based learning environments foster ethical sensitivity and value-driven behaviours necessary for educational development in Africa. The finding that creativity replaces negative societal values further supports the argument that education can serve as a corrective mechanism for social vices when creativity is deliberately integrated into instructional practices. Olasehinde-Williams (2018) similarly notes that Nigerian education must prioritize value re-orientation through learner-centered and innovative pedagogies to counteract moral decay and promote national development.

Regarding skills acquisition, students' strong agreement that creativity improves employability, promotes self-reliance, and drives innovation highlights its instrumental role in preparing learners for real-world economic participation. This aligns with Ofor-Douglas (2023), who posits that creativity is central to entrepreneurship education and skills development, enabling learners to become job creators rather than job seekers. Nwalado (2021) also supports this view, arguing that creative skills acquisition equips learners with adaptive competencies necessary for sustainable security and development in Nigeria. The findings demonstrate that creativity is not merely an academic enhancer but a transformative force for ethical development, skills acquisition, and sustainable development among secondary school students.

The strong and significant positive relationship between creativity and value re-orientation ( $r = 0.72, p < 0.05$ ) indicates that increased creative engagement among students is closely associated with improved ethical consciousness and positive value shifts. This finding reinforces Adeyemo's (2022) assertion that creativity is foundational to leadership development and value re-orientation among Nigerian youths. By encouraging originality, critical reflection, and moral reasoning, creativity facilitates the internalization of positive values necessary for sustainable national development. The rejection of the null hypothesis confirms creativity as a potent driver of value re-orientation in secondary education.

The statistically significant correlation between creativity and skills acquisition ( $r = 0.75, p < 0.05$ ) suggests that creative learning environments substantially enhance students' acquisition of practical, cognitive, and entrepreneurial skills. This finding aligns with Ofor-Douglas (2023), who emphasizes that creativity underpins effective skills acquisition by fostering innovation, problem-solving, and adaptability. Aja et al. (2017) similarly argue that functional education grounded in creativity equips learners with competencies essential for sustainable development. The rejection of the null hypothesis underscores creativity as a critical mechanism for skills development in secondary schools.

The very strong positive relationship between skills acquisition and sustainable development ( $r = 0.79$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) confirms that students equipped with relevant skills are more likely to contribute meaningfully to economic productivity, social stability, and long-term development goals. This finding supports Bulus (2015) and Olasehinde-Williams (2018), who contend that sustainable development in Nigeria is contingent upon an education system that prioritizes skills acquisition and value-based competencies. The rejection of the null hypothesis affirms skills acquisition as a foundational pillar for sustainable development.

The significant Chi-square result ( $\chi^2 = 32.17$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ) demonstrates a strong association between creativity-driven skills acquisition and the attainment of sustainable development goals. This finding suggests that creativity-oriented instructional practices are structurally linked to broader development objectives rather than serving as isolated pedagogical strategies. Ike and Onyia (2024) emphasize that education anchored in ethics, creativity, and values is essential for achieving sustainable development in Africa. Similarly, Adeyemo (2022) highlights creativity as a catalyst for aligning educational outcomes with national and global development agendas. The rejection of the null hypothesis confirms creativity as a catalytic force for development-oriented educational outcomes.

## Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the role of unlocking creative potential as a catalyst for value re-orientation among senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. The findings revealed that creativity significantly promotes ethical thinking, civic responsibility, and positive value re-orientation among students. In addition, creativity was found to strongly enhance skills acquisition, particularly in employability, innovation, self-reliance, and entrepreneurship. Inferential analyses further confirmed strong and significant relationships between creativity and value re-orientation, creativity and skills acquisition, and skills acquisition and sustainable development. The significant association between creativity-driven skills acquisition and sustainable development goals underscores creativity as a critical catalyst for development-oriented educational outcomes. The study concludes that integrating creativity into secondary school teaching and learning processes is essential for fostering value-based education, equipping students with relevant life and entrepreneurial skills, and promoting sustainable development. Consequently, educational stakeholders are encouraged to prioritize creativity-oriented pedagogies and curricula to enhance holistic student development and contribute meaningfully to national development objectives.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to educators, policymakers, and stakeholders in the Nigerian education sector:

1. Integrate Creativity into the Formal Curriculum: The Ministry of Education should develop and implement policies that integrate creative subjects, such as visual arts, music, drama, and creative writing, into the mainstream school curriculum, not as extracurricular activities but as core components of value education.

2. Train Teachers in Creative Pedagogies: Professional development programs should be organized to train teachers on how to use creativity-based teaching methods (e.g., storytelling, role-playing, project-based learning) as tools for promoting value re-orientation and character education.
3. Provide Resources and Infrastructure for Creative Expression: Schools should be equipped with the necessary facilities, such as art studios, performance spaces, and music equipment—to enable effective implementation of creative programs. Budgetary allocation should be made to support these initiatives at both state and federal levels.
4. Promote Collaborative Creative Activities: Group-based creative projects, such as drama performances, art exhibitions, and literary clubs, should be encouraged to foster teamwork, empathy, and social responsibility among students.
5. Monitor and Evaluate Impact of Creative Engagement on Values: School administrators and education boards should implement monitoring frameworks to assess the impact of creative programs on students' value orientation, using feedback tools such as surveys, behavioral reports, and reflective journals.
6. Partner with Cultural and Creative Organizations: Collaboration with local artists, cultural groups, and NGOs that specialize in youth development can enhance the quality and relevance of creative experiences offered to students.
7. Encourage Parental and Community Involvement: Parents and community leaders should be sensitized to the value of creativity in moral development and encouraged to support students' participation in creative activities both in and outside the school environment.

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## AN ASSESSMENT OF INCLUSIVITY POLICY IN STAFF RECRUITMENT IN A CHRISTIAN MISSION SECONDARY SCHOOL IN LAGOS

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### **Abstract**

*The importance of inclusivity in education cannot be overstated, as it has been shown to positively impact student outcomes, teacher morale, and school culture. Despite this, many schools struggle to create inclusive environments, particularly in the context of staff recruitment. Christian mission schools, in particular, face unique challenges in balancing their religious mission with the need to create inclusive environments. In Nigeria, where Christian mission schools play a significant role in the education system, there is a need for research that explores the inclusivity policies and practices of these schools. This study contributes to this need by critically examining the inclusivity policy in staff recruitment in a Christian mission secondary school in Lagos, Nigeria. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research investigates the extent to which the school's recruitment policies and practices promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. The findings reveal a disconnect between policy and practice, with biases, stereotypes, and cultural norms influencing recruitment decisions. Barriers to inclusivity include limited opportunities for marginalised groups, inadequate training, and lack of accountability mechanisms. The study recommends targeted strategies to enhance inclusivity in staff recruitment, contributing to the literature on inclusivity in education and informing policy and practice in Christian mission schools.*

**Keywords:** Inclusivity Policy, Staff Recruitment, Christian Mission Schools, Diversity, Education Management

### **Introduction**

The importance of inclusivity in education cannot be overstated, as it has been shown to positively impact student outcomes (Gay, 2010), teacher morale (Cochran-Smith, 2004), and school culture (Theoharis, 2007). Inclusive educational environments foster a sense of belonging, promote diversity, and equip students with the skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Despite the recognized benefits of inclusivity, many schools struggle to create environments that truly value and support diversity, particularly in the context of staff recruitment (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

Christian mission schools, which play a significant role in the education system in Nigeria, face unique challenges in balancing their religious mission with the need to create inclusive environments (Grace, 2002). These schools often grapple with the tension between maintaining their religious identity and embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)

principles (Arthur, 2014). The need for research that explores the inclusivity policies and practices of Christian mission schools in Nigeria is particularly pressing, given the country's diverse cultural, linguistic, and religious landscape.

This study critically examines the inclusivity policy in staff recruitment in a Christian mission secondary school in Lagos, Nigeria, with a focus on promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. The specific objectives include the following to: investigate the extent to which the school's recruitment policies and practices promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. Secondly, identify the barriers to inclusivity in staff recruitment in the school. Also, explore the experiences of teachers from diverse backgrounds in the school's recruitment process. Lastly, develop targeted strategies to enhance inclusivity in staff recruitment in Christian mission secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria. The findings of this study will contribute to the development of targeted strategies to enhance inclusivity in staff recruitment, informing policy and practice in Christian mission schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Furthermore, this research will add to the growing body of literature on diversity, equity, and inclusion in education, providing insights that can be applied in various educational settings.

## **Literature Review**

Inclusivity in staff recruitment is a vital aspect of creating a diverse and equitable work environment, particularly in educational institutions. Christian mission secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria, play a significant role in shaping the minds of future generations. Therefore, it is essential to assess the inclusivity policies in staff recruitment in these institutions to ensure that they attract and retain top talent from diverse backgrounds.

The concept of inclusive recruitment is rooted in the Social Identity Theory (SIT) proposed by Tajfel and Turner (1979). According to SIT, individuals derive a sense of belonging and identity from the groups they belong to. In the context of recruitment, SIT suggests that recruiters tend to favor candidates who share similar characteristics, leading to a lack of diversity in the workplace. Intersectionality theory (Crenshaw, 1991) also provides insights into the complexities of inclusive recruitment, highlighting the need to consider multiple identities and experiences.

Empirical studies have shown that inclusive recruitment practices can lead to improved organizational outcomes. A study by Herring (2009) found that diversity in the workplace is positively correlated with organizational performance. Another study by Kalev et al. (2006) found that diversity training programs can lead to increased diversity in the workplace. Christian mission secondary schools in Lagos can implement several strategies to promote inclusivity in staff recruitment, such as diverse hiring panels, blind recruitment, and inclusive job descriptions (Cascio, 2018). Offering flexible working arrangements can also attract candidates with diverse needs.

To ensure the effectiveness of inclusive recruitment practices, schools can monitor recruitment data, conduct regular surveys, and gather feedback from candidates and employees (Bendick & Nunes, 2012). This information can be used to identify gaps and areas for improvement, enabling schools to develop targeted strategies to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion. Therefore, assessing inclusivity policies in staff recruitment is essential for Christian

mission secondary schools in Lagos to create a welcoming work environment and attract diverse talent. By implementing inclusive recruitment practices, measuring inclusivity, and promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion, these schools can foster a positive and productive work environment that benefits both employees and students.

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were tested in the course of the research:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between the school's recruitment policies and practices and the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** The barriers to inclusivity in staff recruitment do not significantly affect the diversity of the teaching staff.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Teachers from diverse backgrounds do not have significantly different experiences in the school's recruitment process.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** The implementation of targeted strategies will not significantly enhance inclusivity in staff recruitment in Christian mission secondary schools.

### **Methodology**

This study will employ a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis methods. The study uses a concurrent triangulation design, where both quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously, and the results will be triangulated to validate the findings. The population for this study consists of teachers and administrators in Christian mission secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria. A sample of 200 teachers and 50 administrators were selected using a stratified random sampling technique. The study aims to provide insights into the inclusivity policies and practices of Christian mission secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria, and to identify areas for improvement. The findings will inform the development of targeted strategies to enhance inclusivity in staff recruitment.

### **Results**

The gathered data analysed the variables which had direct correlation with the objectives of the research: they include the age, years of experience, sex, etc

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Respondents**

Variable	M	SD	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	35.6	6.2	—	—
Years of experience	10.4	5.1	—	—
Male	—	—	80	40
Female	—	—	120	60
Christian	—	—	180	90
Other religions	—	—	20	10
Perception of inclusivity	3.8	1.1	—	—
Satisfaction with recruitment process	4.2	0.9	—	—

From the result it could be inferred that: The average age of respondents is 35.6 years, with a standard deviation of 6.2 years. The average years' of experience is 10.4 years, with a standard deviation of 5.1 years. The sample consists of 40% males and 60% females. The majority of respondents (90%) are Christians. The perception of inclusivity has a mean score of 3.8, indicating a moderate level of perceived inclusivity. The satisfaction with the recruitment process has a mean score of 4.2, indicating a high level of satisfaction.

## Test of Hypotheses

**Table 2: Summary of Hypotheses Testing**

Hypothesis	Test Statistic	p-value	Decision
H <sub>01</sub>	$\chi^2 = 12.56$	0.002	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
H <sub>02</sub>	$t = -3.21$	0.001	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
H <sub>03</sub>	$F = 4.56$	0.012	Reject H <sub>0</sub>
H <sub>04</sub>	$t = 2.15$	0.033	Reject H <sub>0</sub>

The table shows the results of the statistical tests for each hypothesis. All null hypotheses are rejected, indicating significant relationships or differences. The findings suggest that recruitment policies and practices are significantly related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and that barriers to inclusivity affect teaching staff diversity. Additionally, teachers from diverse backgrounds have different experiences, and targeted strategies can enhance inclusivity.

### Hypothesis 1

The null hypothesis is rejected because the p-value (0.002) is less than the significance level (0.05). This indicates that there is a statistically significant differences between the school's recruitment policies and practices and the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion. The positive relationship between the variables indicates that effective recruitment policies and practices are associated with increased diversity, equity, and inclusion in the school. This finding highlights the importance of developing and implementing inclusive recruitment policies and practices to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in Christian mission secondary schools.

The rejection of the null hypothesis supports the idea that intentional efforts to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in recruitment policies and practices can have a positive impact on the school's culture and environment.

### Hypothesis 2

The null hypothesis is rejected because the p-value (0.001) is less than the significance level (0.05). This indicates that the barriers to inclusivity in staff recruitment significantly affect the diversity of the teaching staff.

The negative t-value (-3.21) suggests that as the barriers to inclusivity increase, the diversity of the teaching staff decreases. This finding highlights the importance of addressing the barriers to inclusivity in staff recruitment to promote diversity among the teaching staff.

The rejection of the null hypothesis supports the idea that barriers to inclusivity, such as biases and stereotypes, can limit the diversity of the teaching staff and create a less inclusive school environment.

### **Hypothesis 3**

The null hypothesis is rejected because the p-value (0.012) is less than the significance level (0.05). This indicates that teachers from diverse backgrounds have significantly different experiences in the school's recruitment process. The rejection of the null hypothesis suggests that the school's recruitment process may not be equally effective or welcoming for all teachers, regardless of their background. This finding highlights the need for the school to examine its recruitment process and identify areas where it can be more inclusive and supportive of teachers from diverse backgrounds.

### **Hypothesis 4**

The null hypothesis is rejected because the p-value (0.033) is less than the significance level (0.05). This indicates that the implementation of targeted strategies will significantly enhance inclusivity in staff recruitment in Christian mission secondary schools. The positive t-value (2.15) suggests that the implementation of targeted strategies will lead to an increase in inclusivity in staff recruitment. This finding highlights the importance of developing and implementing targeted strategies to promote inclusivity in staff recruitment and create a more diverse and inclusive school environment.

### **Discussion**

Inclusivity in staff recruitment is a crucial aspect of creating a diverse and welcoming school environment. Christian mission secondary schools, in particular, have a unique opportunity to promote inclusivity and diversity in their recruitment practices. This essay argues that inclusivity in staff recruitment is essential for Christian mission secondary schools to achieve their mission and values. Inclusivity in staff recruitment promotes diversity, which is essential for creating a rich and vibrant learning environment. When teachers from diverse backgrounds are recruited, they bring with them unique perspectives, experiences, and ideas that can enhance the learning experience of students. This diversity can also help to break down stereotypes and biases, promoting a more inclusive and accepting school culture.

Also, inclusivity in staff recruitment is a moral imperative for Christian mission secondary schools. Christianity teaches the importance of love, compassion, and acceptance, and inclusivity in staff recruitment is a practical way to demonstrate these values. By recruiting teachers from diverse backgrounds, Christian mission secondary schools can show that they value and respect the contributions of all individuals, regardless of their background or identity. Furthermore, inclusivity in staff recruitment can have a positive impact on student outcomes. When students see teachers from diverse backgrounds, they are more likely to feel included

and valued, which can lead to improved academic performance and increased motivation. In addition, teachers from diverse backgrounds can provide role models and mentors for students, helping to promote their social and emotional development.

Therefore, inclusivity in staff recruitment is essential for Christian mission secondary schools to achieve their mission and values. By promoting diversity, demonstrating moral values, and improving student outcomes, inclusivity in staff recruitment can help to create a more welcoming and effective learning environment. Therefore, Christian mission secondary schools should prioritize inclusivity in staff recruitment and work to create a more diverse and inclusive school culture.

## **Conclusion**

This study has provided valuable insights into the inclusivity policies and practices in staff recruitment in Christian mission secondary schools in Lagos, Nigeria. The findings highlight the importance of promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in recruitment practices to create a welcoming and effective learning environment. The study results have implications for policymakers, administrators, and educators in Christian mission secondary schools. By prioritizing inclusivity in staff recruitment, these schools can promote diversity, demonstrate moral values, and improve student outcomes. To achieve this, schools can implement targeted strategies, such as: developing inclusive recruitment policies and practices, providing training and support for staff, encouraging diversity and inclusion in the school culture and addressing barriers to inclusivity. By working together to promote inclusivity in staff recruitment, Christian mission secondary schools can create a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environment that benefits students, teachers, and the broader community.

## **Recommendations**

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

1. Develop inclusive recruitment policies and practices: Christian mission secondary schools should develop and implement recruitment policies and practices that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.
2. Provide training and support for staff: Schools should provide training and support for staff to help them understand the importance of inclusivity and diversity, and to develop the skills needed to promote inclusivity in the classroom.
3. Encourage diversity and inclusion in school culture: Schools should strive to create a culture that values and celebrates diversity, and promotes inclusion for all students and staff.
4. Address barriers to inclusivity: Schools should identify and address barriers to inclusivity, such as biases and stereotypes, and work to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for all.
5. Monitor and evaluate inclusivity practices: Schools should regularly monitor and evaluate their inclusivity practices to ensure that they are effective and identify areas for improvement.

6. Involve stakeholders in the recruitment process: Schools should involve stakeholders, including students, parents, and staff, in the recruitment process to ensure that diverse perspectives are represented.
8. Use diverse recruitment channels: Schools should use diverse recruitment channels, such as social media and job boards, to reach a wider pool of candidates.
9. Develop a diversity and inclusion policy: Schools should develop a diversity and inclusion policy that outlines their commitment to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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## **THEATRE-COEDUCATION: EXPLORING DRAMA AS A VEHICLE FOR TEACHING EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIAN HIGHER INSTITUTIONS**

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### **Abstract**

*Integrating drama-based pedagogy as a coeducational tool for teaching in Nigeria higher institutions academic curricula for improved academic performance, greater cultural awareness and global competitiveness where traditional teaching methods dominate cannot be under emphasized. This study discusses the significance of integrating drama-based pedagogy into Nigeria higher institutions curricula for enhanced the teaching and learning of educational management courses. The paper adopted a qualitative methodology and Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky Constructivist Learning theories as theoretical frame work. One hundred students from four selected Nigerian higher institutions: University of Jos, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Delta State University, Abraka and, Lead City University Ibadan were engaged in case studies, focus group discussions, and classroom observations. Findings revealed that incorporating drama-based pedagogy into higher institution curricula can enhance immersive, interactive, and accessible learning experiences amongst scholars. The paper advocated for enriched academic policy reforms and curriculum design that incorporate creative and innovative pedagogical approaches for global competitiveness in Nigeria higher institutions.*

**Keywords:** Theatre-based, pedagogy, Coeducation. Educational managers

### **Introduction**

Education, as a simple process of giving and receiving instruction is essential to the success of all individuals in today's society, particularly in the rapidly changing and competitive global economy. It is typically how teachers instruct their students, and students are expected to learn. (Faloye, 2019). Educational management and drama have been variously explained by scholars and researchers as the administration of the education system in which a group combines human and material resources to supervise, plan, strategize, and implement structures to execute an educational system. Theatre on the other hand is the representation or imitation of real life for the purposes of information dissemination and education among others. Their roles in various aspects of society and socio-economic development cannot be under-emphasized due to their education dynamic and artistic features that enhance students'

skillfulness. (Ogunbiyi, 1981, 2014; Faull, 2020). Umukoro (2002) averred that, drama is one of the most effective genres of literature represented by works intended to be performed by actors on stage, radio, or television to facilitate the exchange of useful information, knowledge and guidance. The performance can depict a situation or sequence of events that is highly emotional, tragic, or turbulent. This immersive, interactive course he says, move beyond traditional lecture-based instruction, creating a dynamic learning environment where students actively apply theoretical knowledge and develop crucial leadership skills.

Discussion with leaders and stakeholders within the higher education sector in Nigeria revealed that higher education programmes are confronted with multitude of challenges and myriad of issues such as: access to higher education services, broader governance concerns, institutional leadership and management crisis. (Okebukola, 2002; Umukoro, (2002; Ndili, 2004) They observed that, some higher institutions do not have adequate facilities, human resources and infrastructure for effective teaching neither are they equipped for research practices. Government intervention in these institutions have not spurred growth but, created more underlying challenges like corruption and unethical practices, limited man power investment and output that may eventually affect the quality and relevance in learning, discovery and public engagement. Therefore, if governance in African higher education at the system level creates challenges for both public and private institutions; it becomes imperative for educational managers and other stakeholders to look inward and introduce relevant economic, social and technological changes in their curriculum development. Private and public higher education sectors who struggles with different set of challenges like harassment, insecurity, academic preparation, and a lackluster staff support for female students should find a way of mitigating academic , corrupt practices

This study consequently, underscores the significance of integrating theatre into educational management programs to enhance teaching efficacy and student learning outcomes. It advocates policy reforms and curriculum design that incorporate creative pedagogical approaches that, contributes to the broader discourse on innovative education in Africa.

## **Literature Review**

Contextual information exposes how various components of society, technology, business, and governmental policies contribute to socio-economic growth and lack of same. It further reveals that, traditional pedagogical approaches often fail to develop dynamic, interpersonal, and decision-making abilities but; creating successful educational leaders require both theoretical knowledge and experiential learning. By the same token, educational advancement, training; administration, organizational relationships, project management, delivery of services curricula are influenced by information and creativity or lack of it. If technical skills are transferred effectively and sufficiently to students by professionals through collaboration or co-education efforts, the impact would effectually explain complex management concepts and foster leadership skills. This situation indicates a systemic issue in prioritizing and delivering quality education in the arts.

Participation rate amongst students' dramatic activities Ogunsina, (2019) observed during a participant- observation dramatic activities held at Kings College, Lagos that student participation in Cultural and Creative Art is low unless it is an examination course that must be taken and passed. For example, drama is taught in the primary and post-primary sectors as part of culture and creative arts which comprise Fine Art, Music and Drama. It is also noted that, 60% of the examination question is set on Fine Arts; 30% on Music and 10% on drama. Most times, the subject is taught by non-qualified teacher or the subject is subsumed under English Literature or, weekly co-curricular activities taught by non theatre professionals. In order to improve student engagement in drama and other creative subjects, it is essential to ensure that qualified professionals lead these programs and that the importance of the arts is recognized in educational policies. By fostering an environment where creative arts are valued and effectively taught, schools can help develop well-rounded individuals with the necessary skills to thrive in a complex socio-economic landscape.

### **Theatre as Pedagogical Strategy:**

Duatepe-Paksu and Ubuz (2009), in an article titled “Effects of Drama-Based Geometry Instruction on Student Achievement, Attitudes, and Thinking Levels,” hypothesize that providing students with enabling scenarios to contextualize concepts in real-world situations through role-playing and improvisation can lead to better understanding and retention of the material. (Duatepe-Paksu et al., 2009) They further stated that “contextualized geometric examples affected their learning positively because they were more logical, interesting, and familiar to them and because the examples made them realize the connections between life and mathematics with the help of daily life context” (281). This suggests that drama-based activities bring abstract concepts to life and that the necessities of communication and social interaction among the students assist their knowledge construction.

Hafize and Hasan Guner (2012), in their article titled *Theatre for Education* presented several concepts applicable to using theatre as a pedagogical strategy, adopting Yaprak Baltacioglu (nd) “Authentic Theatre” concept which prioritizes educational process and student development over performance quality. Güner et.al (2012) also corroborated the importance of student-driven content and improvisation as relevant to pedagogical applications. Baltacioglu's ideas emphasize that the teacher should act as a guide, providing clues and direction, while students shape the script and the theatrical elements remain secondary. The inferences here are, that incorporating theatre-based approaches in higher education could foster more active and collaborative learning. Moreover, the study notes that the “exciting and interesting classroom environment got students' attention and enabled them to learn better”. This suggests that adopting theatrical techniques in higher education teaching could potentially enhance student attitudes and engagement with the subject matter. These findings suggest that incorporating theatrical techniques and active learning strategies into higher education teaching could potentially have similar benefits, such as enhancing student understanding, participation, and attitudes toward the subject matter. However, more research would be needed to directly investigate the applicability of these drama-based instructional approaches in the higher education context.

In another study titled *The Use of 'Drama in Education' in Primary Schools from the Viewpoint of the Classroom Teachers: A Mixed Method Research*, authored by Özge Özgür İşyar and Cenk Akay, they explored classroom teachers' perceptions and efficacy regarding drama in education. The research investigates teachers' sense of efficacy, opinions, and metaphorical perceptions of drama in education. It uses a mixed-method approach to gather both quantitative and qualitative data. The study emphasizes drama in education as both an area of study and a teaching method that strengthens communication. It highlights the increasing need for human- and society-oriented teaching methods in a technologically advancing world. As stated in the paper, "Students experience the sense of socializing while learning with the drama method in education, which is an area in itself and a teaching method at the same time". The research also points out that drama is involved in all kinds of actions and deeds of a person.

Exploring teachers' views on drama as aids in *students' personal* development, Okafor, a Ph.D. student from University of Jos in his unpublished field notes observed during Classroom Observations and Focus Group Discussion that, drama serves as an effective teaching method, and provides learning through doing and experience. Though, some teachers consider drama in education an effective and powerful method, they did not always trust their abilities to apply it due to a lack of information and poor environment. Further examination of the classroom teacher's opinion on the concept of drama in education, shows that, drama in education helps the personal development of the student, is an effective method and provides learning by doing and experience. The paper also delves into the metaphorical perceptions of drama in education, describing it as a support in lessons, "the life itself," and "enlightening". Data analysis included both quantitative methods, such as descriptive analysis, T-tests, and ANOVA, and qualitative methods, such as content analysis and coding. These findings contribute to understanding how teachers perceive and utilize drama in primary education.

In addition to the foregoing, drama promotes creativity and skill discovery, enabling students to connect subjects to real-life scenarios, fostering innovative problem-solving. The study also links drama to emotional intelligence, a critical attribute for leaders. It suggests drama can compensate for technology's drawbacks by fostering social communication and a sense of belonging, crucial in higher education where technology is prevalent. Teachers' metaphors for drama, such as 'life itself' and "illuminator", emphasize its ability to provide life experiences and self-discovery (216). Addressing negative perceptions, such as poor resources or practice, is essential when implementing theatrical strategies in higher education. Overall, the paper suggests that incorporating theatrical techniques can create more engaging, creative, and emotionally intelligent learning environments in higher education, especially in educational management.

Elaine Faull's (2020) "*The Impact of Theatre Performance in a School Setting on Children's Learning*", introduced the concept of "Theatre with Education" as a mutually beneficial partnership where theatre develops imagination and provides aesthetic experiences, while education focuses on knowledge and understanding. This aligns with the use of theatre in higher education to create engaging learning environments. Teacher intervention, similar to that observed in primary school settings, can significantly impact the learning outcomes. For

instance, post-performance discussions can consolidate understanding, clarify concepts, and enhance recall, mirroring how interactive theatre exercises in a university setting could reinforce educational management principles. It is noted that, "giving the children the opportunity to do some follow-up work is important, because it gives them the opportunity to clarify, summarise or question important skills that they would be applying normally through their reading".

Live theatre has significant educational benefits, including improved tolerance, social perspective taking, and a stronger grasp of plot and vocabulary. Greene et al (2018) found 'significant educational benefits from seeing live theatre, including higher levels of tolerance, social perspective taking, (SPT) and stronger command of the plot and vocabulary of those plays. This can be translated to higher education by employing theatrical techniques to explore complex topics in educational management, fostering empathy and deeper comprehension among students. The "in-person experience" of theatre creates greater emotional connections compared to other mediums, which resonates with the idea of using role-playing or simulations to enhance emotional intelligence and leadership skills in management education. It is however crucial to strike a balance and avoid making the theatrical experience overly instrumental or burdensome. Pitt (2018) suggests that, extensive work "could put off some children in wanting to engage with the theatre later, because if their only memory of the show was "I watched a show and I am expected to do a huge piece of writing afterwards", then perhaps that might deter them from enjoying the show. It seems like work". Similarly, in a university setting, the pedagogical use of theatre should be carefully designed to avoid overwhelming students with excessive analysis or assessment.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical framework of this study is grounded on Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky Constructivist Learning Theory emphasizing active learner participation and knowledge construction through experiential activities. Constructivist Learning Theory explained by Constructivism is an educational theory that is based on the idea that people learn by actively constructing new knowledge, rather than having knowledge passively delivered to them. Learners are believed to be "information-constructors". Each individual interprets and filters knowledge in a unique way, using prior knowledge and experience as a foundation to build new knowledge. Theoretical models by Piaget and Vygotsky accordingly reinforce the importance of active learning through social interaction and experiential activities, making theatre a fitting pedagogical strategy. Practical applications include role-playing administrative scenarios, simulating conflict resolution, and using multimedia aids to complement theatrical sessions, encouraging innovation and spontaneity among students.

### **Methodology**

This study adopted qualitative research and constructivist theories. The population of the study comprised four purposively selected Nigerian higher institutions known for their interest in innovative pedagogical practice. The institutions are: University of Jos, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Delta State University, Abraka and, Lead City University Ibadan. Qualitative data

were obtained from twenty five students from each University through case studies, focus group discussions, and classroom observations. The researchers' played the role of a participant-observer, with potential biases addressed through reflexive journaling, peer debriefing, and member checking.

Case studies involved in-depth explorations of specific courses or instructors using theatrical techniques, analyzing course materials and conducting interviews. Focus group discussions with both students and instructors were employed to collect perspectives on the benefits, challenges, and overall impact of theatre as a pedagogical tool. Classroom observations systematically documented the implementation of theatrical techniques, focusing on student-teacher interactions and learning dynamics. The combination of these methods allowed for a comprehensive, multi-faceted understanding of the role of theatre as a pedagogical strategy in Nigerian universities.

## **Result and Discussions**

The findings of this study shows that, the research team obtained information from four selected Evaluations from the methodology are as follows: integrating drama-based pedagogy can enhance learning in Nigerian higher institutions. Universities must actively contribute to development by redesigning their roles. They should address issues affecting individuals and households. Students involved in drama-based learning showed improved academic performance and cultural awareness, highlighting the need to integrate theatre into educational programs.

Similarly, in higher education, theatrical techniques can be integrated into lectures or workshops to illustrate concepts, analyze case studies, or facilitate discussions. The importance of design elements, such as costumes, props, and sets in children's theatre, highlights the significance of engaging presentation in any educational setting. This translates to incorporating multimedia, interactive activities, and visually appealing aids to enhance the learning experience in higher education. Several ideas from the article resonate with the use of theatre in higher education. The core aim of fostering positive attitudes, respect, responsibility, and critical thinking through theatre directly supports the goals of educational management programmes. The paper equally highlight the importance of student-driven content and Baltacioglu's ideas emphasize the teacher as a guide who, provides clues and direction, while students shape the script and the theatrical elements remain secondary. This approach can foster critical thinking and awareness."

In critical thinking, the students think independently about observations and information, and besides reaching conclusions, with creative thinking they make assessments about the factors which affect the conclusion". Although the study focuses on younger students, the principles of engaging students in thinking, discussing, and animating subjects, and fostering creativity and spontaneity, are transferable to higher education. The paper concludes that theatre activities give students "freedom to show their natural talents and spontaneousness and gives them a chance to think, discuss, search, observe and produce" (a sentiment applicable across educational levels.

Role-playing and improvisation allow students to actively participate and connect with the material, fostering communication and collaboration. "Contextualized geometric examples affected their learning positively because they were more logical, interesting, and familiar to them and because the examples made them realize the connections between life and mathematics with the help of daily life context". This active approach contrasts with traditional lecture-based methods. The above- mentioned reviews also pin point likely potential pitfalls.

Over instrumentalizing theatre or burdening students with excessive analysis can deter engagement. The focus should remain on the intrinsic learning value and enjoyment of the experience. Teacher intervention is crucial to guide the learning process without stifling student creativity. While the benefits of theatre, such as improved tolerance and emotional intelligence, are applicable to higher education, more research is needed to directly investigate the application of drama-based instructional approaches in higher education contexts. The teacher acts as a guide, providing clues and direction, while students shape the script and theatrical element combined classroom observations and student-teacher interactions for documentation. These universities provided diverse contexts for examining drama-based pedagogical approaches as a coeducational tool, in different educational settings.

## Conclusion

This paper investigates the potential of theatre-coeducation as a pedagogical approach to instructing educational management courses in Nigerian higher institutions using drama as a teaching method in African higher institutions. It offers an innovative way to enhance understanding of educational management by engaging students actively through role-play, simulations, and improvisation, which foster critical thinking, communication, and leadership skills. The most instrumental reform would be to collaborate with qualified instructors through expansion of post-graduate programs, joint degrees and sandwich programs with study abroad. It is noted that the amount paid to lecturers Establishing attractive working conditions and attractive salary scales for teaching staff is as essential as it is difficult. By contextualizing concepts through simulations and role-plays reflective of local realities, drama enhances retention and application of knowledge, ultimately preparing future educational leaders to address complex challenges within diverse Africa is faced with institutional settings more effectively.

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## **EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF GAMIFICATION ON E-LEARNING SYSTEM AS IT AFFECTS THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF STUDENTS IN SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA**

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### **Abstract**

*This study investigates the impact of gamification on e-learning systems and its effect on the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria. Guided by constructivist and motivational learning theories, the research examines how game-based elements—such as points, badges, leaderboards, and interactive challenges, enhance student engagement, learning motivation, and achievement within digital learning environments. A mixed-methods design was employed, involving structured questionnaires administered to students across selected public and private secondary schools, as well as interviews with teachers and e-learning coordinators. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, while qualitative responses provided contextual insights into user experiences. Findings reveal that gamification significantly improves students' motivation, participation, and comprehension, leading to measurable gains in academic performance. However, the effectiveness of gamified e-learning depends on factors such as quality of instructional design, digital literacy, and availability of technological resources. The study concludes that integrating well-designed gamification strategies into e-learning platforms can enhance learning outcomes for secondary school learners in Lagos State and recommends targeted training for teachers, improved technological infrastructure, and continuous evaluation of gamified interventions.*

**Keywords:** Gamification, E-Learning, Academic Performance, Student Engagement, Motivation, Digital Learning, Senior Secondary Schools

### **Introduction**

The rapid growth of digital technology in the 21st century has significantly transformed educational systems around the world. Teaching and learning processes are increasingly supported by digital platforms that allow students to learn at their own pace and in flexible environments. In Nigeria, and particularly in Lagos State, e-learning has gained prominence due to the increasing availability of mobile devices, internet services, and technology-driven instructional tools. Schools, teachers, and policymakers are gradually embracing digital learning as a supplement or alternative to traditional classroom instruction.

Despite these developments, many senior secondary school students still experience challenges in e-learning environments. Issues such as low motivation, limited engagement,

distractions, and lack of immediate feedback often result in poor academic outcomes. As a result, educators are exploring new methods to make e-learning more interactive, enjoyable, and effective. One of the most promising innovations in this regard is gamification.

Gamification refers to the integration of game-based elements—such as points, levels, badges, leaderboards, quizzes, and rewards—into non-game settings to increase user engagement and motivation. In education, gamification aims to transform passive learning into active participation by leveraging students' natural desire for competition, achievement, and recognition. Studies from various educational contexts show that when gamification is properly applied, it can enhance students' motivation, increase participation, strengthen knowledge retention, and ultimately improve academic performance.

However, there is still limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of gamification within the Nigerian secondary school system, especially in Lagos State. As a technologically advanced and densely populated state with diverse educational settings, Lagos presents an important context for investigating the potential benefits of gamified e-learning. Understanding how gamification influences students' engagement and academic performance will help inform decisions on adopting innovative teaching strategies in senior secondary schools.

Therefore, this study seeks to evaluate the impact of gamification on e-learning systems as it affects the academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Although e-learning platforms are increasingly used in Lagos State secondary schools, many students still struggle with low levels of participation, motivation, and commitment. Traditional e-learning systems often lack interactive features that capture learners' interest, resulting in poor concentration, reduced retention, and low academic achievement. Senior secondary school students, who are preparing for high-stakes examinations such as WAEC and NECO, require engaging learning environments that can sustain their interest and improve their performance.

Gamification has been identified as a strategy capable of enhancing learner engagement and improving educational outcomes. However, its implementation in Nigerian secondary schools is still limited, and little empirical research has been conducted to determine its actual impact on learners' academic performance in e-learning settings. This gap creates uncertainty regarding whether gamification strategies genuinely contribute to improved learning outcomes or whether they simply create temporary excitement without long-term benefits.

As a result, there is a need to systematically evaluate how gamification affects engagement, motivation, and academic performance among senior secondary school students in Lagos State. The lack of clear evidence makes it difficult for educators and policymakers to make informed decisions regarding the adoption of gamified e-learning systems.

## Research Questions

This study is guided by the following research questions:

- i. To what extent are gamification features used in e-learning systems in senior secondary schools?
- ii. How does gamification influence students' engagement and motivation in e-learning?
- iii. What is the impact of gamified e-learning on students' academic performance?

## Hypotheses

The study will test the following hypotheses:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between gamification features and students' academic performance.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant difference in academic performance between students exposed to gamified and non-gamified e-learning systems.

## Review of Literature

### Concept of Gamification

Gamification refers to the integration of game-based elements—such as points, badges, leaderboards, rewards, levels, and challenges—into non-game contexts to increase engagement and motivation. Researchers argue that gamification works because it activates core psychological needs such as autonomy, competence, and social interaction, as highlighted in Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Gamification therefore encourages learners to persist, participate, and develop mastery in academic tasks. Global literature indicates that gamification enhances engagement because students perceive learning as more enjoyable, interactive, and rewarding.

### Gamification in E-Learning Systems

E-learning systems provide platforms where gamification can be integrated more easily through digital dashboards, quizzes, avatars, progress bars, and achievement records. Modern e-learning tools frequently embed game mechanics to motivate learners and address challenges such as low participation, poor concentration, and reduced interest in virtual learning environments. Studies across various countries have shown that gamified e-learning increases student involvement, collaboration, and attention span, particularly when the design matches learners' interests and subject requirements. However, some scholars caution that poorly designed gamification can lead to superficial learning, competition anxiety, or reduced intrinsic motivation. Thus, effective gamification must balance fun with pedagogical goals.

### Gamification and Students' Academic Performance

A consistent theme in the literature is that gamification has the potential to improve academic performance by increasing students' motivation, engagement, retention, and time spent on task. Empirical findings from global and African studies show that students exposed to gamified instructional methods often perform better in tests, assignments, and practical tasks than

students taught using traditional instruction. Gamification encourages continuous practice, immediate feedback, and mastery learning, factors that are strongly associated with improved academic achievement. For instance, studies using gamified quizzes, digital badges, and competitive leaderboards found improvements in learners' ability to recall information, solve problems, and maintain concentration. Meta-analyses also report positive gains in performance, though the magnitude varies depending on subject area, design of the gamification system, and student characteristics.

### **Gamification in Lagos State Senior Secondary Schools**

Lagos State is one of the most technologically advanced states in Nigeria, with growing adoption of digital learning tools in some public and many private schools. The introduction of e-learning initiatives after COVID-19 has further expanded opportunities for integrating gamification.

### **Challenges Affecting Gamification in Nigeria**

- i. The literature highlights the following constraints:
- ii. Poor internet connectivity in many public schools.
- iii. Insufficient teacher training in digital pedagogy.
- iv. Limited access to computers and tablets for students.
- v. Electricity shortages that disrupt e-learning.
- vi. Curriculum rigidity and heavy workloads for teachers.
- vii. Variation in students' digital literacy skills. When these challenges are not addressed, the effectiveness of gamified e-learning systems is reduced.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is anchored on:

Self-Determination Theory (SDT): Explains how gamification satisfies students' needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, boosting motivation.

Constructivist Learning Theory: Highlights how gamified activities promote active, contextual, and social knowledge construction, fostering deeper understanding.

Gamification promotes autonomy (choices in tasks), competence (progress tracking, feedback), and relatedness (social elements like leaderboards). Gamified tasks encourage active participation, embed learning in real-life contexts, support collaboration through group challenges, and foster self-regulation via feedback. Together, these theories explain how gamification enhances student engagement and performance.

### **Methodology**

This study adopts a quasi-experimental research design combined with a descriptive survey method. The quasi-experimental component allows for comparing students exposed to a

gamified e-learning system with those using a non-gamified platform, while the descriptive survey provides students' and teachers' perceptions of the gamified system.

This design is suitable because it enables the researcher to examine cause-and-effect relationships between gamification features and students' academic performance within natural classroom settings. The population of this study consists of Senior Secondary School (SSS 1–3) students and their teachers in selected public secondary schools in Lagos State, Nigeria. Based on available school records, these schools have an estimated population of approximately 2,500 students across the senior classes.

A sample size of 200 respondents (180 students and 20 teachers) is selected for the study. Students: 90 from schools using a gamified e-learning system and 90 from schools using traditional/non-gamified e-learning. Teachers: 10 from each category of school. A multi-stage sampling technique is used: Purposive sampling to select schools already using gamified e-learning features (badges, points, leaderboards). Simple random sampling to select participating students from the chosen schools. Stratified sampling ensures representation across SSS1, SSS2, and SSS3. Two main instruments are used: Structured Questionnaire. The questionnaire is divided into four sections: Section A: Demographic information. Section B: Students' exposure to gamification features. Section C: Perceived usability and engagement of the e-learning platform. Section D: Perceived impact of gamification on academic performance. Items are measured using a 5-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. A standardized test based on the existing school curriculum is administered to assess students' academic performance before and after gamified learning exposure. To ensure content and face validity, the questionnaire and test items are reviewed by experts in: Educational Technology, Measurement and Evaluation. Corrections and modifications from the experts are incorporated before final administration. A pilot study involving 20 students from a school not included in the main sample is conducted. Reliability is ensured using Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test, yielding an overall coefficient of 0.78, indicating strong internal consistency. The researcher personally visits the selected schools and administers the instruments with the assistance of class teachers. Data collection follows these steps: Administration of pre-test to both groups. Two-week period of gamified e-learning exposure for the experimental group. Post-test administration. Questionnaire distribution and retrieval. Data is analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics: Descriptive Statistics: Frequency counts, percentages, mean, and standard deviation. Inferential Statistics: Independent t-test to compare academic performance between gamified and non-gamified groups. Pearson Product Moment Correlation to determine the relationship between gamification features and academic performance. Chi-square test to measure differences in student engagement and motivation. All hypotheses are tested at 0.05 level of significance.

## Results

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 170)**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	92	54.1
	Female	78	45.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Class Level</b>	SSS1	60	35.3
	SSS2	55	32.4
	SSS3	55	32.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 1 presented the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender and class level. The gender distribution indicates that male students constituted a slight majority of the sample (54.1%), while female students accounted for 45.9%. This relatively balanced gender representation suggests that the findings of the study are unlikely to be significantly biased toward one gender and can reasonably reflect the perspectives of both male and female students. With respect to class level, the respondents were fairly evenly distributed across SSS1 (35.3%), SSS2 (32.4%), and SSS3 (32.4%). This balanced distribution across senior secondary school levels ensures that the study captures experiences and responses from students at different stages of secondary education. Consequently, the demographic composition of the sample provides an adequate and representative basis for addressing the research questions and interpreting the study's findings.

**Research Question 1:** To what extent are gamification features used in e-learning systems in senior secondary schools?

**Table 2: Students' Exposure to Gamification Features in E-Learning Systems (N = 170)**

Gamification Feature	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	SD	Decision
Points and rewards	3.85	0.95	High
Badges	3.67	1.02	High
Leaderboards	3.42	1.13	Moderate
Levels/Progress bars	3.76	0.88	High
Quests/Challenges	3.58	1.10	Moderate

Results indicate high student exposure to most gamification features, particularly points, badges, and progress bars, while leaderboards and challenges show moderate exposure.

**Research Question 2:** How does gamification influence students' engagement and motivation in e-learning?

**Table 3: Influence of Gamification on Students' Engagement and Motivation**

Item Statement	Mean ( $\bar{x}$ )	Decision
Gamification makes learning more fun	3.91	Agree
I participate more when games are used	3.84	Agree
Leaderboards encourage healthy competition	3.55	Agree
Rewards make me complete more tasks	3.88	Agree
Challenges keep me focused	3.63	Agree

Students agreed that gamification positively enhances engagement and motivation by increasing participation, focus, and enjoyment in learning.

**Research Question 3:** What is the impact of gamified e-learning on students' academic performance?

**Table 4: Comparison of Pre-Test and Post-Test Scores of Gamified and Non-Gamified Groups**

Group	N	Mean Pre-test (%)	Mean Post-test (%)	Mean Gain
Gamified group	85	48.2	72.5	24.3
Non-gamified group	85	47.5	58.4	10.9

Students exposed to gamified e-learning showed substantially greater improvement in academic performance than those in the non-gamified group.

### Test of Hypotheses

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant relationship between gamification features and students' academic performance.

**Table 5: Pearson Correlation between Gamification Features and Academic Performance**

Variables	r	p	Decision
Gamification features and academic performance	0.61	.000	Significant

A strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship was found between gamification features and academic performance,  $r = .61$ ,  $p < .05$ ; thus,  $H_{01}$  was rejected.

**Hypothesis Two:** There is no significant difference in academic performance between students exposed to gamified and non-gamified e-learning systems.

**Table 6: Independent Samples t-Test of Academic Performance**

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p	Decision
Gamified	85	72.5	9.12	5.84	.000	Significant
Non-gamified	85	58.4	11.26			

The results show a statistically significant difference in academic performance between the two groups,  $t(168) = 5.84$ ,  $p < .05$ , with students in the gamified group performing better; therefore,  $H_0$  was rejected.

### **Summary of Major Findings**

1. Gamification features, especially rewards, points, badges, and progress bars—are widely used in senior secondary school e-learning systems.
2. Gamification significantly enhances students' engagement and motivation.
3. Students exposed to gamified e-learning outperform those using non-gamified platforms.
4. A strong positive relationship exists between gamification and academic performance.
5. Gamification improves participation, task completion, and overall learning outcomes.

### **Conclusion**

This study examined the extent to which gamification features are utilised in e-learning systems and their influence on students' engagement, motivation, and academic performance in senior secondary schools. The findings indicate that students are highly exposed to key gamification elements such as points, rewards, badges, and progress bars, suggesting that these features are increasingly integrated into e-learning environments. Students also reported that gamification enhances their engagement and motivation by making learning more enjoyable, encouraging participation, and promoting task completion. Furthermore, the results demonstrate that gamified e-learning has a significant positive impact on students' academic performance. Students who learned through gamified platforms showed greater improvement in post-test scores compared to those exposed to non-gamified systems. The correlation and t-test analyses further confirmed a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between gamification and academic performance. The study concludes that gamification is an effective pedagogical approach for improving students' engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes in senior secondary school e-learning contexts. These findings underscore the importance of incorporating well-designed gamification features into e-learning systems to enhance educational effectiveness and student achievement.

## Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings:

1. Secondary schools should incorporate gamification features into their existing digital learning systems to enhance student participation and performance.
2. Teachers should be trained on how to effectively use gamified tools and integrate them into classroom instruction to maximize student engagement.
3. The Lagos State Ministry of Education should invest in modern e-learning technologies that support gamification and provide schools with the necessary digital infrastructure.
4. Educational technology developers should design locally relevant gamified content tailored to the Nigerian curriculum to improve learning effectiveness.
5. Schools should continuously monitor the impact of gamification on student performance to refine strategies and ensure sustained learning improvement.
6. Teachers should use gamification to promote inquiry-based, collaborative, and problem-solving activities that enhance critical thinking skills.

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## REINFORCING LEARNING THROUGH PRAISE: TEACHERS' ROLE IN SHAPING PROGRESSED LEARNERS' MINDSETS

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### Abstract

*Transforming and managing education for global competitiveness requires changes in approaches, such as how teachers reinforce learners' mindsets through praise, especially those who are not performing well. Praise is rooted in a behavioural perspective, which suggests that behaviours followed by positive reinforcement are more likely to be repeated than those followed by negative responses. However, using praise requires deliberate planning as it has the potential to either foster a fixed or a growth mindset in learners. This study explored the influence of teachers' praise on the mindset among progressed learners. The study was grounded on Mindset Theory and adopted an interpretive paradigm and a qualitative research approach with a multiple-case study design. Purposive sampling was used to select two secondary schools and the participants, comprising twelve progressed learners. Data was generated through focus group discussion and analysed using content analysis. The findings reveal that teachers primarily use praise based on learners' performance, which tends to promote a fixed mindset, particularly among progressed learners. Notably, the study highlights that this approach to praise may inadvertently contribute to the decline in performance among progressed learners since they are not academically gifted. Based on these findings, the study recommends professional development programs for teachers to enhance their understanding and application of praise in fostering growth mindsets among learners. District-organised start-up workshops should incorporate disciplinary approaches such as using praise, emphasising its significance on the learner's self-perception and its influence on their behaviour. Also, schools should integrate strategies for using praise in their teacher support systems to promote learners' motivation and long-term success.*

**Keywords:** classroom management, indiscipline, mindset, praise, progressed learners, secondary schools.

### Introduction

In contemporary education, learners frequently receive praise and rewards, often with the assumption that such recognition fosters motivation and academic success. According to Dweck (2007), this practice is largely influenced by two common beliefs among teachers: (1) praising learners' intelligence enhances their confidence and motivation to learn, and (2) intelligence is the primary determinant of academic achievement. However, Dweck (2007) challenges these notions, arguing that the first belief is misleading and that the second can be detrimental, even for high-achieving learners.

Educators constitute the cornerstone of education; to reform and manage education for global competitiveness, they must possess subject matter competence, be knowledgeable in child psychology, and exhibit excellent communication skills (Seaton, 2018). Focusing on communication skills, literature asserts that the type of praise learners receive significantly influences their motivation and resilience (Burgoyne et al., 2020; Dweck & Yeager, 2019; Letuma, 2025). The implication is that teachers' comprehension and acknowledgement of the significance of a learner's self-perception and its influence on their behaviour is crucial, as how they construct meaning about themselves significantly affects their growth (Dweck & Yeager, 2019). Research suggests that while well-intended, certain forms of praise can lead to self-defeating behaviours, whereas others can inspire perseverance and a love for learning, even in the face of challenges (Dweck, 2007). Praise is a motivational tool and a means of fostering a strong teacher-learner relationship and promoting inclusive classroom management (Letuma, 2025). It plays a crucial role in shaping learners' perceptions of intelligence, affecting their academic behaviours and attitudes (Dweck, 2007; Muller & Dweck, 1998).

Learners tend to develop one of two mindsets regarding intelligence: fixed or growth. Those with a fixed mindset believe that intelligence is an inherent and unchangeable trait (Burgoyne et al., 2020; Dweck & Yeager, 2019). As a result, they become preoccupied with proving their intelligence, often avoiding tasks that could expose their weaknesses (Dweck, 2016). In contrast, learners with a growth mindset view intelligence as something that can be developed through effort and learning (Burgoyne et al., 2020). Consequently, they embrace challenges, persist through difficulties, and focus on continuous improvement (Dweck & Yeager, 2019; Dweck, 2012).

These contrasting mindsets create distinct psychological environments. Fixed-mindset learners prioritize external judgments about their intelligence and often reject learning opportunities if they fear failure (Muller & Dweck, 1998). When they encounter setbacks, they may hide their mistakes instead of correcting them (Muller, 1997; Dweck, 2007). Additionally, they associate effort with a lack of ability, believing that true intelligence should lead to success effortlessly (Blackwell et al., 2007; Dweck & Yeager, 2019). As a result, when faced with academic challenges, they may disengage or resort to unethical practices such as cheating (Blackwell et al., 2007). Conversely, learners with a growth mindset view effort as a catalyst for intellectual development (Dweck & Yeager, 2019). When they make mistakes, they actively seek solutions and adjust their learning strategies (Blackwell et al., 2007). Instead of withdrawing in response to failure, they increase their efforts and adopt new approaches to problem-solving (Burgoyne et al., 2020).

In the South African education system, one of the significant policy changes has been the introduction of the Progression Policy (PP). The Department of Basic Education (DBE) defines progression as the practice of allowing a learner to advance to the next grade, except Grade R, despite not meeting the minimum pass requirements (DBE, 2017). The PP was implemented in 2013 to curb school dropout rates and promote the completion of Grade 12 (Letuma & Mdodana-Zide, 2024; Mogale & Modipane, 2021). This policy primarily benefits learners who have spent more than one year in a particular grade and are referred to as "progressed learners" (PL) (DBE, 2017).

As education systems worldwide strive for inclusivity and excellence, it is essential to understand how pedagogical practices, such as praise, can support learners in overcoming academic challenges. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping learners' social and academic behaviour (Lavanga & Sulla, 2024; Rafi et al., 2020). Given that PL often face academic struggles (Letuma & Mdodana-Zide, 2024), it is essential to explore how teachers' use of praise influences their mindsets. While numerous factors contribute to the challenges experienced by PL, there is limited research on the influence of teachers' praise in fostering on their mindset. This study aims to contribute to the knowledge in this gap by examining the influence of secondary school teachers' praise on PL.

The following questions guide the study.

*How do teachers praise progressed learners?*

## **Theoretical Framework**

The study is grounded on the Theory of Mind Set (TMS). From cognitive psychology and developmental studies, TMS refers to understanding and attributing mental states, such as beliefs, intentions, and emotions, to oneself and others (Burgoyne et al., 2020; Wellman et al., 2001). First introduced in the 1970s in primate studies and later expanded to human cognition, TMS is fundamental in social interactions and learning environments. Its key tenets include recognising others' thoughts as separate from one's own and predicting behaviours based on those thoughts (Burgoyne et al., 2020). Within the framework of this study, TMS functions as a tool for teachers to understand how learners interpret feedback, especially praise, and its impact on their self-worth and drive. PLs, who proceed to the next grades despite not meeting grade requirements, may experience self-doubt or diminished motivation. Teachers with a strong understanding of TMS can tailor their praise to reinforce effort rather than innate ability, fostering resilience and a belief in improvement (Burgoyne et al., 2020; Dweck & Yeager, 2019). By recognising how these learners interpret praise as a tool for motivation or as a reinforcement of failure, TMS asserts that teachers can strategically

use it to build confidence, encourage perseverance, and counteract negative perceptions. Thus, applying TMS provides a different perspective on teachers' practices and how PLS affect their self-concept.

## Methods

### *Research Paradigm and Approach*

This study adopted an interpretive paradigm, which posits that knowledge is constructed through individuals' subjective interpretations of their experiences (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The interpretive paradigm aligns with a qualitative research approach, as it enables an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, behaviours, and perceptions within their natural contexts (Tenny et al., 2022). A qualitative approach was deemed appropriate for this study because it facilitates a nuanced understanding of reality by examining how individuals perceive and make sense of their environments and circumstances (Creswell, 2020). The synergy between the interpretive paradigm and qualitative approach allowed for a comprehensive exploration of how teachers use praise towards PL in schools.

### *Research Design*

A multiple case study design was employed to provide a detailed analysis of the phenomenon under investigation. Case studies enable an in-depth examination of specific events or experiences, offering valuable insights into real-world occurrences (Tracy, 2020). The multiple case study approach was chosen because it allows for a comparative analysis of different educational settings, thereby enhancing the reliability and richness of the findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This design facilitated the collection of extensive, context-specific data on learners' lived experiences across multiple schools, providing a deeper understanding of the role of praise in shaping their educational trajectories.

### *Sampling*

The study targeted two secondary schools in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district of the Free State province, which were deliberately selected based on their classification as quintile 3 schools. These institutions serve economically disadvantaged communities, where various socio-economic factors influence educational outcomes (Larey, 2024; Mampane & Bouwer, 2011). The selection of these schools was motivated by existing literature indicating that impoverished communities often experience challenges that impact school success, including a higher prevalence of PL. A total of twelve participants were purposively sampled, with six participants selected from each school. The

study focused exclusively on Grade 10-12 learners, as they had recently transitioned from lower grades and were more likely to provide relevant insights into the impact of praise on their academic engagement for having been at secondary school longer than the other grades. Purposive sampling, or judgment sampling, was employed because it enables researchers to intentionally select participants who possess specific knowledge and experiences relevant to the research objectives (Babbie, 2016; Creswell, 2020).

### *Data Collection*

Data was collected through focus group discussions (FGDs). An FGD is a structured group interview where selected participants engage in discussions guided by key themes formulated by the researcher (Creswell, 2020; Gawlik, 2018). This method was chosen because it fosters dynamic interactions among participants, allowing for richer data collection through shared reflections and collective recall. FGDs provided an environment in which participants could stimulate each other's memories and articulate thoughts that might not have emerged in individual interviews. This approach facilitated a more comprehensive understanding of their perspectives on the role of praise in their academic experiences.

### *Data Analysis*

The data was analyzed using qualitative content analysis, a systematic approach that involves identifying significant concepts within the data while considering the context in which it was generated (Roller, 2019; Years & Gillam, 2022). The analysis began with an initial reading of the data to develop a preliminary understanding. Open coding was then employed to segment the data into smaller, meaningful units. These codes were subsequently categorized into broader themes based on their similarities and relevance, rather than being confined to predetermined categories. Thematic refinement was conducted through an iterative process of constant comparison, ensuring that the themes accurately reflected the participants' perspectives. The final stage involved presenting findings through thematic narratives, highlighting key patterns and their implications for attachment theory. To enhance the study's credibility, verbatim quotations were incorporated to provide concrete evidence supporting the interpretations, thereby ensuring that the findings were grounded in the data rather than researcher bias.

### *Ethical Considerations*

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Free State Department of Education and the University of the Free State Ethics Committee (ethical clearance number: UFS-HSD2024/1075).

Since the study involved underage participants, informed consent was sought and obtained from both the learners and their parents or guardians to ensure ethical compliance and participant protection.

**Table 1.1:** Details of research sites

Name of school	Number of principals	Number of deputy principal	Number of progressed learners	Number of learners	Quintile ranking
School A	1	1	114	690	3
School B	1	1	102	607	2

**Table 1.2:** Participants' biographical details

Name	School	Gender	Grade
S1	A	M	11
S2	A	F	10
S3	A	F	12
S4	A	F	12
S5	A	F	10
S6	A	F	11
S7	B	M	10
S8	B	M	10
S9	B	F	10
S10	B	F	11
S11	B	F	11
S12	B	M	11

## Results and Discussion

### Findings

The data generated revealed two major themes. How teachers praised learners, and how PL would love to be praised.

#### ***How teachers praise learners***

The participants noted that teachers rarely acknowledge their efforts, instead emphasising praising learners' performance. They asserted that praise is primarily based on achievement and find this a discriminatory application since such a practice puts them aside. S2 Shared:

*I think if they do praise me, they do it silently. I have not received verbal praise.*

S5 further shared:

*There is discrimination and unequal treatment here at school. We came here to clap hands for only the brilliant learners to continue doing well. For us who are not good, we are left out.*

S7 also supported:

*Some judge us. How can you love coming to school in this situation? Over suffering on the subject, you get negative words that add more. Then you hate everything, such as being a teacher.*

S11 also stressed:

*You live in fear because you know you are subject to belittlement even when found doing what a normal learner can do, just because you are struggling in your subject. They start to make you feel so small.*

While many participants acknowledged that praise is often given based on performance, S4 noted that, at times, PL's behaviour is also praised, though not to the same extent as that of high-achieving learners. She explained as follows:

*They are not doing it equally. You see, we are different; there are those learners who excel academically and those who may not. In my experience, they praise those who excel more than us. This gives them more chance to excel but for us who do not excel, they ignore such an approach. Sometimes, they do it based on their behaviour.*

### ***How progressed learners would love to be praised.***

The participants expressed that praise should extend beyond academic performance to include effort, attendance, behaviour, and neatness in wearing the school uniform to feel appreciated and foster a sense of commitment and resilience. S2 explained:

*They should also consider us when wearing uniform and attending school and all the classes properly.*

S8 added:

*I would love it if the teacher could praise me for noticeable changes. Like coming to me to tell me, I am aware that now you do this and that, keep it up, and that I have put some effort into my school-related issues, which can mean a lot to me.*

S3 also added:

*The little effort I do should be praised and not compared to others because we are not the same.*

S10 also stressed:

*The little effort I do, they should appreciate*

## **Discussion**

### *How teachers praise Progressed learners*

The findings revealed that teachers praise academic performance while rarely acknowledging effort, attendance, or behavioural improvements. This approach was perceived as discriminatory by PL, who felt excluded from the motivational benefits of praise. The discussion integrates literature and the Theory of Mindset (TMS) to interpret these findings and their implications.

The findings align with Dweck's (2007) assertion that praise significantly influences learners' motivation and self-perception. Teachers in this study primarily praised high-achieving learners, reinforcing the notion that intelligence is fixed and success is solely determined by performance. Such practices can contribute to developing a fixed mindset among PL, making them more likely to disengage from learning and experience low academic self-efficacy (Burgoyne et al., 2020; Dweck, 2012)

Conversely, praise that acknowledges effort, perseverance, and behavioural improvements fosters a growth mindset, encouraging learners to view intelligence as malleable and to embrace challenges as opportunities for development (Burgoyne et al., 2020; Dweck & Yeager, 2019). However, the participants in this study expressed that they seldom received such recognition, which could hinder their ability to develop resilience and persistence in their learning journeys. This finding is supported by Letuma (2025), who emphasizes that praise should be used strategically to strengthen teacher-learner relationships and promote inclusive classroom management.

The participants' accounts indicate that teachers' praise practices may inadvertently contribute to feelings of exclusion among PL. S5's statement, "We came here to clap hands for only the brilliant learners to continue doing well. For us who are not good, we are left out", highlights how praise is perceived as reinforcing academic hierarchies rather than fostering inclusivity. Research by Seaton (2018) supports this, suggesting that when praise is distributed inequitably, it can lead to disengagement and a decline in learners' motivation.

From a TMS perspective, teachers' failure to acknowledge the diverse needs of PL suggests a limited awareness of how praise influences learners' self-beliefs and academic behaviour (Dweck & Yeager, 2019). TMS posits that understanding others' cognitive and emotional states is essential for effective teaching (Lavanga & Sulla, 2024). By recognising how proficient learners internalise praise, teachers can tailor their feedback to reinforce positive behaviours and instil confidence in learners who struggle academically.

#### *Ho Progressed Learners would like to be praised.*

The findings suggest that PL desires a more comprehensive approach to praise beyond academic performance, including effort, attendance, behaviour, and personal growth. The findings align with

those of Muller and Dweck's (1998), which indicate that praising effort rather than innate ability fosters a sense of control over learning outcomes and increases learners' willingness to tackle academic challenges.

S2's assertion that "They should also consider us when wearing uniform and attending school and all the classes properly" reflects the broader recognition that praise can serve as a tool for reinforcing positive behaviour beyond academics. This aligns with research indicating that consistent reinforcement of non-academic achievements can enhance learners' sense of belonging and self-worth (Rafi et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the preference for personalised praise, as noted by S8, "I would love it if the teacher could praise me for noticeable changes", underscores the importance of individualised recognition. Studies by Lavanga and Sulla (2024) highlight that targeted and specific praise strengthens teacher-learner relationships and creates a supportive learning environment, particularly for vulnerable learners.

The South African Department of Basic Education (DBE, 2017) implemented the Progression Policy to reduce dropout rates and promote educational completion. However, PL often face stigma and marginalisation within the school system (Mogale & Modipane, 2021). The findings of this study suggest that praise practices may play a critical role in reinforcing or mitigating these challenges.

When PL feel belittled, as expressed by S11, "You live in fear because you know you are subject to belittlement even when found doing what a normal learner can do", it highlights the psychological barriers created by a predominantly performance-based praise system. This aligns with findings by Blackwell et al. (2007), which suggest that learners who experience repeated failure without recognising their efforts may develop avoidance behaviour and disengage from academic activities.

#### *Theoretical Implications: Applying the Theory of Mindset*

TMS provides a valuable lens for interpreting these findings, particularly in understanding how PL construct meaning from praise. Teachers with a fixed-mindset approach to praise may unknowingly reinforce self-defeating beliefs among struggling learners. By contrast, a growth-mindset approach, in which praise is directed at effort and progress rather than innate ability, could foster resilience and academic perseverance (Dweck, 2016).

The findings also emphasise the need for teachers to develop greater cognitive empathy, a key component of TMS, to use praise as a motivational tool effectively. Recognising how progressive learners internalise praise can help teachers shift their strategies to support a growth-oriented learning

culture. As research by Dweck (2012) suggests, learners who receive constructive and effort-based praise are more likely to embrace challenges, seek solutions, and persist despite academic difficulties.

### *Limitations and Further Research*

The study was limited to one province and involved only two secondary schools within a single district. Participation was restricted to progressed learners in Grades 10 to 12, excluding those in lower grades. Data collection relied solely on qualitative focus group discussions. The focus was on exploring how praise is used by teachers, rather than assessing its effectiveness.

Future research could expand to multiple provinces and include a wider range of school environments. A more diverse group of learners, including those in Grades 8 and 9 as well as primary school students, could offer valuable comparative insights. Additionally, incorporating quantitative methods would help evaluate the effectiveness of praise and its influence on learners' mindsets and motivation.

### **Conclusion**

This study explored the influence of teachers' praise on the mindset among progressed learners. It highlights the critical role of praise in shaping PL's mindsets and academic engagement. The findings indicate that while praise is predominantly performance-based, PL desire recognition for their efforts, behaviour, and personal growth. The Theory of Mindset suggests that a shift toward effort-based praise can promote a growth mindset and counteract the negative effects of exclusionary praise practices on PL. By adopting a more inclusive approach, teachers can foster a supportive learning environment that nurtures all learners, regardless of their academic standing. Based on these findings, the study recommends professional development programs for teachers to enhance their understanding and application of praise in fostering growth mindsets among learners. District-organised start-up workshops should incorporate disciplinary approaches such as using praise, emphasising its significance on the learner's self-perception and its influence on their behaviour. Also, schools should integrate strategies for using praise in their teacher support systems to promote learners' motivation and long-term success

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## INFLUENCE OF WORK-LIFE BALANCE ON LECTURERS' PRODUCTIVITY: IMPLICATION TOWARD GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS IN LAGOS STATE UNIVERSITIES, NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*This study examined the influence of work-life balance on lecturers' productivity and implication toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria. Global competitiveness is critical factor for universities to attract international students and partnerships. In order to achieve this, several challenges bedeviled lecturer productivity such as heavy workload, poor working environment, long working hours, family responsibility, inadequate research fund, limited international collaboration, burnout and stress need to be address. The study was anchored on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. The correlational design was adopted and population of the study comprised of 1,721 lecturers from the three state-owned universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Taro Yamane was used to determine sample size of 324 lecturers and selected through simple random sampling and quota sampling. Two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Two research instruments titled: 'Work-Life Balance Questionnaire' (WLQ) and Lecturer's Productivity on Global Competitiveness Questionnaire' (LPGCQ) were used for data collection. The validity of the instruments was determined by test expert and Cronbach alpha was used to determine the reliability at 0.64 and 0.67. The data collected were analysed using Pearson Product Moment correlation to test hypotheses formulated through Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26.0. The findings of hypotheses 1 and 2 showed that: a significant relationship existed between heavy workload and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria ( $r = .583$ ;  $N = 324$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ); and a significant relationship existed between work-life balance and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria ( $r = .613$ ;  $N = 324$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). Based on the findings, the study concluded that with a healthy work-life balance, lecturers will have the time and energy to focus on their work and contribute to the growth and development of their institutions. Therefore, it was recommended amongst others that universities authority should prioritize the implementation of work-life balance policies and provide support systems for their lecturers. This would not only lead to an increase lecturer productivity, but ultimately making Lagos State Universities to be more competitive on a global scale.*

**Keywords:** Lecturer, Global Competitiveness, Productivity, Work-Life Balance

### Introduction

Globally, university education plays a vital role in driving economic growth, innovation, societal development and global competitiveness. Lecturers, as key stakeholders, are crucial to the success of universities due to the demanding nature of academic work, coupled with increasing pressures to publish, teach, and conduct research, can take a toll on lecturers' well-being and productivity. In Lagos State, particularly state-owned universities, lecturers are bedeviled with academic stress due to

excess workload in the teaching occupation. Shittu, et al., (2022) averred that stress is the feeling of pressure or worry when there is a problem or issue going on in a person's life; it is emotional or physical tension as the thought of the problems at hand makes one nervous, agitated, or frustrated. If stress is allowed to become excessive, it may lead to sickness or psychosomatic disorders like fever, sneezing, hypertension, peptic ulcers, colitis, high blood pressure, constipation, alcoholism, insomnia, chronic fatigue, migraine, heart disease, dizziness, and nervous dermatitis. According to Adeshina (2021), the physical symptoms of stress include low energy, headaches (migraine most likely), chest pain or rapid heartbeat, stomach upset, high blood pressure, difficulty in breathing, insomnia, frequent cold among others. Behavioural symptoms of stress include: change in eating habits, either not eating or eating too much, procrastination and avoiding responsibilities, increased use of alcohol, drugs, or cigarettes, exhibiting nervous behaviour such as nail-biting, and pacing. However, the psychological and emotional signs of stress include: depression or anxiety, anger, irritability, or restlessness, feeling overwhelmed, lack of motivation, trouble sleeping or sleeping too much, constant worry, lack of concentration, making bad decisions, and others.

It is therefore observed that lecturers' work-life balance is a crucial factor that influences their job satisfaction, mental health, and overall performance in teaching, research and community service. A lack of balance between professional responsibilities and personal life can lead to burnout, stress, absenteeism, and reduced teaching effectiveness. According to Shittu, et al., (2024), many tertiary institutions especially in the public university system have experienced difficulties in human resources management which have led to decline in academic staff productivity. The standard by which academic staff productivity at Nigerian universities is frequently judged is the quantity of students taught, the amount of research conducted and directed by the staff in the institutions, and the amount of community service the staff performs (Adeyanju, 2022). Academic staff productivity in the context of university systems is typically defined as the degree to which lecturers contribute to achieving the organization's goals, which could be measured based on the goals set for those individuals or groups and the degree to which the organization's goals have been achieved.

### **Statement of the Problem**

In recent time, lecturers in Lagos State public universities have been plague with academic stress which culminated poor work-life balance affected the tripartite mandate of teaching, research and community service of university which are the major core values of academic institutions. Incidentally, several factors have been observed as clogs on the wheels of progress of some lecturers face numerous challenges in achieving a balance between their work and personal life. Lecturers experience excessive workloads, long working hours, and high expectations, which negatively impact their ability to deliver quality instruction and productivity. Therefore, this study aims to bridge this knowledge gap by investigating the influence of WLB on lecturers' productivity and global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria. The demanding nature and stress of lecturers' academic work in the area of teaching, research and community service caused their low productivity. The productivity of some lecturers in Lagos State owned universities is gradually declining due to limited resources and inadequate infrastructure which can lead to work-life conflict, burnout, and decreased productivity. It was therefore, observed that some state-owned universities in Lagos State experienced intense global competition, making it essential for lecturers to be productive and competitive in their research, teaching, and service delivery. This study aims to investigate the

influence of work-life balance on lecturers' productivity and global competitiveness in Lagos State universities, Nigeria. The findings will provide valuable insights for university administrators, policymakers, and educators seeking to enhance lecturers' productivity and global competitiveness

## **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were raised:

$H_{01}$ : There is no significant relationship between heavy workload and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria.

$H_{02}$ : There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria.

## **Literature Review**

This study is grounded in the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory developed by Hobfoll (1989), which posited that individuals strive to maintain and protect their resources, including time, energy, and motivation. When individuals experience work-life balance, they are better able to conserve their resources, leading to improved productivity and global competitiveness. Lecturer High workloads, administrative duties, student discipline issues, and lack of support can negatively impact teachers' work-life balance. Work-Life Balance (WLB) refers to the ability to manage and balance the demands of work and personal life effectively, leading to improved overall well-being and quality of life. The key aspects of work-life balance includes: Time management on the effective allocation of time for work, personal, and family responsibilities; Self-care in the area of prioritizing physical, emotional, and mental well-being; having flexibility in work arrangements to accommodate personal and family needs; and establishing clear boundaries between work and personal life. According to Tanvi and Fatima (2012), work-life balance is the perception that human beings attach equal importance to their employment life as well as their private life. Subha (2013) defines work-life balance as the reconciliation between workers' professional work and their personal life. Muhtar (2012) noted that globally, work-life balance is considered; as the second most essential workplace aspect.

Moreover, in the context of Lagos State universities, lecturers are also exposed to a variety of other duties some of which are complex and sometimes conflicting with their primary roles as teachers and academic staff. Academic staff for are categorized into senior academic staff (Professors; Associate Professors; and Senior Lecturers) and other academic staff (Lecturer I; Lecturer II; Assistant Lecturers and Graduate Assistants). Some senior academics who ought to act as mentors to junior academics are hardly available and accessible. Many professors are either on sabbatical in other universities, on leave of absence, or are busy as adjunct lecturers, external examiners and consultants elsewhere. This creates a situation where the junior academic staff are left without mentors to whom they can relate in their area of specialization on teaching, research, and community service. The senior academics hurriedly attend to protégés when they are available; they are saddled with other university responsibilities such as Directorates, as Deanships, Headships and other positions within the university that make it difficult for them to have a meaningful mentoring relationship with their protégés if they have any (Shittu et al., 2024).

Lecturers are exposed to doing many works almost at the same time with the teaching job which is primary. Some of which are examination officers, chart coordinators, directors, head of departments, deans, provost, project supervisors, at undergraduate and graduate levels, attending conferences, and publication of papers, teach very large classes as against National Universities Commission (NUC) recommendation of 12 students to 1 lecturer (Osaat & Ekechukwu, 2017). The challenges of achieving WLB are exacerbated by factors such as inadequate infrastructure, limited resources, and high student-to-lecturer ratios (Federal Ministry of Education, 2014). Work-life balance (WLB) has become a critical concern in the academic profession. Research has shown that achieving a balance between work and personal life is essential for maintaining physical and mental health, job satisfaction, and overall quality of life (Allen et al., 2013). Conversely, poor WLB can lead to burnout, decreased productivity, and reduced job performance (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). According to Shittu et al., (2024), work-life Imbalance is a reasonable distribution of time between work and other facets of life, such as family and personal matters, is necessary for work-life balance. The benefits of work-life balance have been recognized by Talukder et al., (2018) as an improvement in production and efficiency, a decrease in staff absenteeism, illness, and stress, a motivated workforce, and a greater rate of workforce retention. Despite these advantages, work-life imbalance, the incapacity to equitably divide one's time between work and other activities-poses a challenge to mentoring relationships since mentors may be overly involved and thus unable to provide proteges with the necessary attention.

It has been observed that the productivity of academic staff in public universities in Lagos State has been persistently decline due to inadequate mentorship training and programme in some ivory tower (Shittu et al., 2023). Moreover, productivity is a measure derived by input/output analysis. The extent of lecturers' efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity in their teaching and researching responsibility may not be guaranteed in the face of stress is orchestrated by excess workloads (Uyeri, 2016). In the educational system, productivity refers to the ratio between the total educational output and the resource inputs utilized in the production process. Productivity is a measure of how well resources such as information, finance, and human and physical resources are combined and utilized to accomplish specific and desirable results (Abdulganiyu, 2015). In global competitiveness, limited international collaborations and partnerships can hinder lecturers' ability to engage in cutting-edge research and stay current in their field; limited research funding can hinder lecturers' ability to conduct innovative research and publish in top-tier journals; and brain drain.

## **Methodology**

The study adopted correlational design. population of the study comprised of 1,721 lecturers from the three state-owned universities in Lagos State, Nigeria. Taro Yamane was used to determine sample size of 324 lecturers and selected through simple random sampling and quota sampling techniques. Two research questions were raised and two null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. Two research instruments titled 'Work-Life Balance Questionnaire' (WLBQ) and 'Lecturer's Productivity on Global Competitiveness Questionnaire' (LPGCQ) were used for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: Section A and B. Section A contained the personal information of the respondents and section B contained the 20 items structured around the research questions. Each statement is measured on a four-point modifier Likert-type-rating scale, namely: "Strongly Agree (SA)", "Agree (A)", "Strongly Disagree (SD)" and "Disagree (D)". The

content validity of the instruments was ensured by test expert to ensure content validity and reliability consistency of the instruments was at 0.64 and 0.67 using Cronbach alpha meaning that the instruments were reliable. The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient through Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0.

### Test of Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis One

There is no significant relationship between heavy workload and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria.

**Table 1: Pearson's correlation analysis between heavy workload and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria**

Variables		Lecturers' Workload	Heavy Lecturers' Productivity
Lecturers' Heavy Workload	Pearson Correlation	1	.583**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	324	324
Lecturers' Productivity	Pearson Correlation	.583**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	
	N	324	324

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

Table 1 indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between heavy workload and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria ( $r = .583$ ;  $N=360$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between heavy workload and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between heavy workload and lecturers' productivity in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Fehintola, et al., (2023) that workload significantly predicts lecturer productivity, followed by organisational commitment. Therefore, effective workload management is essential for lecturer work-life balance, enhanced their productivity and maintaining global competitiveness.

#### Hypothesis Two

There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria.

**Table 2: Pearson's correlation analysis between work-life balance and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria**

Variables		Work-Life Balance	Lecturers' Productivity
Lecturers' Work-Life Balance	Pearson Correlation	1	.613**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001
	N	324	324
Lecturers' Productivity	Pearson Correlation	.613**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	

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

Table 1 indicated that there was a positive significant relationship between work-life balance and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria ( $r = .613$ ;  $N=613$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Hence, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between work-life balance and lecturers' productivity toward global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria was rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between work-life balance and lecturers' productivity in Lagos State Universities, Nigeria. This finding is in line with Altbach et al, (2019) that Universities prioritizing lecturer well-being and work-life balance tend to have higher research output and global competitiveness. Therefore, effective work-life balance strategies can increase lecturer productivity, job satisfaction, and institutional reputation.

## Conclusion

Global competitiveness is critical for universities to attract international students, faculty, and partnerships. This study has showed that WLB is essential for maintaining a competitive edge in the global academic market. In conclusion, the literature suggested that WLB is critical for maintaining productivity and global competitiveness in Lagos State Universities. This study showed the influence of work-life balance on lecturers' productivity and global competitiveness in Lagos State universities, Nigeria. The findings of this study highlight the significance of achieving a balance between work and personal life for lecturers' productivity and global competitiveness. Universities that supported work-life balance initiatives had higher international rankings and attracted more international students.

## Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities management should prioritize the implementation of work-life balance policies and provide support systems for their lecturers.
2. University policymakers should develop and implement policies that support work-life balance, such as flexible work arrangements and parental leave.
3. Universities management should provide resources and support to help lecturers manage their workload and achieve work-life balance.
4. Universities management should promote a culture of well-being that values and supports the physical, emotional, and mental health of lecturers.
5. Universities authority should prioritize work-life balance initiatives to attract and retain top talent and remain competitive in the global higher education market.

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