

## THE AFRICAN SYMPOSIUM: AN ON LINE JOURNAL OF AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Volume Five - Number One, March 2005

NEW LEADERSHIP PARTNERS. The University of Swaziland and Albany State University have accepted lead roles in the African Educational Research Network and its major project, *the African Symposium*, the quarterly on-line journal of educational research which is now entering its fifth year of publication. Dr. Claude G. Perkins, associate vice president for academic affairs and graduate dean at Albany State University, and Professor Cisco Magagula, vice-chancellor of the University of Swaziland, will serve as co-chairs of the collaborative activity.

Manuscripts may be submitted to Dr. David Adewuyi, Albany State University, Albany, Georgia [david.adewuyi@asurams.edu](mailto:david.adewuyi@asurams.edu) and to Professor

Cisco Magagula at the University of Swaziland <[ciscomag@uniswacc.uniswa.sz](mailto:ciscomag@uniswacc.uniswa.sz)> Dr. Kwabena Ofori-Attah will continue to serve as production editor and may be contacted at his usual address,

[doforik@cumberlandcollege.edu](mailto:doforik@cumberlandcollege.edu) Dr. Milton E. Ploghoft will continue to be actively involved as a corresponding editor and may be contacted at his usual Ohio address <[ploghoft@ohioi.edu](mailto:ploghoft@ohioi.edu)>

Ohio University, the University of Namibia, North Carolina State University, Cumberland College and Clark Atlanta University will continue as active members of the AERN and participants in the on-line journal project. Ohio University initiated a series of African research symposia in 1985 which led to involvement in the BOLESWA research symposia, and in 1992 to the creation of the AERN on the campus of Clark Atlanta University. Ohio University President Charles Ping was instrumental in

attracting the interest and support of Kenyatta University, The National University of Lesotho, The University of Zimbabwe, Bayero University and the University of Namibia. President Ping continued to be an active participant in the work of the AERN until his retirement from the presidency ten years ago.

Professor George Eshiwani, former vice chancellor of Kenyatta University,

Professor Peter Katjavive, former vice chancellor of the University of Namibia, former provosts at Clark Atlanta University, Dr. Kofi Bota and Dr. Shelby Lewis, served terms as chairpersons of the AERN. Professor Barnabas Otaala, former dean at the University of Namibia, Dr. Sofus Simonsen of North Carolina State University, Dr. Jacqueline Howard Mathews of Clark Atlanta, former dean of Ohio University Libraries Dr. Hwa-Wei Lee, Ohio's African collections specialist Ted Foster, Dr. Olive Mughenda of Kenyatta University, Dr. Kwabena Ofori-Attah of Cumberland College and Ohio Professor Emeritus, Milton Ploghoft were major contributors to the founding of the *African Symposium* and its success into its fifth year as an on-line journal.

For a more complete history of the AERN and the Journal, kindly access the AERN Homepage at <http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/aern/INDEX.HTML>

## Introduction to Volume 5, Number 1

The first number of the Journal's fifth year provides strong evidence that African researchers have a wide range of interests and the courage to study "new" and untraditional problem areas. In its first four years, the Journal has published more than 100 papers by professors, doctoral students and other researchers from more than 18 African and northern universities. The young tradition is continued in this issue of the Journal.

The problem of child abandonment and adoption in Osun state, Nigeria, was investigated by Mrs. Evitayo O. Akinyemi under the direction of Dr. Sydney Osuji at Obafemi Awolowo University.

Dr. Ayo Kehinde reported on his completed dissertation which studied the contemporary African novel as a tool for cultural education of young African students. Kehinde's paper should prove to be a valuable resource for professors of literature, history and sociology.

The relationship between "procrastinatory" behavior and the academic performance of undergraduate students was investigated by Dr. Bayode Popoola of Obafemi Awolowo University.

O.J.Ajobeje of Ondo State Polytechnic investigated the extent to which cognitive entry characteristics and continuous assessment predicted academic performance among engineering students. His findings may hold implications for other fields as well.

Students' perceptions of web based instruction in a computer science course were assessed by O.B. Longe of the Federal University of Technology and F.J. Ogege, F.A. Longe and F.C. Chete of Auchu Polytech. They used web course tools which were developed by Murray Goldberg of the University of British Columbia and have been used in many university courses internationally.

Dr. C.S. Oni studied programmes of training for instructors in vocational technical subjects in post secondary schools in Nigeria.,

A dissertation study of reform and innovation in education in the Kingdom of Lesotho was completed by Dr. Nana Boaduo at Vista University, South Africa. His research design included the participation of selected groups in the assessment of the efforts at reform and innovation over several decades.

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## **AN INVESTIGATIVE STUDY OF INNOVATION AND REFORM IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

**The Summary of a Dissertation Project by  
Dr. Nana Adu-Pipim Boaduo Frc**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated reforms and innovations in the education system of the Kingdom of Lesotho limited specifically in content to the secondary school system. The problem for the investigation centred on the ability of secondary school learners to acquire basic, functional, practical, applicable and relevant manual skills-based Secondary school education with the aim of getting either employed or self-employed on completion of secondary school if further education is not pursued.

The study took the form of survey through literature review, the use of questionnaires, structured interview questions and observation among others. Respondents were made up of nine population groups who are the stakeholders as providers and recipients of the educational services. Included were the Minister of Education, the Director of the National Curriculum Development Centre [NCDC], the education secretaries of the government and the mission schools secretariats, principals, teachers, secondary school learners, parents, secondary school graduates and the general public.

Three research methods – qualitative, quantitative and participatory action – were blended to complement each other and were used where applicable.

The major findings were grouped under four main headings: curriculum reform and innovation, infrastructure availability and provision, teacher recruitment, training and retraining of teachers and institutional reform and innovation at system level. However, there were unanticipated findings that were relevant and were included.

The conclusion that could be drawn was that the Lesotho education system has problems which hold both universal and local implications. The universal implications were that some of the problems, e.g. shortage of qualified and experienced teachers, lack of relevant infrastructure including classrooms and equipment, are characteristics of all education systems world wide. The local implications pertain to specific provisions and applications of the education system to benefit secondary school graduates who terminate at the end of their secondary education.

The suggested recommendations as panacea to help address some of the problems lie in the critical study of successful case studies to be able to apply those strategies that could be applicable, relevant and cost effective considering the Lesotho situation. This, the researcher believes, will help the Kingdom of Lesotho to resolve the problem of secondary school graduates wastage.

## BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Every society educates its youth. From both the traditional and modern perspectives education serves society in a variety of ways. In both the functional and responsibility levels, education does four major services to society.

- The development of the right personality
- Equipping individuals with knowledge and skills
- The development of attitudes and awareness
- The development of creativity to help bring about changes in society

In short, education is an instrument of social change. All traditional African societies, like the Kingdom of Lesotho, had their own education identities long before they were exposed to the European formal education influences. Generally, a pattern of culture and education were firmly established. The learning of children and the youth was informally oriented towards the practical activities in the home, on the farms, in the grazing fields or in the various workshops where implements were designed and produced. Education was compulsory and free. It was the responsibility of every community to educate its youth in the traditional and cultural norms that were held in high esteem. The homes, the workshops, the farms and fields, the kitchens, the queens', kings' and chiefs' palaces were all used as classrooms. The graduates from the traditional basotho institutions readily got employed due to the practical, relevant and applicable nature of the life skills acquired while in training

The curricula reflected largely on the needs of society and emphasised the training of specific skills that were required for the sustenance of the basotho society. For instance, if war was eminent, most male youth and able men were conscripted into the army to be trained to defend the nation. Once the war was over most skills training concentrated on the aesthetic nature of the basotho like weaving, crafts, decoration, bead-making and beauty tactics, especially among the women.

This brief sketch does not in any way suggest a wholesale return to the traditional basotho education system. The basotho society today is modern, diverse and completely different in terms of needs, development and technology as compared to the days described above. However, some aspects of the traditional basotho education system need careful reflection when modern secondary school curricula are discussed. For instance, the importance attached to the acquisition of practical, functional, relevant and applicable life skills, the passing of both the practical and oral examinations, the emphasis placed on the knowledge of ancestral history and the respect of one's cultural and traditional norms during initiation into adulthood need to be considered.

In sum, the traditional basotho education system has something to offer the modern education system. A reflection on the characteristics and fusion of those relevant and applicable principles into modern secondary school curricula might help to curb the secondary school graduates wastage [SADC Report on education and training for employment 1989:27-32].

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Do innovations and reforms in secondary schools in Lesotho provide sufficient practical, functional, applicable and relevant manual basic life skills training which will equip pupils for living after school?

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

1. Why has the education system in Lesotho been unable to equip secondary school pupils with practical, applicable, functional and manual skills-based training to eliminate wastage among secondary school graduates?
2. Can reforms and innovations improve the present secondary education provision in practice in Lesotho if the government does not implement recommendations in reports submitted by task forces and commissions set up by the government?
3. Why has the government not implemented recommendations in reports submitted between 1968 and 1996?
4. What should be done to reverse secondary school graduates wastage?

## **THE AIMS OF THE STUDY**

In the Kingdom of Lesotho many learners terminate after their secondary education due to problems beyond their control. The turnout of secondary school graduates without relevant and applicable skills to sell to prospective employers has contributed to mass unemployment among secondary school graduates in Lesotho. This has led to all forms of social problems like crime and migration within and beyond Africa. This study provided insight into the:

- Lesotho secondary education system.
- Secondary school graduates wastage problem.
- Difference between the forms of secondary education with and without applicable and relevant living skills training to equip pupils for life.
- Need for the acquisition of living skills by pupils within and across the secondary school parameters.
- Explanatory and analytical capacity of living skills training at the secondary school level.
- Provision for basic manual and practical living skills in the secondary school system as a priority in the plans and policies of future education policymakers in Lesotho.

Apart from the main research questions, the following were also investigated in the study.

- To trace the developmental history of the Lesotho education system with special reference to the secondary schools in order to identify the problems that had hindered the provision of practical, functional, applicable manual skills-based secondary education to equip learners with skills for living.
- To study and investigate reforms and innovations that have been undertaken between 1960 and 1996.

- To establish through the instruments identified for the study whether secondary schools should provide practical, functional, applicable manual skills-based secondary education to equip pupils with living skills.
- To recommend tried and tested strategies from successful case studies of educational reforms and innovations to help the Lesotho Government to restructure the secondary education system to address the problem of secondary school graduates wastage.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was guided by the scientific approach and fulfilled the basic requirements of science inquiry in the following ways:

- It confronted the social world being studied directly, for instance, the researcher has come to grips with social reality pertaining to the research problem through prolonged and intimate participation as a teacher rather than adhering to just scientific protocols without being part of the system.
- It established relations between categories of data required to complete the study as stated in the abstract.
- Applicable and relevant propositions were formulated around the relations in the study and investigated further as indicated in the research questions.
- The propositions were then organised into analytical schema as was done in the treatment, analysis and interpretation of the collected data.
- The testing of questions, data relations, propositions and analysis took place through the examination of the social world – that is the secondary education system in Lesotho.

As identified right from the beginning, the methodological paradigms – qualitative, quantitative and participatory action are not merely collections of research methods. For the purpose of this study, they include certain assumptions and values regarding their use under specific circumstances. In this study the researcher encountered both the actual methods and the underlying philosophy regarding the use of each method. These included the theory of when and why to apply quantitative rather than qualitative method and the awareness of the limitations of equally applicable methods. However, it was identified by the researcher that:

- Research methods and techniques are task specific and the task is defined by the research goals.
- Different studies use different methods and techniques because they have different aims and objectives.
- The method must be specific, relevant, applicable and appropriate for the task at hand.
- This should apply to data collection and analysis as well as sampling and questionnaire design.

The implication in this respect was that qualitative, quantitative and participatory action research methods were used because they complemented each other. For instance where data were required to be quantified, the quantitative method was applied especially when treating questionnaire and interview responses for analysis and interpretation and vice versa. During the analysis and the interpretation of data, the qualitative method was applied.

## THE PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH PERSPECTIVE

Since participatory action research method is self-reflective inquiry in social situations it helped to improve the rationality and justice of the social and educational practices, understanding them and the situations in which they were carried out. Since the study was to find out about the opinion of the basotho about the current secondary education provision, it was necessary to involve the general public in a participatory manner through ‘pitsos’ [local community gathering at the chief’s palace], direct intervention [interview] and questionnaire.

Participatory action research as applied in this study supported and contributed to the effort of individuals, groups and movements that challenge social inequality and work to eliminate exploitation [Participatory Research 1982:1]. It plays a liberating role in the learning process by providing the development of critical understanding of the social problems, their structural causes and possibilities for overcoming them. It calls for democratic interaction between the researcher and those among whom the research is conducted. The democratic interaction depends on the political participation of those involved in conducting research on the causes of their exploitation with the objective of overcoming the exploitation. In this study secondary school graduates have been exploited and then abandoned leaving them at the mercy of the exploiters for further exploitation.

Participatory action research is composed of three inter-related processes. These are:

- The collective investigation of problems and issues with the active participation of the constituency in the entire process.
- The collective analysis in which the constituency develops a better understanding not only of the structural causes – socio-economic, political, cultural, historical – of the problem.
- The collective action by the constituency aimed at long-term as well as short-term solutions of these problems.

These three processes are inseparable. Their integration gives participatory action research its fundamental strength and power. Processes most closely related to investigation, analysis or action can be identified separately in any participatory action research study or activity; but each process incorporates aspects of the others. Above all, participatory action research is a learning process for those involved as will be seen later. The process begins with people’s concrete experience and situation and moves to include both theoretical analysis and action aimed at change. Critical evaluation of the success or failure of action also deepens awareness of the concrete reality that people face.

Participatory action research is an educational approach to social change. However, it is not a recipe for social change. Rather it is a democratic approach to investigation and learning to be taken by individuals, groups and movements as a tool aimed at social change. As related to this study, the following questions were answered to place this very method into clear perspective as to why it was chosen. The questions are the following:

1. Who are the participants?
2. Why should they participate in the study?
3. How would they participate?



4. Who has to learn?
5. What has to be learned?
6. Why should they learn what they have to learn?
7. How would they participate in the learning process?

1. **Who are the participants?** The participants included all the stakeholders in the provision of secondary school education in the Kingdom of Lesotho and all the recipients.
2. **Why should they participate in the study?** Metaphorically, “nobody takes in medication for a sick person”. In other words, it is the sick person who needs the medication to get better. In this investigative study, it is the basotho public who need solutions to their problems regarding secondary school graduate wastage; and therefore it should be their responsibility to find solutions. By participating in the study, they would be able to make inputs and share the derived benefits from the contributions that they would make.
3. **How would they participate?** There are various ways the people could be brought on board to achieve collective participation in the study. These include social structures like associations, civics, committees and other organizations within the society, the traditional leadership, the youth groups, churches, and “pitsos”.
4. **Who has to learn?** Right from the start all the participants would collectively learn from the various means through which data would be collected. The learning will be practical involving all the participants and whatever is discovered through the process will be collaborative expression of interest and solutions to the problem being investigated.
5. **What has to be learned?** All participants will learn a lot. Firstly, they would learn how to identify problems that confront them. Secondly, they would learn how to investigate the causes of the problems and thirdly they would learn how to identify and apply possible solutions to the identified problems. Since the learning will be practical, participative and a learning experience, participants will be empowered educationally.
6. **Why should they learn what they have to learn?** As members of society, the need to learn is obvious. The simple answer that can be provided is that, they need to find and work out solutions to their problems.
7. **How would they participate in the learning process?** All the participants would be fully oriented and engaged. They would be required to make specific inputs. For instance some of the participants would be made to devise possible topics and subjects significant for inclusion in the new secondary school curricula based on practical, functional, applicable and relevant manual skills-based secondary school education. Through this process all participants will be learning through participation.

The strengths and characteristics of participatory action research are:

- A critical analysis is encouraged throughout the research process and not just at the beginning or termination.

- The approach encourages active involvement on the part of all participants.
- It is positive in initiating and helping to bring about change and improvement.
- By either using the field or the classroom or both as the study environment, the natural behaviour of participants is accommodated.
- As a research framework, it is flexible and adaptable.
- It describes relationships as they develop over time and accommodates changes in thinking which reflect mutations occurring in the context of the study [Boaduo 1988:20-25].

In sum, participatory action research helps the researcher to address practical problems with theoretical relevance and transfers the knowledge from the research findings to the participants [McNiff 1995:57-85; Clark 1972:23]

### **SAMPLING AND POPULATION SELECTION**

Two sampling techniques were used, namely systematic and random. The systematic sampling was used to select some of the population by virtue of their position. The Minister of Education, the head of the National Curriculum Development Centre, the secretaries of the nine missions and the principals of the ten randomly selected secondary schools from the ten districts of Lesotho were systematically selected due to the positions that they hold. Ten pupils and ten teachers and from the public ten secondary school graduates from each of the ten districts and nine volunteers each from the ten districts were randomly selected making a total of 600 respondents. The data obtained from the literature review, responses from questionnaire and interview schedules, observations and pitsos were treated, analysed and interpreted. The analysis and interpretation provided answers, questions and insight into the problem under investigation through which the findings were arrived at. Recommendations made depended on the findings.

### **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The findings of the study were numerous and some of them were not anticipated. However, all of them have been listed under the following headings and brief commentary provided

- Curriculum reform and innovation
- Infrastructure availability and provision
- Recruitment of teachers, teacher development and retraining:
- Institutional reform and innovation at system level, and
- Unanticipated findings.

**1. Curriculum reform and innovation:** With regard to the research questions, the following were substantial answers. It was identified that between 1962 and 1996 several commissions were set to investigate the relevance of secondary education provision to recipients. The commissions [1962, 1966, 1978, 1982, 1984, 1991-92, 1995-96] recommended the revision of the curriculum and the introduction of practical studies, provision of equipment and materials, the strengthening of the overall administration and management especially the inspectorate, the

decentralisation of administration, the provision of laboratories and workshops, recruitment of qualified teachers and in-service for old teachers.

**Comments:** The government set up the National Curriculum Development Centre [NCDC]. Practical studies were integrated into the existing curriculum not as a separate course or subject but as a teaching technique through which teachers emphasised the significance of basic practical skills [Task Force Report 1982]. The deficiencies were obvious and these included absence of workshops and laboratories, qualified teachers for practical studies and materials and equipment. At the time of this study [1996-1998] the Ministry of Education [MOE] has not implemented most of the recommendations proposed by the various commissions especially personnel, infrastructure, equipment and materials and the broad implementation of the new syllabus. With this kind of picture, reform and innovation cannot bring about improvement in the education system.

**2. Infrastructure provision and availability:** There is lack or total absence of infrastructure, especially in the rural area. Classrooms are inadequate. Libraries, workshops and laboratories are not provided except in some of the urban centres.

**Comments:** With this kind of grim picture reform and innovation cannot bring about improvement in the education system let along the sustenance of further development.

**3. Teacher recruitment and in-service training:** The MOE does not have control about the recruitment of teachers for distribution to schools. The mission secretariat and the school managers recruit teachers and send their list to the MOE for salary purposes. Teachers do not get promotion because there are not clear guidelines to this effect. As a result most schools do not have adequate number of teachers and coupled with low salaries and no pension scheme [at the time of the study] the morale of teachers was at its lowest ebb. There is only one teacher training college and the University of Lesotho was not tasked to train teachers [at the time of the study]. Those who were employed left without notice to greener pastures in South Africa and Botswana.

**Comments:** The implementation of reform and innovation in an education system depends on the quality and quantity of teachers and other personnel available as well as the provision of the required infrastructure, equipment and materials. Unfortunately, Lesotho does not have the financial urge to do all that and for that reason, the implementation of recommendations becomes an impossible task.

**4. Institutional reform and innovation at system level:** From the various pitsos organised by the government and the researcher during the study, the basotho public want complete restructuring of the secondary education system to provide for practical, applicable and relevant skills oriented subjects to equip secondary school graduates with living skills to be employable or self-employed after leaving school. However, all these have been impossible to implement due to severe inefficiency of management and administration.

**Comments:** There is need for total re-organization of the teaching service regarding inspectors and inspection of schools, recruitment and distribution of teachers, orderly provision of in-

service training for old teachers, adequate supply of equipment and provision of relevant infrastructure and proper evaluation of activities in the secondary school system.

**5. Unanticipated findings:** The list below represents the findings that were not anticipated:

1. The traditional basotho education system has been completely replaced by the formal European education system and as such the thrust of practicality, applicability and relevance have been completely avoided in terms of the incorporation of practical traditional skills.
2. The aims of the colonial education system are still hinged on by the Lesotho secondary school education system with academically oriented curricula despite curricula changes.
3. There is no established system for the recruitment and distribution of qualified teachers by the MOE creating a huge disparity in the staffing of secondary schools.
4. There is not compulsory registration of teachers as professionals before they can be employed as teachers.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

According to Wilms [1990:242] "... integrating practical experiences with classroom studies has long been regarded by many educators – modern and ancient ... as a panacea for a host of educational provision problems," especially in the secondary school system where most of the learners terminate. The best effort in the provision of secondary education in the Kingdom of Lesotho should be given to a secondary school education that is relevant, appropriate and applicable to enable school graduates use their acquired skills for everyday use [Noble 1995:78; Rogers 1986:169; Rudduck et al 1996:25]. The real challenge is that the quality of secondary school education should be such that it makes graduates useful citizens capable of applying the knowledge and the skills acquired to make a decent living long after they have graduated. Real education is that which is left with the learner long after everything learned at school has been forgotten [Anderson 1981:13; Noble 1995:78].

## RECOMMENDATION 1

**Towards a new secondary school education provision:** The Kingdom of Lesotho secondary education system has the chief responsibility for producing a capable workforce that will carry the flag of the Kingdom's development mission and vision through to accomplishment in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. There is, therefore, the need to make significant effort to improve public schools as to be able to address the current and the future unemployment among secondary school graduates [Salamon 1991:23]. Secondary education provision is one of the most important media for the provision of learning opportunities. The rapid pace of economic, social and technological changes in our contemporary societies has highlighted the difference between what the secondary school system provides and what is apparently "**needed**", especially in the business-industry world [Carr-Hill 1988:3]. The secondary education, as traditionally organised, cannot meet these "**needs**" for "**appropriate**" and "**relevant**" education.

Secondary education and employment should relate to each other through a great many connections, processes and interfaces [Korn et al 1984:13]. These authors indicate that the system of secondary education and the system of employment are both defined by the interplay

of political, economic, social, cultural, juridical and material-technological factors under specific historical conditions. The two complementary systems are highly dynamic, actively related and interdependent. The framework of their relationships can be comprehended only as an integral part of a whole and in the final analysis as an integral part of the socio-economic and socio-political structures of the society. In the current Lesotho perspective, these are fundamental statements not taken seriously by the secondary education system.

Considered from this angle, the shaping of relations between secondary education and employment presents itself as a special problem of relationship between social and economic progress. It further implies making them efficient and effective in both social and economic terms. Since this aspect is in direct correlation, any change in one affect the other either positively or negatively [Korn & Maier 1977:15].

Currently, it is possible to evaluate Lesotho's secondary education system with its objectives, principles and attainments as something isolated from the requirements of its past, present and even the future employment system. The establishment of proportions in the interrelations between secondary education and employment is purpose-oriented within the framework of that totality that determines social reproduction as a whole.

The following have been emphasised by Boyer [in Salmon 1991:31] as significant for meaningful changes that can enhance the provision of applicable, relevant and functional secondary education for employment and development:

1. A national commitment to the proposition that every secondary school graduate must have high quality functional, applicable and relevant secondary education responsive to national and community needs and can respond to them in a practical way.
2. A need for the development of a coherent curricula stressing proficiency in languages, availability of facilities, equipment and infrastructure, integration of cultural and traditional knowledge, basic science and above all familiarity with the needs of business-industry world.
3. The restructuring of secondary schools to stress school-based management and accountability for educational performance.
4. A greater effort to recruit and train better educators through higher salaries, improved working conditions, expanded teacher-renewal programmes and an effort to upgrade the status of teaching as a profession requiring compulsory registration body to oversee the registration of professional educators.
5. An expanded partnership between the secondary schools on one hand and the parents and business-industry world on the other.

From what has been listed above attention needs to be paid to the practical application of scientific and acquired knowledge for immediate use after the completion of secondary education. In other words greater efforts should be made to facilitate training and functional practical skills-based development within the secondary school parameters. As a prerequisite to secondary school education in practical terms for practical on-the-job experience, training and skills development should be integrated and attention should be paid to weekend and vacation employment for all secondary school learners to practically put their theoretical knowledge into practice in their chosen fields exposing them, right from the start, to the realities of the business-industry world before the completion of their secondary education.

## RECOMMENDATION 2

**Towards partnership between secondary education and the business-industry world:** There is urgent need for partnership between secondary education and the business-industry world in relation to curricula and infrastructural matters. Partnership reflects an understanding that the economic well-being and the vitality of a community are tied to the quality of its public secondary school system. In effect, good public secondary school system is also good for the business-industry world because it will encourage and contribute to the overall community general stability, advancement and development. To the secondary school graduates the following serve as the major advantages if partnerships are forged between the secondary school system and the business-industry world:

1. Learners acquire basic work experience before the completion of their secondary school education exposing them to the business-industry world in advance.
2. Learners will have the opportunity to undertake on-the-job training and exposure, especially during the afternoons, weekends, holidays and vacations, as part of their experiences. Work shadowing, work simulation and industrial site visits are included in the study programme.
3. Academic work that relates to the demands of the business-industry world would be made real, practical and will stimulate interest and all learners would strive to do well to ensure smooth career path. In this perspective, motivation would be high because of the use of industrial resources as well as industrialists as personal educators while the learners are on site.
4. Since the curricula is a joint product of all stakeholders, it is relevant to both the graduates and the business-industry world because there is joint secondary education-business-industry curricula project which will cater for all interested parties and fulfil their aspirations.

To the educators as well as education policy makers the advantages of this kind of partnership between the secondary education system and the business-industry world include the following:

1. Educators can be attached to industry and also attend company training programmes and courses so that they are able to use the primary up-to-date materials in the classroom before secondary school graduates are taken out on their on-the-job practical training. Educators may use this as a spring board to change their profession by joining the business-industry world.
2. Educators will be able to develop and maintain personal contacts and receive expert assistance from the business-industry world for policy-making, curricula propositions, resources selection, allocation and general planning. Furthermore, information about needs of the work place that will enable secondary institutions to develop relevant programmes is made available to educators. There is also the advantage of the use of experts from the business-industry as part time, temporary or full time educators and trainers of secondary school graduates.

The purpose of all these is to give the educator the opportunity to gain first-hand experience and knowledge of a variety of careers and offers the educator numerous opportunities for support in order to carry out the accorded tasks effectively and efficiently.

While the educators and secondary school graduates become beneficiaries of the excellent partnership, the business-industry world and the government benefit as well. To the business-industry world, the secondary school system will produce educated and well-prepared workforce. As a result the business-industry world will promote and permit the use of their facilities, equipment and other resources of the educational institutions. This will further increase the direct economic benefits from the secondary education institutions that may also buy goods and other products and services in their local communities helping them to apply technology to further improve business operations and raising the economic level of the community.

### **RECOMMENDATION 3**

**Towards physical facilities and infrastructural provision:** Where it is not possible to provide laboratories, workshops and libraries for every secondary school, especially at the initial stages of the reform and innovation process. The MOE should set up a committee to plan to equip schools. In the plan the following should be considered:

1. The ten districts should be re-zoned into smaller educational regions.
2. Each region should have equal number of secondary schools.
3. A centrally placed secondary school in each new region should be selected for the pilot project period for development.
4. The selected central schools in each region should be budgeted for development and equipped with laboratories, workshops and libraries as well as materials and equipment, electricity and water.
5. A central time-table should be prepared for each region to accommodate all the schools to come to the centre at specific times to make use of the facilities either weekly or fortnightly..
6. These selected schools should be well-staffed to cater for all the needs of the curricula of the schools within that region.

Once the pilot project has fulfilled its expectations through rigorous assessment and evaluation, one school each from the regions should be equipped each financial year so that with time, all the schools will be equipped with laboratories, workshops and libraries to help the learners acquire practical, applicable and relevant skills before the completion of their secondary education.

### **IMPLICATIONS FOR CHANGES**

If the Government is to undertake the required reform and innovation then there are certain measures that should be put into place. With respect to curricula changes, there will be need for renovation of structures in the schools and new ones added. Teachers would have to be retrained or provided with intensive in-service to be able to cope with the new changes. There is need for the re-organization of the inspectorate to make it efficient. This will demand the recruitment of

more inspectors and placed at the district offices as decentralization will need them to be close to the areas they are supposed to operate. Teachers should be recognised and remunerated for their service, especially promotion should be granted when the time is ripe not necessarily moving the promoted teacher from the school. The implications are that the Government of Lesotho would have to forgo some of its commitments and prioritise the secondary school system. The researcher believes that it would be a worthwhile action since most of the pupils terminate at the secondary school level.

## CONCLUSION

The problems that the Lesotho education system faces have both universal and local implications. The universal implications are that most of the problems are characteristic of all education systems particularly those related to curriculum, lack of infrastructure and qualified teachers. The local implications pertain to specific provisions and applications which include relevant and applicable curricula, training and retraining of teachers, lack of facilities, equipment and regular assessment and evaluation of the system. The solution of most or all of the identified problems lies in the critical study of successful education systems where functionality, relevance and applicability have been given prominence in the provision of secondary education.

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## **STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF WEB-BASED LEARNING TOOLS: A CASE STUDY OF THE WEB COURSE TOOL (WebCT).**

By

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### **ABSTRACT**

Educators today are using distance education and Internet-based learning as methods for delivering courses. There are many software packages specifically designed for electronic learning (e-learning), such as WebCT, Blackboard, and Prometheus. Teaching styles have to be adapted to this new environment since the Internet as a medium for course delivery is different from the traditional teaching settings. Lecturers and students will have to adjust to the pedagogy that uses instructional technology as an integral component in teaching and learning in order to be successful with online learning classes. This study sought to determine students' interest in using WebCT as a tool for learning courses online. WebCT was selected because of its wide usage in online education all over the world. An introductory computer science course was selected for the research. Students were surveyed at the end of the courses after they used WebCT for a variety of assignments and electronic interaction. The goal is to determine students' perceptions of online learning tools, identify their advantages as well as the challenges of using web-learning tools.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Before Internet access became widely available, instructors delivered asynchronous instruction via telephone, cable TV, videotape, or printed materials to distance learning students ([Hazari, 1998](#)). In recent years, universities have moved to Internet-based courses to attract students not able to attend traditional classes for various reasons. In the majority of cases, students enroll in Internet-based classes because of convenience while working towards a diploma or enhancing professional skills that may result in a promotion or career change Reed,(2003).

Many schools that have not used instructional technology to accomplish course objectives in the past now have to be trained to do so, and they very often include a component in the course that provides information to students about the technology itself. Since the study focused on students with computing curriculum, it should have a general relevance to all educators because most schools have now made computing courses compulsory as part of the graduating requirements.

### **DISTANCE EDUCATION**

Distance education, the transmission of instruction from one location to multiple locations via telecommunications technology, has expanded at an exponential rate in post-secondary education settings. [Smallwood & Zargari \(2000\)](#). This exchange of information between instructor and student can be in the form of compressed video/interactive television (ITV), video conferencing, satellite transmission, Internet, or Internet-based delivery used separately and/or in combination with traditional modes of instruction (in this case hybrid). Access to distance education may require

students to be at a specific location at a specific time, such as with ITV, or the course can be made available via electronic files and accessed at the student's convenience. This is the case with Internet-based courses. Thus, the more traditional method of teaching via lecture or face-to-face interaction could potentially be supplanted by students learning at their own pace, on their own time, and at any location with an Internet portal Whitehead(2001).

## **INTERNET-BASED LEARNING**

The use of the Internet as a tool for Internet-based learning (also called e-learning) has educators rethinking the way instruction is administered to students. Internet-based communication creates a variety of ways to deliver instruction and provide electronic resources for student learning. Some methods, such as using Web pages to deliver text in much the same way as hard-bound texts, are very familiar to faculty. However, a big advantage is that the Internet also supports the delivery and use of multimedia elements, such as sound, video, and interactive hypermedia McNeil, Robin & Miller (2000). Curriculum, administration, and assessment are all affected as members of the educational community experience changes in communication and commerce that are a result of the explosive expansion of the Internet Austin & Mahlman,92001). These technologies in a general term are referred to as courseware.

Thus, many educators are looking at the way Internet-based learning can provide flexibility and convenience. Internet-based learning can overcome some traditional barriers such as time and place. A student can study independently online or take an instructor-led online class, which combines the benefits of self-study with those of more traditional classroom-based learning (Ryan, 2001). For working adults occupying an increasingly large percentage of our tertiary education population, and with greater numbers of students having computer and Internet experience prior to entering the higher institutions, opportunities are being made to better meet their needs, interests, and work schedules through online classes Cooper( 2001). As higher institution-level education programs begin to offer more online classes and degree programs, technology education experts may be in the position of developing online offerings Flowers, (2003).

Internet-based learning does not require extensive computer skills, although familiarity with computers and software (especially Web browsers) does help to reduce the intimidation factor Ryan, (2001). Internet-based learning generally fits into one of three major categories:

**Self-paced independent study:** Students determine the schedule and study at their own pace. They can review the material for as long as necessary. Feedback from online quizzes takes the form of preprogrammed responses. Unfortunately, there is no one to whom the student can direct questions. This form of study requires strong self-motivation.

**Asynchronous interactive:** The students participate with an instructor and other students, although not at the same time. They attend classes whenever they need or until the course material is completed. This approach offers support and feedback from the instructor and classmates. It is usually not as self-paced as independent study.

**Synchronous learning:** Students attend live lectures via computer and ask questions by e-mail, messenger or in real-time live chat. This format is the most interactive of the three and feels the most like a traditional classroom. Flexibility is restricted by the previously determined lecture schedule. There are limited course offerings in this format due to high delivery costs Ryan,( 2001).

## **POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF INTERNET-BASED LEARNING**

Proponents argue that Internet-based courses actually succeed more than traditional instruction at discouraging student passivity and encouraging lifelong learning Rosenbaum( 2001). Since Internet-based instruction is relatively new , evidence of the effectiveness of online courses compared to traditional instruction are still subjective and needs further probing which will only come with time Hazari, 91998). It is true that in an interactive, multimedia environment, students often find greater opportunities to learn by actively working through new concepts. This, of course, is dependent on the structure and kind of Internet-based learning tools made available to the student. For example, relatively low-tech presentations delivered online allow students to proceed slowly or click past material they already know. Ideally, Internet-based learning also promotes group learning and inquiry via serial e-mails known as "discussion threads" Rosenbaum, (2001). Instructor tools that can improve or enhance classroom management include e-mail, digital drop box, discussion board, and the chat room. These tools can enable students and the instructor to have broader access to one another as needed McEwen, (2003).

The advantages of Internet-based courses include determination of time and place of learning "class time" by the student, access to global resources and experts, completion of coursework at home or at work, scheduling flexibility, and the ability to track progress Gallagher,Smallwood & Zargari, 2000). While Internet-based courses have advantages, it is equally important to note that there are disadvantages. These might include little or no "in-person" contact with departmental or faculty members, feelings of isolation, a difficult learning curve in how to navigate within the system, problems with the technology, the need for the student to be actively involved in learning, and increased lead-time required for feedback regarding assignments Smallwood & Zargari, (2000). Another disadvantage is the cost and lack of availability of the hardware and software necessary for Internet-based learning.

## **THE WEB COURSE TOOL (WEBCT)**

Web Course Tools (WebCT) was developed in 1995 by Murray Goldberg, a faculty member at the University of British Columbia. Universal Learning Technologies purchased WebCT in 1999. According to Whitehead, (2004), WebCT is the most popular web course platform in higher education today around the world. More than 39,000 instructors at over 1,350 institutions of higher learning, use WebCT to deliver over 147,000 courses to more than 6 million student in more than 50 countries.

WebCT integrates communication tools, including a bulletin board, chat room, private e-mail, and calendar on the WebCT site. In addition, graphics, video, and audio files can be incorporated into a WebCT site. Such features can facilitate interaction between faculty and students Morss, (1999). These tools are available only to the students and instructor of the course, thus protecting the intellectual property of the instructor, the privacy of the student, and the course content from external parties. WebCT also provides instructional tools to support course content such as a glossary, references, self-test, and quiz module. Students, too, can place assignments and other materials in WebCT for courses in which they are enrolled. WebCT also gives lecturers course management tools for grading, tracking student interaction, and monitoring class progress. Students

access their WebCT course materials using a Web browser from any computer connected to the campus Intranet or Internet Morss, (1999).

A major challenge with WebCT is that the program only runs on servers using the UNIX operating system. If the institution does not have a UNIX server or is unwilling to devote space on its server for WebCT, it will be impossible to offer WebCT at that institution. A second problem with WebCT is that it is heavily frame-dependent. Frames have a tendency to load slowly, can be cumbersome to navigate, and require more memory than Web pages without frames. Institutions considering WebCT as their e-learning tool will need to determine if students and faculty have the necessary computing power. Fredrickson(1999).

In summary, WebCT is a powerful learning management system that facilitates the creation of Web-based teaching and learning. It does this in the following ways:

- by providing tools for learning, communicating and collaboration.
- by providing easy to use course interface and
- by providing administrative tools for providing and updating course contents.

## **THE STUDY**

The purpose of this study is to examine students' perception of online learning tools using WebCT as a case study. Hence, WebCT was used as a supplement to traditional teaching methods in an introductory undergraduate computer science subject. The method of instruction is hybrid using a combination of traditional face-to-face teaching complemented by synchronous interactive elements. Traditional methods included lecture, hands-on activities, and discussions. Students were required, at a minimum, to use the bulletin board feature of the system to view assignments and discussion questions posted by the instructor, and were required to send electronic versions of written assignments to the instructor's mailbox. There were a variety of other functions such as live chat sessions, a personal calendar for each student, and an electronic version of the syllabus available for optional use.

During the course of the semester, the students were gradually introduced to new features in the courseware package (WebCT) as it related to the corresponding course materials. For example, in the first two weeks of the course, the syllabus tool and calendar function were reviewed during class. Elements of the courseware that were required to be used were reviewed to ensure that students would be successful when on their own after the scheduled meeting time.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

The students, numbering 57 were surveyed using pen and paper instruments at the end of the semester after using the courseware tool for a variety of assignments and electronic interaction opportunities. The survey instrument incorporated dichotomous and open-ended questions regarding their experiences with WebCT. The questions sought to determine whether the students perceived that they had used the e-learning tool effectively, what elements of WebCT they elected to use, what difficulties they might have encountered, and their overall opinions regarding this e-learning tool.

The first section of the questionnaire collected data about student's use of and familiarity with WebCT. Questions asked how they learned to use WebCT, whether it was useful for the coursework and assignments in the class, and what, if any, technical problems they encountered. The second section of the survey inquired about their interest in using e-learning tools in the future.

### **INSTRUMENT VALIDATION AND PILOT TESTING**

The validity and reliability of the research instrument was ensured by experts in related fields, as well as through a pilot test. The questionnaire was sent to senior members of the department for validation. They were asked to evaluate the content of the instrument and to comment on the clarity and appropriateness of the items. Before implementing the survey, a pilot test was administered to fifteen students. A random sampling was used to select the participants. The purpose of the pilot test was to check the time required to finish the questionnaire, to determine if there were ambiguity and format problems, and to clarify items. According to the results of the pilot test group, the researcher made the necessary corrections.

The data were analyzed and descriptive statistics were calculated for the dichotomous items, and the qualitative data were analyzed for emerging themes and consistency with the quantitative data.

### **RESEARCH ANALYSIS**

The course selected for integrating e-learning tools is titled "Introduction to computers". This particular course was selected due to the expected variation in students' skills and interest areas, and the suitability for integration of e-learning tools. All undergraduates within the institution irrespective of the department also offer this course. Student volunteers were therefore selected for the project across five departments within the institution.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Table 1: Survey Items Regarding Use of WebCT**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
Is this the first time you are using WebCT or any courseware at all?	Yes	54	94.7
	No	3	5.3
Did you need additional instruction in using WebCT?	Yes	21	36.8
	No	36	63.2
What prior knowledge of computing helped you in the usage of WebCT?	Internet browsing	42	73.68%
	Word-processing	7	12.28%
	Computer games	10	17.54%



What WebCT element did you use most frequently?	-Calendar	36	63.2
	-Bulletin board	10	17.5
	-Chat room	2	3.5
	-Assignment	9	15.8
Was WebCT useful for communicating with the instructor?	Yes	44	77.2
	No	13	22.8
Was WebCT useful for communicating with your classmates?	Yes	36	63.2
	No	21	36.8
Did you find WebCT useful for your coursework?	Yes	44	78.6
	No	12	21.4

The survey results displayed in table 1 show that for the majority (94.70%) of students, this was the first time they had used WebCT or any courseware tool. The students appeared to learn the basic concepts of using WebCT easily and required little additional instruction or help from the instructor during the face-to-face class meetings (63.2). Among the majority above (73%), ease of use was enhanced by prior knowledge of computer usage associated with internet browsing.

The calendar function, i.e., important dates relevant to the course generated by the instructor, was reported as the most frequently used tool in the WebCT courseware package (63.2%). This tool simply required the student to navigate to the calendar page, as updating with personal information was an option. Use of this tool would be similar to referring to a course calendar in a standard, paper-copy course syllabus, albeit the calendar function is a dynamic version of a syllabus. In addition to the calendar, the instructor to post questions relevant to the course and solicit responses and discussion from the students regularly used the bulletin board function. This function and the assignment-posting features were the second most commonly used WebCT elements reported by the students (83%).

When asked whether WebCT was useful in electronic communications with regard to the class, more students indicated that contacting the instructor was more useful than connecting with fellow students in the course (77.2% against 63.2%). On the whole, the students found WebCT useful for their course (78.6%). The frequencies and percentages for survey questions regarding use of WebCT are displayed in Table 1.

Table 2: *Survey Items Regarding Technical Problems and Future Use of WebCT*

Question	Response	f	%
Did you have any technical problems with WebCT (select all that apply)?	Logging on to WebCT	4	7.0
	Submitting assignments	19	33.3
	Accessing the calendar	0	0.0
	Posting/replying on bulletin board	4	7.0
	Sending/receiving private e-mail	0	0.0
	Other	0	0.0
	Did not have any problems	30	52.6
Which one item would you like to see WebCT used for?	Assignments online vs. hard copy	22	38.6
	Quizzes / tests	13	22.8
	Class discussions using chat room	4	7.0
	Bulletin board communication	11	19.3
	Other	7	12.3
Would you enroll in a distance education course with WebCT or any other courseware as your contact with the instructor?	Yes	33	57.9
	No	24	42.1

From table 2 above, the majority of students (52.6%) reported no technical problems with the software, and for those who did encounter problems, submitting assignments was the most burdensome task. When asked to verbally comment on some of these problems, specific examples given by the students are as follows:

- It is sometimes hard to download and post things on WebCT
- It seemed difficult at times to post assignments
- Having to write assignments somewhere else and then load them up could be cumbersome.
- Posting/replying was confusing.
- Not knowing when to check for something new.

It should be noted that there were also a large number of comments stating no difficulties were encountered. Further analysis showed that students from engineering and applied sciences had a strong positive response to the question of the usefulness of WebCT as a course tool. When considering reported technical problems with the software, they had fewer problems than many other undergraduate majors. Additionally, students from these faculties responded that they would enroll in a distance education course possibly using WebCT or any other courseware as their contact with the instructor. Other groups of undergraduate majors liked the idea of online education. The frequencies and percentages for survey questions about difficulties with WebCT, desired future use of the technology, and using WebCT as a mode of learning are displayed in Table 2.

## CONCLUSION

One can correctly conclude from the facts so far that WebCT and by extension web-based learning tools are useful tool for students who are comfortable with the technology and do not encounter serious technical problems. Engineering and science majors indicated their acceptance

of this mode of information access in greater degrees than their classmates in other areas. It could be inferred that these groups of students are more willing than other student majors to embrace new or emerging electronic formatted text-based or graphics-enhanced media. Further research on this issue would definitely be warranted.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Overall, the results of the study indicate that student interest in the WebCT is tempered by initial experiences with the technology. For students who struggled with uploading assignments, using the calendar or bulletin board features, or checking for new postings on a regular basis, e-learning was perceived to be time consuming and/or challenging. However, the majority of students adjusted to the technology quickly and with enthusiasm. Further research will determine whether e-learning is better than traditional instructional methods and to check the pedagogical methods that are employed in using e-learning tools.

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## **TEACHING VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SUBJECTS IN NIGERIAN SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated whether or not the factors involved in the subject matter of the study such as qualified teachers, instructional materials and society in general, contribute to the problem of teaching vocational technical subjects in Nigerian special educational institutions. The survey population comprised 160 vocational teachers and 40-school administrators who were randomly selected from eight special educational institutions across the nation. Precisely, a total of 200 people were selected to rank-order the above listed factors. The findings show that 175 people (87.5 per cent) ranked “lack of qualified teachers” as their number one problem affecting the teaching of vocational subjects in Nigerian special educational institutions. While a total of 162 people (81 per cent) ranked “lack of incentives” as their number two problems affecting the teaching of vocational subjects, a considerable size of 152 people (76 per cent) ranked “inadequate instructional materials” as number four problem affecting the teaching of vocational subjects in our special educational institutions.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Nigerian National Policy on Education (NPE), 1998 Revised, defines special education as the education of children and adults who have learning difficulty because of different sorts of handicaps, such as blindness, partial slughtness, deafness, hardness of hearing, mental retardation, social maladjustment and other physical handicaps due to circumstances of birth, inheritance, social position, mental and physical health pattern, or accident in later life. As a result, a few children and adults are unable to cope with the normal school class organisation and methods. The policy document also explains the objectives of special education as follows:

- (i) to give concrete meaning to the idea of equalizing educational opportunities for all children, their physical, mental, emotional disabilities notwithstanding;
- (ii) to provide adequate education for all handicapped children and adults in order that they may fully play their roles in the development of the nation; and
- (iii) to provide opportunities for exceptionally gifted children to develop at their own pace in the interest of the nation’s economic and technological development (NPE, 1998:36)

In pursuance of the above objectives, vocational subjects are now been offered and taught in some of our special education institutions across the nation. Among the subjects currently being taught in the institutions are: Woodworks; Metal works; Electronics; Mathematics; Local Crafts; Home Economics; and Business Studies.

There are problems of teaching these subjects which are due to lack of qualified professional teachers and other factors such as:

- (i) lack of in-service training in our special educational institutions;
- (ii) inadequate instructional materials in the institutions;
- (iii) social attitudes towards the teaching of vocational subjects; and
- (iv) provision of adequate incentives for the teachers.

These factors are critically examined in this study through the use of a survey.

### **PREAMBLE**

The entire Nigerian education system is besieged with problems. This was what necessitated the formulation of the National Policy on Education (NPE) in order to solve these problems. As should be expected of any new change, the implementation of the educational policy is not without problems of adjustments.

Okafor (1988) and Nwokocha (1991) have identified some of the problems affecting the effective teaching of vocational and technical education. For example, Okafor (1988) identified some of the problems affecting teaching of vocational and technical subjects as:

- (i) lack of funds and buildings to set up the equipment they have received from the Federal Government;
- (ii) lack of teachers to teach the introductory technology courses as well as lack of instructors to train technical teachers; and
- (iii) lack of incentives to encourage the study of technological based disciplines (Okafor, 1988:7).

With the prevailing economic situation in the country, whereby only lean resources are made available to our education sector, some of these problems, according to Nwokocha (1991) are inevitable.

Some of the problems enumerated were inherited from the shabby education system in operation in the past. Since vocational and technical education was not accorded high regards, no incentives were given to products from such institutions and the perennial problem of scarcity of technical manpower persists. Reviewing Vocational Education. Oni (1984) pointed out in his study that:

*“The scarcity of vocational technical manpower and the problem of their production in adequate number, coupled with inability of students to select appropriate occupations, constitute the greatest obstacle in Nigerian manpower and technological development. Most Nigerians look down on vocational technical manpower occupations while expatriate staff are hired at great cost”.*

It must be noted that scarcity of technical manpower is worldwide except in industrialized/developed nations such as America, Soviet Union, and Europe. The Nigerian situation seems peculiar in the sense that no breakthrough is in sight yet. This is because we are not prepared to make sacrifices and to take risks.

The problems of teaching vocational and technical subjects according to some researchers (Baganda, 1980; Oni, 1984; Sesay, 1986; Okafor, 1988; and Nwokocha, 1991) can be summed up to the problems of teachers, inadequate materials, effective management of resources as well as societal attitude towards the subjects. The implications as Nwokocha (1991: 142) puts them are:

- (i) to ensure adequate provision of staff both in quality and quantity;
- (ii) to ensure effective management and optimum utilization of scarce materials and financial resources; and
- (iii) to establish a positive image for vocational and technical subject specialists (Nwokocha, 1991, pg. 142).

### **METHODOLOGY**

Eight schools for the deaf located in different states across the country were chosen for this study. The eight schools chosen for the study are:

- (i) Ibadan School of Deaf, Ijokodo, Ibadan;
- (ii) Ondo State School for the Deaf, Akure;
- (iii) Ogun State School for the Deaf, Abeokuta;
- (iv) Osun State School for the Deaf, Osogbo;
- (v) Wesley School for the Deaf, Surulere;
- (vi) Ekiti State School for the Deaf, Usi;
- (vii) Kwara State School for the Handicapped, Ilorin; and
- (viii) Kaduna State School for the Deaf, Kaduna.

The sample population for the study comprised 20 teachers and five administrators randomly selected from each school and they were note to be involved in the teaching and the administration of vocational subjects in the schools. Precisely, a total of 200 people from occupations such as Home Economics, Local Crafts, Metalwork, Woodworks and Mathematics were selected for the study. These categories of people were used for the study because they were close to the source of the problems. Also, the people were personally involved in the teaching and management of the affairs of the subjects. The respondents were required to rate the degree of adequacy of each facility as either very adequate, adequate, average, inadequate or very inadequate. They were also asked to indicate whether they strongly agreed, agreed, undecided, disagreed, or strongly disagreed on the societal attitudes towards vocational subjects.

### **RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

Two instruments were used for the study. These are oral interview and a self-designed instrument. The self-designed instrument consists of two parts. The first part consists of a list of vocational subjects obtained from Nigerian National Policy on Education, 1981. The second part consists of a list of assumed problems by the researcher as those problems that could affect the teaching of vocational technical subjects. Among these problems are:

- (i) lack of in-service training;
- (ii) lack of qualified teachers to teach vocational subjects;
- (iii) inadequate instructional materials;
- (iv) lack of recognition for vocational teachers by the society (that is, societal attitudes towards vocational teachers); and
- (v) lack of incentives

The respondents were required first to rank these problems in order of gravity (Table 1). Following the ranking of the problems, the study also seek to investigate the degree of adequacy of instructional materials as well as the perception of societal attitudes towards vocational subjects in special education (Tables 2).

The respondents were required first to rank these problems in order of gravity (Table 1). Following the ranking of the problems, the study also seek to investigate the degree of adequacy of instructional materials as well as the perception of societal attitudes towards vocational subjects in special education (Table 2).

From Table 1, it is observed that lack of qualified teachers to teach vocational subjects in special education institutions across the nation ranks first among the five listed problems. This is followed by lack of incentives while lack of recognition for vocational teachers is ranked third. Factors relating to the status of the teachers such as lack of incentives and recognition are ranked high, showing that the image of vocational subject teachers is insignificant.

Lack of in-service training is placed last in the ranking order and this does not exist in most special education institutions. Even in the institutions where in-service trainings are provided, the impact of such training is not felt.

## DATA ANALYSIS

**Table 1:** Responses on the Ranking of the Problems Affecting the Teaching of Vocational Subjects in Nigerian Special Educational Institutions

Types of problems	Population	Rank order	Frequency in %
Lack of qualified teachers	175	1	88
Lack of incentives	162	2	81
Lack of recognition for vocational teachers	153	3	77
Inadequate instructional facilities/ materials	152	4	76
Lack of in-service training	35	5	18

The findings on the degree of adequacy of instructional facilities as well as the perception of social attitudes towards vocational subjects in special education institutions in the country are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

**Table 2:** Frequency in Percentages of Degree of Adequacy of Instructional Facilities in Special Education Institutions

Degree of Frequency in %	Very Adequate	Adequate	Average	Inadequate	Very Inadequate
	4	3	22	76	67

The data in Table 2 show that 4 per cent of the respondents were for “very adequate”, 3 per cent were for “Adequate”, 22 per cent for “Average”, while 76 per cent and 67 per cent were for “Inadequate” and “Very Inadequate” respectively. The majority of the respondents felt that instructional facilities are inadequate in the schools. This inadequacy of facilities makes the teaching of vocational subjects ineffective in our institutions.

The data in Table 3 shows a disparity of frequencies in percentages of societal attitudes towards the teaching of vocational subjects in our special educational institutions. While only 22 per cent of the respondents strongly disagreed with this assertion, the majority of the respondents 74 per cent strongly agreed that the teaching of vocational subjects are in a bad state in our institutions.

**Table 3:** Frequencies in Percentages of Societal Attitudes towards the teaching of Vocational Subjects in Special Educational Institutions

Degree of Frequency in %	Strongly Agree	Agreed	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	74	25	0	33	22

## CONCLUSION

One of the ways of integrating vocational technical education into special education is through the inclusion of vocational technical subjects into special education curriculum. The Federal Government has taken a giant step towards this direction as indicated in the Nigerian NPE (1981:37). The policy also indicates that vocational subjects should not only be integrated into our special education programmes but the subjects should be effectively taught to the handicapped children and adults so as to provide them suitable employment opportunities.

In spite of the above policy statement by Nigerian government, findings from this study indicate lack of effective teaching of vocational subjects in our special educational institutions. This ineffectiveness is consequent upon lack of qualified teachers to teach the subjects, lack of incentives for teachers, inadequate instructional facilities, and lack of recognition for vocational teachers as well as negative societal attitudes towards the teaching of vocational subjects. On the basis of these findings the following suggestions are made:

- (i) each state government across the nation, especially states where special education programmes are established, should endeavour to employ professionally qualified teachers to teach vocational subjects in their respective special educational institutions;
- (ii) for effective teaching, adequate facilities, instructional equipment and materials are required. Therefore, every state government should endeavour to provide these requirements in their already established special education institutions; and
- (iii) a system of incentives should be worked out for the teachers so as to retain them on their jobs. This is because incentives generally given to our teachers nationwide are inadequate.

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**THE TRAINING OF INSTRUCTORS  
FOR POST-SECONDARY TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN  
NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

At present in Nigeria, there is no public or state post-secondary institution with required number of adequately trained technical instructors. This is a critical problem facing the growth of post-secondary institutions in the country. This paper is therefore, deals with the need to train competent technical instructors in our post-secondary institutions. In accomplishing this goal, the author suggests a model for the training and development of vocational instructors as well as technological advancement in country.

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the problems facing education in Nigeria today is the scarcity of competent technical instructors required to provide training for the skilled technician in post secondary institutions. Sesay (1988) emphasized that:

Efforts at implementing the technical education component of our national policy of education continue to be thwarted by the scarcity of competent teachers in this area – that is, teachers who can effectively combine theory and practice in their subject areas (p.1)

The importance of competently trained technical instructors to the nation's manpower development has also been cited. For example, Sugarman (1974) has stated that technical services as they are supplied in Occupational Education are provided by skilled technicians and other related workers who are typically trained in post-secondary occupational education programme, which in turn are staffed by post-secondary occupational instructors.

The training of competent technical instructors should be a major priority in our post-secondary institutions. Such training is necessary because technical instructors are needed to train the skilled technicians for our nation's technological and manpower development.

**THE DIMENSION OF THE PROBLEM**

The Nigerian Fourth National Development Plan (1981 – 85, p. 435) reports the extent of manpower shortage as reflected in staff vacancies in our vocational and technical institutions. This report was submitted twenty four years ago without any Development Plan since then.. The report stated that staff vacancies in Nigerian Vocational and Technical Colleges varied from 33 per cent to a little over 50 per cent in respect of a wide range of manpower categories. These include architects, town planners, geologists, land quantity surveyors, and many other categories of engineering technicians. The report implies that on

the average, our nation requires two additional instructors out of every three we had in each of these occupations.

The problem of shortage of competent Vocational and technical staff has also been identified as one of the crucial constraints on the expansion of the facilities of our post-secondary institutions. For example, the Nigerian Fourth National Development Plan (1985) explains that:

1. In our polytechnics, about two thirds of the available staff do not possess adequate professional and teaching experience.
2. That our nation suffers from inadequacy of technical instructors, students' enrolment in our technical institutions rose from 35,800 in 1979/80 to about 70,000 in 1984/85.
3. The between 1984/85 year, an increase of about 5,700 students was recorded while graduate out-turn also increased by about 160% from 11,5000 in 1981 to about 30,000 in 2002 (p.435).

The above reviews in Nigeria's Nation's 4<sup>th</sup> Plan, called for an urgent need for the training of technical instructors in all post-secondary institutions. The report also emphasized that two thirds (66.7%) of the available staff in the country's technical and vocational institutions do not possess adequate professional and teaching experience. It is important that new staff members in our post-secondary institutions possess the required education which will enable them to meet the high standards needed for the successful training of the nation's technicians.

### **THE EDUCATION OF THE POST-SECONDARY INSTRUCTORS**

The educational preparation and the attainment of the post-secondary instructor spans a wide range and cannot be generalized at a specific level (Sugarman, 1974, p.2). Although the total number of technical instructors in Nigerian public and private institutions has not been reported, however, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Social Statistics Book (2002) has reported on the number of teachers by qualification and sex in over 227 technical and vocational state institutions across the nation. For example, a grand total of 1,895 male and female technical and vocational instructors that were reported shows 1,479 (78%) were males and 416 (22%) were females (see Table 1).

From the total of 221 male graduates for the 1984/85 academic year, only 103 (46.2%) possessed teaching qualification while 120 (53.8%) were without teaching qualification. Also from a total of 154 female graduates for the 1984/85 academic year, only 17 graduates, about (11%) received teaching qualification. A large proportion of the female graduates – that is 137 graduates (89%) were without teaching qualification.

A percentile distribution for Vocational and Technical Teachers was computed. Results of the findings are displayed in Table 2. It indicates that during the 2002/2003 academic year, 452 teachers (24%) held N.C.E. certificates. Other teachers 545 (28.8%) were either holders of G.C.E. O/A level certificates or without certificates. Only 208 teachers (11%) held City and Guides certificates while exactly 64 teachers (2.4%) held Teachers Grade II Certificates.

The literature review on teachers' certificate in the United State of America differs widely on the issue of educational preparation for two to three year technical and vocational instructors. Most authors agree that teaching at the two-year technical college

levels differs appreciably from teaching at other levels. The master's degree according to (Sugarman, 1974) is the standard for teaching in the academic areas in the two-year colleges or post-secondary institutions. Much of the literature seems to indicate that the doctoral degree is inappropriate as a requirement for teaching in the two-year colleges (Kelley and Wilbur, 1970; Gleazer, 1968 and Thornton, 1966).

**Table 1:**  
Number of Instructors by Qualification and Sex in Vocational and Technical Colleges 2002/2003

State	Graduate s with and without teaching		CERTIFICATES															
			N.C.E. 24%		Teacher s Grade I 1.4%		H.N.D. 4.2%		O.N.D. 3.4%		City and Guides 11%		Teachers Grade II 3.4%		Others 28.8%		Grand Total	
			M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
1. Anambra	26	9	21	18	2	1	-	-	-	-	12	4	7	-	3	1	181	33
2. Bauchi	12	-	22	-	-	-	25	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41	-	100	0
3. Bendel	32	116	85	36	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	3	21	9	333	248
4. Benue	34	5	53	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	74	5	161	17
5. Borno	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. C/River	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
7. Gongola	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8. Imo	54	16	85	31	5	6	--	-	49	-	-	-	20	14	16	1	229	78
9. Kaduna	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
10. Kano	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
11. Kwara	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
12. Lagos	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13. Niger	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14. Ogun	6	-	3	-	-	-	29	-	3	1	31	7	-	-	9	2	81	10
15. Ondo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
16. Oyo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17. Plateau	24	2	16	-	-	-	-	-	5	-	43	1	-	-	70	3	91	3
18. Rivers	18	2	44	13	5	1	16	-	6	-	-	-	3	2	1	-	162	21
19. Sokoto	17	4	15	1	-	-	8	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	41	6
20. FCT (Abuja)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

\*Source: Statistics Unit Federal Ministry of Education (2002)

Note: (A) Include those without teaching qualification

(B) OND

(C) GCE (O/A) Levels

Where N = ground total teachers from all degrees

n = total number of teachers from each degree

**Table 2:**  
Percentile Distribution of Vocational and Technical Education Teachers Per Various Degrees

Qualifications	Percentage
N.C.E.	23.9%
Teacher Grade I	1.4%
H.N.D.	4.2%
O.N.D.	3.4%
City and Guides	11%
Teachers' Grade II	3.4%
Others	28.8%

**Note:** Percentile in each Degree area was calculated by the use of the formula  $\frac{N}{n} \times 100$

Where N = ground total of teachers from all degrees n = total number of teachers for each degree.

It is generally felt, according to Sugerman (1974), that the holder of a Ph.D. degree is too narrowly specialized and research-oriented to serve the board and general instructional needs of the two-year colleges. The Nigerian Fourth National Development Plan (1981 –95) has also specified a unique training requirement and a Bachelors or a Masters degree holder for our instructors in the Polytechnic Institutions but failed to specify such for our vocational two-year colleges.

However, if the ideal qualification as previous studies indicate for the two-year post secondary colleges is at the Master's degree level, then the technical and vocational instructors as a group in our technical/vocational institutions falls short of the generally accepted educational goal. Teachers' certification requirement in Nigerian post-secondary institutions has not been adequately met.

Thornton (1966) has explained that the lack of qualified instructors for occupation curriculum may necessitate the postponement of needed programmes. Kelley and Wilbur (1970) also felt that the instructor in two-year colleges needs preparation on how to teach his subject, courses in methodology, methods of teaching and learning, instructional aids, the psychology of the two-year college student, the testing measurement. They felt that supervision of teachers at the two-year college is a must.

The importance of in-service training for the two-year post-secondary instructors in Nigeria institutions has not been effectively emphasized. As (Gleazer, 1968); Monroe, 1972; and Thornton, 1966) have stated that in-service training must be conducted in either educational methodology or in the instructional area. In-service programmes may according to (Monroe, 1972, p. 17) include orientation sessions, weekend seminars, formal lectures by educators, of university extension courses on the two-year institution campuses. In-service training programmes for the Nigerian post-secondary instructors need to be more adequately organized and emphasized. Most two-year Colleges and Polytechnic Technical Institutions throughout the nation lack effective in-service programmes for their instructors who also may not be effective teachers in their areas of subject matters.

In-service programmes at the post-secondary level should be continuous and should be required of all faculties periodically. The major purpose of in-service activities should be to help faculty members maintain a sound orientation toward a natural educational philosophy and also

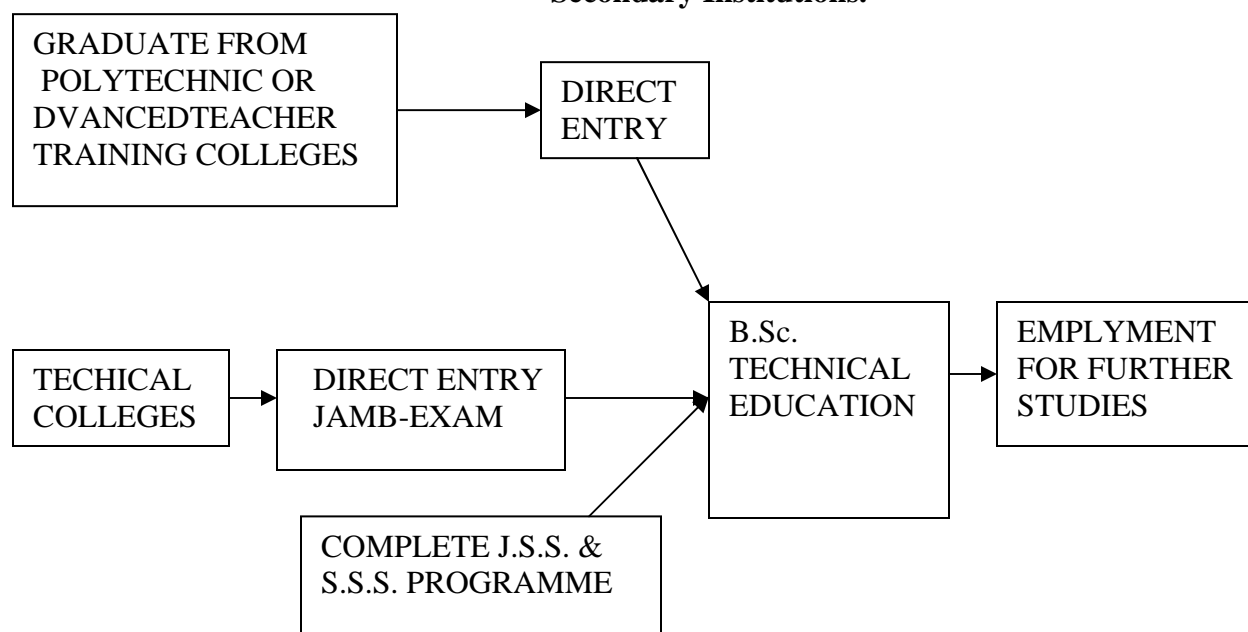
to keep most faculty members up-to-date in their specialty areas. The need to place special attention for the preparation of technical and vocational educators was cited by Taylor and Miller (1971, p.7) as follows:

1. The increase in post-secondary occupational education enrolments, is the need for well-trained, post-secondary occupational instructors; and
2. The increase in the enrolments in technical community colleges is the need for well-trained technical instructors.

In this paper, shortage of competent technical instructors in Nigerian post-secondary institutions (Vocational/Technical Colleges) has been reviewed. Increase in students' enrolment in the polytechnics, technical and vocational institutions were also reported. At present, there is no public or state post-secondary institution in the country with the required number of adequate trained technical instructors of faculty members. This is a critical problem facing the growth of post-secondary institutions in Nigeria.

In an attempt to help alleviate the problem of shortage of technical instructors in our post-secondary institutions, suggestions were given in a performance-based training model for training vocational technical instructors in our post-secondary institutions (see Fig. 1).

**Fig. 1: Suggested Model for Training Technical Instructors in Nigeria Post-Secondary Institutions.**



The above Model was suggested by Oni (1995) for the training of technical instructors in our post-secondary institutions. The model reflects to the pedagogical aspects of teaching which cut across the basic elements of all services of teacher education. The model is structured to train the following categories of Nigerian students:

1. Students who successfully complete their Senior secondary school programmes with at least 6 credits including credit passes English Language and Mathematics. In addition, such students will also pass their Jamb examination.

2. Technical College graduates who also have 6 credit passes in their Senior Secondary School examinations will be given direct admission. Technical College students could be admitted if they pass the Jamb examination.
3. Graduates from Colleges of Technology and Teacher Education will be given direct entry admission into part 2 or 3 of the programme depending on the students' course work already completed in their respective college programmes. Students in the third year will be required to undergo a 4 units Teaching Practice exercise. Before graduating, students will also undergo a 3-month training in relevant industries, firms, corporations or institutions.

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**COGNITIVE ENTRY CHARACTERISTICS AND  
CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT AS PREDICTORS OF  
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AMONG POLYTECHNIC  
ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY STUDENTS**

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**Abstract**

This study investigated the extent to which cognitive entry characteristics and continuous assessment measured or predicted student's academic performance among Polytechnic Engineering Students. In particular, the study determined the relationship between WASC, PCEE, and semester Examination scores, and [determined the contribution of year CPA and second year GGPA of the polytechnic engineering technology student. The score of cognitive entry characteristics, continuous assessment results and the results of the academic performance of the subject were assessed using correlation analysis, regression analysis and analysis variances. The results of the analysis revealed that both cognitive entry characteristics and continuous assessment results seem to have predictive strength on the academic performance of the subject. Continuous assessment shows higher predictive strength than cognitive entry characteristics.

**INTRODUCTION**

Alonge [1986] contended that the ultimate goal of any human being is to achieve the objective of any project he sets for himself. He went further to say that achievement is the central theme of all existence. Vernon [1976] and Costin [1978] claimed that a lot of studies on academic achievement are based on the concept of achievement and achievement motivation.

The academic achievement of students in our polytechnics, Colleges of Technology or higher institutions in general is influenced by a number of factors. Bajah [1975] argues that these factors can be classified into two main parts, namely: [i] Extrinsic factors and [ii] Intrinsic factors. The extrinsic factors are those that affect the students learning, but are not within his environment such as home background, school environment, birth order, cultural, political and economic environment as well as teacher's influence. The intrinsic factors include s total student input into study and the students' characteristics such as intelligence.

Hebb in Vernon [1969] described intelligence as inherited potentialities for growth [genotype] and the result of interaction with the pre-natal and post- natal environment [phenotype].

Wesman [1976] viewed intelligence as the summation of the learning experiences of the individual and as an "attribute" not an "entity". An individual's intelligence is also determined by some other complimentary factors, namely heredity, environment and time. Sprinthall and Sprinthall (1977).

Other factors in connection with student's academic achievement have bee shown to influence students' intelligence. Maynard and Murnane [1979] found that the academic

performance of students in school depends on factors such as the quality of environment. This quality is characterized as goods and time input. Goods input refer to nutritious food, healthcare and materials that stimulate intellectual interests while time input include parental time, reading and talking to children.

Academic performance usually refers to an expression used to represent students' scholastic standing .Lavin (1965). There is a problem of how and what parameters to be use in measuring the scholastic ability of students. The award of marks by teachers and grade patterns have often been used, but the reliability of such marks is questionable. Ojerinde [1975] stated that many problems are involved in the approach of using grades for assessment of academic performance. One of these problems is the possibility of bias on the part of the teacher. It was stated that a grade is a function of interaction between student and teacher. In the use of grade point average [GPA], errors come in the computation when different sources are compiled to find the aggregate. Lavin, (1965).

Letter grades are based on opinion and hence unreliable and variations occur when the grades are from different departments. However, the variations can be reduced when uniform tests are used in measuring academic performance. Fishman [1958] and Lavin [1965] contended that uniform tests would also remove the initial knowledge of the social interaction between students and teachers, which is indicated to some extent by marks assigned by the teachers. Cronbach [1950] opined that marks and grades only measure on approximation that is a far cry from the true academic performance. Although grades and marks are loaded with various problems, they are the most acceptable and widely used measure of scholastic ability.

Alonge [1986] states that the problems associated with measuring academic performance also crop up when future academic performance is to be predicted from past achievement as represented by the present performance. He stated further that in predicting academic performance, Charles [1948] used a combination of continuance in college and in an achievement test externally administered as the criterion measure. Alonge [1986] also claimed that predictor variables are usually intellectual and non-intellectual measures. All the same prediction studies have been found to differ in procedure, characteristic of students studied and in many other ways.

Ojerinde [1975] investigated the predictive validity of the National Common Entrance Examination [NCEE] on success in school certificate examination, collecting the 1969 NCEE scores and SC/GCE O' Level grades for all secondary school students. The analysis of this data shows that there was a significant and positive relationship among all the variables. Arithmetic and English Language of NCEE were found to be the best predictors of Mathematics and English Language of SC/GCE O' Level examination performance respectively. Again, Arithmetic and Verbal Aptitude test of NCEE showed better relationship with SC/GCE O' Level than any other combination in English Language and Mathematics.. That is, a combination of English Language and Arithmetic and the Verbal and Quantitative Aptitude test of NCEE would provide a useful predictor of performance in English Language and Mathematics of SC/GCE O' Level.

Akindehin [1983] also contended that students entry qualification were capable of predicting academic performance at college level. While studying the effectiveness of entry qualification in predicting academic performance for Adeyemi College of Education, Ondo, he found that there was a year-to-year improvement in the academic performance of the WASC and Teachers' certificate [TC] II holders. The final results of the subjects used for the study reflected no significant difference between WASC AND TCII holders as they leveled up at the end of the three-year programme.



However, Ojerinde [1986] repeated this study in the same institution. Measures of academic performance were the GPAS of 484 WASC, TCII and pivotal certificate holders. These were subjected to ANOVA with teaching experience, entrance examination score and subject discipline as covariates. Contrary to Akindehin's findings, WASC and pivotal certificate holders performed better than the TCII holders by the end of the second year but Leveled off at the end of the third year. This showed that none of the entry qualifications was superior to the other, the research findings above highlight the advantage of using combinations of predictors rather than a single predictor in predicting studies.

## **HYPOTHESIS**

The study is designed to test the validity or otherwise of the proposition that there is a relationship between WASC, PCEE and semester examination scores, and there is a significant contribution from WASC, PCEE and semester results to the first year CPA and second year CGPA of the Engineering Technology students.

## **SUBJECTS**

Subjects for this study included 95 students selected from the full-time students who were admitted for the two-year ND programme in the Engineering Technology and Environment studies, Ondo State polytechnic, Owo, in the 1995/1996 academic session. The sample was selected using both stratified and purposive sampling techniques. This is because of the fact that not all the departments in the school offered the available mathematics course during the same semester and the Mathematics course designed for these departments by NBTE are not uniform because of the peculiar nature of some of the courses. The final sample of 95 students was made up of 35 Electrical and Electronics Engineering students, 31 Mechanical Engineering students and 29 Building and Quantity Surveying students.

## **DESIGN**

The design for the study was an ex-post facto design. The experimental variables are the entry requirements of the various categories of students involved and a function of their performances in their previous schools and their performances in the polytechnic examinations.

## **INSTRUMENTS**

The research instruments for the study were WASC, PCEE and the semester teacher-made achievement test. The validity and reliability of these instruments were assumed since WASC and PCEE achievement tests are standardized achievement tests, the semester teacher-made achievement test was moderated internally by experts in that field.

## **DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS**

The data for the study were scores from the following examination results: School certificate grades in Mathematics, PCEE scores in Mathematics, ( Semester Examination grades

in MTH 111, MTH 112, MTH 211 and STA 111 for Engineering Technology students and The first year and second year ND cumulative grade for 1995/96 and 1996/95 session respectively.

For the purpose of statistical analysis the school certificate (WASC), PCEE scores and the polytechnic results of the students were coded as follows:

Table 1: The WASC stanine scores and their weights

Stanine scores	A1	A2	A3	C4	C5	C6	P7	P8	F9
Weights	4.00	3.50	3.00	2.50	2.00	1.50	1.00	0.50	0.00

Table 2: The polytechnic Grade point Average [GPA] Rating

Raw scores:	75-100	70-74	65-69	60-64	55-59	50-54	45-49	40-44	0-39
Stanine score	A	AB	B	BC	C	CD	D	E	F
Weight	4.00	3.50	3.25	3.00	2.75	2.50	2.25	2.00	0.00

The correlation between the semester scores of students in Mathematics, WASC, PCEE, CPA and CGPA were calculated by using the Pearson product-moment correlation analysis. Multiple regression analysis and analysis of variance were also used to find out the predictive strength of each of the independent variables and the dependent variables. The regression equation between the dependent and independent variables was also found in the form of

$$Y = a + b_1X_1 + b_2X_2 + b_3X_3 + \dots$$

Where  $b_i = [i=1, 2, 3, \dots]$  is the multiple regression coefficients

$X_i = [i=1, 2, 3, \dots]$  are semester scores in Mathematics, PCEE, WASC.

The accuracy of the prediction equations as reflected by the square of the multiple correlations  $[R^2]$  was examined. In addition, the results were further subjected to F-test to find whether there was any significant difference between the various R-values.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis are shown in Tables 3 to 5 below. In determining the first hypothesis, Pearson's correlation analysis was computed. The result is contained in Table 3.

Table 3: Inter-correlation Matrix Among Variables.

	WASC	PCEE	MTH111	MTH112	MTH211	STA111	CPA	CGPA
WASC	1.0000							
PCEE	0.0710	1.0000						
MTH111	0.1339	0.1258	1.0000					
MTH112	0.1825	-0.0253	0.3679*	1.0000				
MTH211	0.1070	-0.0749	0.2386*	0.3320	1.000			
STA111	0.4526*	0.0605	0.2356*	0.2939*	0.3039*	1.0000		
CPA	0.1170	0.0718	0.3292*	0.4819*	0.2338*	0.3662*	1.0000	
CGPA	0.1576	0.0952	0.3819*	0.4584*	0.4716*	0.5652*	0.4855*	1.0000

\* $P < 0.05$  [significant results]

Table 3 there is a significant relationship between the combination of cognitive entry characteristics (WASC, PCEE results) and semester results and academic achievement of engineering technology students. Although the relationship between cognitive entry characteristics (WASC, PCEE) and CPA or CGPA are very low and not significant at 0.05 level of significance. There exist significant relationships between Semester results and CPA; semester results and CGPA; and semester results (STA iii) and WASC. Table 3 also shows very low (some negative) correlations between PCEE and CPA, PCEE and CGPA and PCEE and semester results.

With regard to the contribution of WASC, PCEE and semester examination results to CPA, the results of the statistical analysis are shown in Tables 4[a] 4[b] and 4[c].

Table 4 [a] Multiple Regression, CPA as Dependent variable.

Multiple R = 0.55146, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.30410, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.27318, Standard Error = 0.21351

Table 4 [b] Analysis of variance, CPA as Dependent Variable

	DF	SS	MS	Fcal	Ftab	Result
Regression	4	3.60786	0.72157	13.33	4.41	Significant
Residual	104	5.57380	0.05411			

Table 4 [c] Relative contribution of the predictor variables, CPA as Dependent variable.

Variables.	B	SE B	Beta	T	Sig. T.
Bus 122	0.110004	0.062543	0.186564	1.759	0.0816
PCEE	0.432276	0.161140	0.216699	2.683	0.0085
WASC	0.037827	0.041681	0.071563	0.908	0.3662
Bus 112	0.098524	0.051077	0.203665	1.929	0.0565
Constant	0.277024	0.481831		0.575	0.5666

Table 4 [a] [b] and [c] reveal that there is significant contribution to the first year cumulative point Average [CPA] of the Business Studies Students by cognitive entry characteristics [WASC, PCEE] and semester results [Bus 112 and Bus 122]. The multiple regression analysis of first year CPA on cognitive entry characteristics [WASC, PCEE] and semester results [Bus 112, Bus122] was carried out to determine to what extent the CPA depends on the entry characteristics and semester results.

The regression model fitted is:

$$CPA = 0.277 + 0.432[PCEE] + 0.110[Bus 122] + 0.099[Bus 112] + 0.038[WASC].$$

The results of the above equation indicate that cognitive entry characteristics [PCEE] show the highest predictive strength of all variables. This is followed by semester results [Bus 122, Bus 112] and WASC. The cognitive entry characteristics and semester results jointly contributed to the CPA of the Business Studies Students.

This fitted model leaving 60.71% unexplained explains the coefficient of determination R<sup>2</sup> = 0.39294 shows that only 39.29% of the total variation in CPA. This implies that there are other major factors, which also contribute to variation in CPA other than cognitive entry characteristics and semester results.

With regard to the contribution of WASC, PCEE and semester examination results to the second year CGPA, the results of the statistical analysis are shown in Tables 5[a], [b] and [c].

Table 5[a] Multiple Regression CGPA as Dependent Variable

Multiple R = 0.64283, R<sup>2</sup> = 0.41322, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.37871, Standard Error = 0.22000

Table 5[b] Analysis of variance, CGPA as Dependent variable.

	DF	SS	MS	Fcal	Ftab	Result
Regression	6	1.96196	0.32699	12.107	3.71	Significant
Residual	88	2.37662	0.02701			

Table 5 [c] Relative contribution of the predictor variables, CGPA as Dependent Variable.

Variables	B	SE B	Beta	T	Sig. T
STA III	0.177308	0.041550	0.401864	4.267	0.0000
MTHIII	0.101975	0.037170	0.239131	2.744	0.0074
MTH112	0.102461	0.027500	0.334615	3.726	0.0003
MTH211	-0.000250	0.023153	-0.000940	-0.011	0.9914
PCEE	-0.057986	0.033580	-0.138838	-1.727	0.0877
WASC	-0.067176	0.027923	-0.213762	-2.406	0.0182
Constant	1.982202	0.143564		13.807	0.0000

Table 5 [a], [b] and [c] reveal that there is a significant contribution to the final CGPA of the Engineering Technology students by cognitive entry characteristics (WASC, PCEE) and semester results. The regression model fitted here is:

$$CGPA = 1.982 + 0.177(STA\ III) + 0.102(MTH\ III) + 0.1025(MTH112) - 0.0003(MTH\ 211) - 0.058(PCEE) - 0.067(WASC).$$

The above equation indicates that semester results (STA III, MTH III and MTH 122) has the highest predictive strength of all variables followed by PCEE and WASC. The value of Beta = 0.4019 associated with STA III is larger than any other value of beta in that column.

Similarly, its t-statistic of 4.267 is the largest. This fitted model leaving 54.78% unexplained, explained only 45.22% of the total variation in CGPA.

The results of this study support the findings of Abdullahi [1983] who investigated the predictive validity of JME with students' scores in these same subjects at the end of their first year at the university.

He reported that the validity of JME scores in some subject using university achievement as criterion was very small where significant correlation were obtained. Similarly, Agbonito and Dinowo (1985) reported that out of 14 correlation analyses carried out, only 2 were statistically significant in favour of students in Business Administration. He concluded that the predictive validity of JME was rather low.

## CONCLUSION

The results of this study are not conclusive, but they suggest to a reasonable extent that continuous assessment [i.e. semester results] techniques of the learning processes are the best predictors of academic achievement of Engineering Technology students. It further shows that cognitive entry characteristics [WASC and PCEE] are not significantly related to academic achievement of Engineering Technology students. Most of the students with good grades at WASC coupled with high score in PCEE examination sometimes rely on their entrance results which eventually affect their academic achievements.

Finally, there are other factors that influence academic achievement in institutions of higher learning other than the basic entry qualifications and continuous assessment scores (or semester results).

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## **A STUDY OF CHILDREN ABANDONMENT AND ADOPTION IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA: 1991-2001**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated the causes of children abandonment and government efforts on abandoned Children in Osun State. A purposive sample of 200 respondents comprising 50 nurses, 40 social welfare officers and 110 adoptors were selected for the study. The data were collected with the use of an instrument termed “Children Abandonment and Adoption Questionnaire” (CAAQ). Descriptive survey research method was used. Data were analysed using descriptive statistical method of percentages, t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Chi-Square. The findings included that Children abandonment was caused mainly by poverty and unwanted pregnancy; and, that the government was unable to effectively execute its policy over children abandonment and adoption. Hence the recommendation that the government should establish a standardized procedure for adoption and management of motherless babies’ homes.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Nigerian women traditionally place much value on children. Bearing children is a criterion for attaining womanhood. Marriages are contracted mainly for rearing children, while barrenness is a stigma. An African marriage without a child is incomplete (Mbithi, 1974). After any marriage ceremony, people around a family want to see the bride pregnant. If otherwise, after one or two years, the relations of the husband will mouth pressure on him to marry another woman. Usually, the birth of a child is seen as a blessing and as fruit of marriage, and therefore is greeted with celebrities. According to George (1992), in Africa and in Nigeria in particular, children are always taken to constitute blessings in marriages. Proper care is taken over every child as children are seen as sources of hope and security of parents and families.

In the Nigerian traditional setting, there is the belief that no matter how a child is born, it should deserve the right to live and enjoy the basic necessities for physical growth and mental development. Consequently, every child is accepted and becomes the concern of the extended family even if the mother is having mental problem. Also, barren women are pitied, hence in some cases, children are entrusted to their care to give them psychological, social and emotional satisfaction by their relatives. In some cases the names of such children are used in calling such

women. With such an opportunity nobody thought of adopting a child. Also, a woman whose husband died would be adopted by a junior brother of the late husband or by any member of the family while the deceased children would be absorbed into the family, thus another form of adoption.

It is therefore, very surprising that in a society where child bearing is very much valued that some mothers could abandon their babies at different places as has been the trend in Nigeria recently. Consequently, this study was undertaken to examine the issues of children abandonment and adoption in Osun State, Nigeria, 1991-2001.

## **RESEARCH HYPOTHESES**

1. There is no significant difference between the incidence of children abandonment across the six Social Welfare Zones in Osun State.
2. There is no significant difference between the perceived causes of children abandonment across the six Social Welfare Zones in Osun State.
3. There is no significant relationship between the rate of children abandonment and the efforts of Government on children abandonment.
4. There is no significant relationship between Government policy and Government efforts on children adoption in Osun State.
5. There is no significant difference in the views of children adoptors across the six Social Welfare Zones in Osun State.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Quantitative Statistical Analysis (Descriptive Research Method). Data were collect with an instrument termed “ Children Abandonment and Adoption Questionnaire” (CAAQ). The data were analysed using descriptive statistical method of percentages, t-test, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) and Chi-Square.

## **POPULATION AND SAMPLE**

The population for this study consisted of philanthropists, social welfare workers, nurses from Jaleyemi Catholic Hospital, Osogbo, and Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospital Complex, Ile-Ife; childless couples and children adoptors. Out of the population a sample of 200 was randomly selected consisting of 50 nurses, 40 Social Welfare Worker, and the rest 110 couple adoptors. However, as a result of secrecy and total confidentiality involved in the child adoption process, the researchers were not allowed to have face-to-face contacts with the adoptors. Consequently, the random selection of the adoptors was done by the Zonal Welfare Officers.

## **LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

As the researchers could not have contact with some subject groups, such as children adoptors and childless couples, there was much reliance on the random selections made by the officers incharge. For instance, while the researchers knew that 50 nurses and 40 Welfare Officers were included in the sample, they could not know about the adoptors and childless couples. Thus, such lapses might affect the findings of the study.

## **THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. There is a relationship between the incidence of children abandonment across the six Social Welfare Zones in Osun State.
2. The views of people about the perceived causes of children abandonment across the six Social Welfare Zones in Osun State are different. However, the preponderant views were poverty and unwanted pregnancy.
3. There is significant relationship between the efforts of government and the rate of children abandonment.
4. There is no correlation between government policy and efforts over children abandonment and adoption. Government had very good policy but in practice was unable to execute it hence religious bodies and philanthropists were more recognized than the efforts of the government over abandoned children.
5. There is no correlation on the views of adoptors across the six social Welfare Zones in Osun State.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

1. Children abandonment was caused mainly by poverty and unwanted pregnancy.
2. The Osun State was not able to meet up to expectations on the care expected to render to the abandoned children.
3. There is need for government to establish a standardized procedure for adoption and treatment of adopted children which should include regulation over establishment and management of motherless babies' homes.
4. Government should support the motherless babies' homes by funding and training of the staff.

## **RECOMMENDATION FOR STUDY OF RELATED PROBLEMS**

1. There is need to enlarge this study to cover the South West States of Oyo, Ogun, Ondo and Lagos.
2. There should be a study on the functions of Social Welfare Ministries or Divisions over the children abandonment and adoption in selected states of the Federation.



## REVISION OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology should be revised to include using data documented by appropriate ministries so as not to totally depend on the views of respondents.

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## THE CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN NOVEL AS A TOOL FOR CULTURAL EDUCATION

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### ABSTRACT

The importance of the contemporary African novel as a veritable tool for cultural education, enculturation and acculturation has not received adequate critical attention. This paper is an attempt to partake of filling this critical lacuna. The contemporary African novel is held in this paper to be relevant to the propagation of African culture. In the main, it dwells on the place of oral tradition in the contemporary African novel. It also reveals that, as the African novelist is concerned, there is an urgent need to acculturate and enculturate the African youths and Westernized adults into the culture of their milieu. The selected novels of two prolific contemporary African novelists (Chinua Achebe and Ngugi wa Thiong'o) are used as the data for the study. A critical analysis of the novels reveals that the contemporary African novelists intentionally employ some elements of oral tradition for cultural pedagogy. This is with a view to educating the Africans and the world at large on the enduring richness and glory of African culture.

### INTRODUCTION

It is very pertinent to commence this discourse with an exposition of the stand of Nigeria's government on the need for constant cultural awareness by every Nigerian. We turn to the *National Policy on Education* (1981) for an informative insight into the place of cultural education in Nigeria's educational system:

In specific terms, the secondary school should...develop and project Nigerian culture, art and language as well as the world's cultural image (16).

In order to meet the foregoing provision, most African novelists, like most other literary artists, have contributed immensely to the acculturation and enculturation of the African child into the traditions and mores of his/her society.

To imbue this study with the necessary scope and focus it deserves, our textual references are limited to selected novels of two African novelists that are considered as exemplars of the motif under study. Therefore, few of the novels of Achebe and Ngugi are used as the launching pad of this study.

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

It may not be an overstatement to assert from the outset that the contemporary African novelists are to their oral traditions as a snail is to its shell. The reworking of forms of indigenous folk traditions is a deliberate and necessary attempt at indigenizing the novel, which is an imported

genre. The African novelists graft traditional elements from their cultural backgrounds unto their novels so as to give them a local flavor and propagate legions of African cultural artifacts. This is desirable, since it imbues their works with a certain identity code, cultural signification and pedagogical impetus. Barber (1995) corroborates this claim. She sees 'orature' as a veritable source for modern African writers. In her words:

It is treated both as a source – the origin and precursor of 'modern' literature – and a source – a rich heritage or fund of themes, motifs, images and techniques upon which the 'modern' author can draw (6).

In the same vein, Irele (1990) testifies to the importance of indigenous literary traditions on the African novel. To him, the distinctive mark of written African literature in European languages is the striving to attain the condition of oral expression, even within the boundaries established by Western literary conventions. African novelists more often than not draw heavily from the oral traditions of their societies. This is also the opinion of Kehinde (2004). In the works of leading contemporary African novelists, such as Achebe, Ngugi, Soyinka, Tutuola, Mwangi, Oulougum, Laye and Okri, there is ample evidence of borrowing from the literary traditions of the individual communities. In the construction of their novels, certain traditional forms of expression are reconstructed to utilize the prose works as an effective weapon for cultural pedagogy. This is also the observation of various scholar-critics like : Ernest Emenyonu, 2000; J.O.J. Nwachukwu-Agbada, 2000 and Oladele Taiwo, 1967).

Okpewho (1983) identifies four ways by which African writers can appropriate materials from folk traditions in their works. These include: tradition preserved (for example, Mofolo's *Chaka*); tradition observed (for example, Fagunwa's *The Forest of a Thousand Daemons*, translated by Soyinka); tradition refined (for instance, Soyinka's *The Interpreters*); and tradition revised (for instance, Okri's *The Famished Road*). In *Chaka*, Mofolo relies heavily on African indigenous traditions without much alteration. In the case of Fagunwa's *The Forest of a Thousand Daemons*, African oral traditions are patronized with a slight modification. While Mofolo preserves oral traditions, Fagunwa modifies it to some extent. However, Soyinka's *The Interpreters* provides a good example of African writers' effort to refine cultural traditions. In the novel, Soyinka gives a creative refinement of African oral traditions with a view to revealing their dynamics in the modern age. While Soyinka merely refines African traditions in his novel, Okri, in *The Famished Road*, revises African them. He subjects African autochthonous traditions to critical revision in order to modernize them. Thus, the indebtedness to oral literary traditions varies in degree and subtlety from one writer to another. Achebe, who is popularly regarded as one of the fathers of the African novel in English, was spurred to write in part by his desire to "teach" his readers that before the coming of Europeans, African got their oral literatures.

It is against the backdrop of the foregoing framework that the selected works of Achebe and Ngugi are examined to foreground how these novelists borrow from their indigenous literary traditions with a view to acculturating and enculturating Africans and foreigners into the cultural traditions of their communities.

### **CHINUA ACHEBE'S FICTION AND THE QUESTION OF CULTURAL EDUCATION**

Achebe's novels, most especially *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and *Arrow of God* (1964) are greatly influenced by the indigenous literary traditions of the Igbo people in their forms and technical properties. In order to expose his readers to the rich cultural heritage of Igbo people, Achebe makes a frequent recourse to oral traditions like proverbs, riddles, jokes, epigrams, aphorisms,

epics, folktales and legends. In these novels, there is also a heavy reliance on African festivals. The living and the dead are known to mingle very freely in festivals, since these are considered the highest communal interaction between these spheres of existence. Masked spirits are also often in attendance. Nnolim (1979) highlights the significant position of masked spirit in Igbo cosmology. According to him, “it was the throbbing centre of its folk-tradition and folk ways” (64). Nnolim even identifies, in Achebe’s novels, a heavy reliance on folkloric structures; this offers the basic bipartite structure of the novels.

Achebe’s earlier novels deal with the history of Igbo land. The novels achieve epic effect, if read as the novelist’s impression of life from the time of European conquest to the contemporary period. However, *Things Fall Apart* evinces the greatest traits and characteristics of epic. The novel is a long narrative recounting many episodes; the story is an amalgam of myth, history and fiction. It is of strong regional and national significance. It is written in elevated style; it makes use of invocation of the muse and the participation of divine beings. Actually, the epic hero is Okonkwo. Other signifiers of the epic form in the novel include the integrated civilization of Umuofia and the celebration of life which ultimately is the concern of all epics. The narrative techniques and themes of the novel also denote it as an epic.

In this paper, we see Okonkwo as an epic hero separately from the Umuofia Motif in order to avoid the tendency of some critics which relegates Okonkwo to the background and takes Umuofia as the hero of *Things Fall Apart* (Egejuru, 1978 and Larson, 1971). If the nucleus of this thesis, the Umuofia motif, is that the Okonkwos come and go, that they are small creatures who people the world for a brief moment and then disappear, then we need to observe that Umuofia is what it is because of people like Okonkwo. We therefore agree with Lukacs (1971) who declares that an epic hero “owes his significance to the grace accorded him, not to his pure individuality...” (36). The epic soul in *Things Fall Apart* is therefore Okonkwo who wishes to find his own essence by refusing to be everything that is his father’s. By so doing, he finds unity and congruence; so he hops between himself and his society. With the characterization of Okonkwo in the novel, Achebe is able to project the African continent as a place full of heroes and heroines. Also, Okonkwo is an embodiment of African culture. Through him, the reader comes across some traditions and norms of the Igbo land, prior to the arrival of the colonialists.

Okonkwo is a wrestler, through out his life. He wrestles disadvantages, isolation, and very humble background, and, ultimately, he wrestles and is defeated by British imperialism. When the story begins, we are told of his prowess in the art of wrestling, his fame and the enduring socio-cultural importance of the African continent:

Okonkwo was well known throughout the nine villages and even beyond. His fame rested on solid personal achievements. As a young man of eighteen he had brought honour to his village by throwing Amalinze the Cat. Amalinze was the great wrestler who for seven years was unbeatable, from Umuofia to Mbiano. He was called the Cat because his back would never touch the earth. It was this man that Okonkwo threw in a fight which the old man agreed was one of the fiercest since the founder of their town engaged a spirit of the wild for seven days and seven nights (1).

The above passage has been quoted in full because it foregrounds, with effortless simplicity, some basic tenets of epic and some elements of folktales – the epic hero (Okonkwo), the indigenous idiom of wrestling, the retrogressive motif which is characteristic of epic, ideals of

his society, particularly personal achievements and how rated he is in this society, legend and history of Umuofia from the early period when the division between the world of the spirits, the gods and man was non-existent and expansiveness of epic proportions achieved through geographical references and time; the narrative techniques which take all these in one short gallop.

Achebe has, in the opening observation, shown that Okonkwo is a rare person, already a legend or in the ranks of power. To achieve so much at such a tender age is a rare feat and marks Okonkwo out for a brighter future in the clan. His appearance is also portrayed as unusual: “He was tall and huge, and his bushy eye-brows and wide nose gave him a severe look...” (1). There is something rather unusual in Okonkwo. It is the realism of the novel form which perhaps forces Achebe to dwell in the realm of the believable. Okonkwo could have been portrayed as something more grotesque than the picture we have in the novel. But it can be otherwise argued that Okonkwo comes in the tradition of Ozidi, Sundiata, Chaka, Mwindo – epic heroes who have not only unusual features, but also have rather strange powers and are awe-inspiring. This claim is in alliance with Okpewho’s (1979). Achebe, in order to ‘teach’ the African youths and uninformed adults about the past glory of their continent, presents Okonkwo as a comprehensive symbol of the ideals of his society. However, if some critics complain that Okonkwo goes beyond the bound of common sense in the pursuit of his ideals, maybe we can concede that he is a degenerate example of quintessential African heroes. According to Palmer (1971), Okonkwo is what he is because his society demands it. When Umuofia refuses to fight colonialism, Okonkwo, in the epic and nationalist spirit which does not shy away from danger and challenge, fights alone.

Again, in *Things Fall Apart*, Achebe achieves the epic progression from birth to death, from planting to harvest, through a brilliant narrative technique borrowed from the indigenous literary traditions. The reader is introduced, from the outset, to a mythic narrative voice – telling him the legend of the founding of the town and the tribe. The present is strongly tied up to the past through heroes like Okonkwo, who is already a legend in his lifetime. And the episodic nature of the narrative, which has led some critics (e.g. Charles Larson, 1971) to complain that *Things Fall Apart* is nothing but episodes not clearly knit up, is typical of the indigenous epic tradition. The expositional style which helps the story to develop through explanation of anthropological materials, digressions, proverbs and idioms is also part of the indigenous epic tradition. The mythic narrator chronicles, sings the history and culture of Umuofia, its customs and belief systems and leaves the writer to record them for posterity.

Achebe’s *Things Fall Apart* is also replete with proverbs and aphorisms. In fact, to Achebe, “proverbs are the palm-oil with which words are eaten” in traditional Igbo society (*Things Fall Apart*, 5). Killam (1969) also asserts that Achebe incorporates much proverbial material couched in traditional verbal formulae, “again naturally and with a sense of exact appropriateness” (18). An early example can be taken from Page 15 of the novel:

The lizard that jumped from the high Iroko tree to the ground said he would praise himself if no one else did (15)

The foregoing proverb is didactic because it teaches people to always appreciate good deeds. In traditional African society, people who felt heroic used to give themselves praise names to celebrate their achievements.

Obiechina (1993) comments perceptively on the use of proverbs in Achebe's novels. According to him, Achebe's intertextual recourse to African proverbs in his novels is for aesthetic, pedagogical, cultural and ideological purposes. In his words:

Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is the best example of the use of narrative proverbs to express the distinctive quality of the African fiction. Many African novelists use the technique of narrative embedding, but in *Things Fall Apart* we have the most successful use of this technique for diverse formal, thematic and aesthetic purpose (127).

Thus, in *Things Fall Apart*, nine forms of embedded narrative proverbs can be isolated; some of them are folktales and mythic stories; one is pseudo-history, and one is an anecdote. These narrative proverbs are borrowed from the indigenous literary traditions; they define the epistemological order within the novel. Among the embedded narrative proverbs are the following:

- the cosmic quarrel between Earth and Sky (38)
- the Locust Myth (38)
- the Mosquito Myth (53)
- the Tale of the Tortoise and the Birds
- the Abame Story
- the Kite Myth.

Actually, *Things Fall Apart* is a literary effort by Achebe to employ prose fiction as tool for cultural education. We quote Obiechina once again:

In the broadest sense, every aspect of the oral tradition is present, from narratives of epic style to myths and mythopoetic recitations, songs for all occasions, proverbs and figures of speech, folktales and fables, chants and incantations, names and naming styles, ideophonic and onomatopoeic expressions, the world-view, ceremonies, language and imagery rooted in the traditional cultures of Africa (138).

The socio-historical context of *Arrow of God* is the time when European influence was beginning to have an impact on life in Eastern Nigeria, when missionaries and colonialists were just arriving the Igbo society. In this novel, like in *Things Fall Apart*, the reader comes across ample elements of the indigenous literary traditions. For instance, in the traditional Igbo society, the art of rhetoric and aphorism was acquired by those who have accumulated the wisdom of the community through age and practice. In Chapter Two of the novel, for example, we meet elders of Umuaro debating about sending an emissary to Okperi over a disputed piece of land. Ezeulu contends that the piece of land in question belongs to Okperi, not to Umuaro. Nwaka disputes this claim: "Umuaro Kwenu ... Kwenu... Kweuzuenu..." (15). Nwaka's speech is replete with aphorisms, epigrams, proverbs and folktales. The frequency of proverbs and illustrations in the speech shows that the novel has a close intertextual relationship with oral literature. Throughout the story, proverbs are used by various characters in conversations, rituals and reflective moments when characters like Ezeulu are engaged in active thinking. Proverb is thus one of the major stylistic devices employed by Achebe in *Arrow of God*.

Obiechina (1993) observes, "proverbs are the kernels which contain the wisdom of the traditional people" (11). It is proper therefore that in *Arrow of God*, Ezeulu, the chief priest of the people and the very pillar and corner stone of the people's culture and customs, should appear to be the most gifted user of proverbs. Suffice it to exemplify this claim with some of the proverbs used in the novel:

The fly that struts on a mound of excrement wastes its time; the mound will always be greater than the fly (225)

When death wants to take a little dog, it prevents it from smelling even excrement (226).

The two proverbs are used to warn people to be cautious in their actions and deeds. In African societies, proverbs are used to warn, teach and reprimand people.

Also, in *Arrow of God*, Achebe borrows abundantly from indigenous folktales. Nwaka is undoubtedly an expert orator in the novel. His speeches evince myths, legends, proverbs, folktales, riddles, jokes and aphorisms. He uses a number of rhetorical devices which centre on indigenous literary traditions. Achebe intentionally makes use of Nwaka as a veritable weapon of cultural education. For instance, the technique of repetition is preponderant in Nwaka's speeches. This gives information to the listeners and consequently wins them to the speaker's side. The technique of audience-participation is borrowed from indigenous literary traditions.

Moreover, in *Arrow of God*, we come across some instances of African traditional poetry. For example, lullaby, the indigenous poem used for pacifying a weeping baby is found on page 124:

Tell the mother her child is crying  
Tell the mother her child is crying  
And then prepare a stew of Aziza (124).

We can therefore conclude that Achebe, in his novels, relies significantly on African indigenous literary traditions. This graft of folk traditions is not inadvertent; rather, it is informed by Achebe's artistic credo – that is, 'teaching' the readers the cultural legacies of the African continent.

## NGUGI WA THIONG'O AND CULTURAL EDUCATION

Like Achebe's fiction, Ngugi's fiction appeals to all the strong oral traditions of his culture. In fact, Ngugi makes use of myths, legends and folklores. Gikuyu and Christian mythologies, the Messianic myth and the myth of Gikuyu and Mumbi form the nucleus of Ngugi's novelistic oeuvre. A close chronological reading of his novels shows that he adapts the devices of oral traditions for the purpose of cultural pedagogy. In *The River Between*, the influence of folk tradition is highly minimal. However, Ngugi's reliance on the autochthonous culture of Africa is at an appreciable scope in *A Grain of Wheat* (1967). In *Petals of Blood* (1977), Ngugi makes use of the elements of cultural traditions abundantly. But, Ngugi's employment of the elements of oral traditions reaches its peak in *Devil on the Cross* (1982). More than most contemporary novels, the fiction of Ngugi appears conscious of itself as a sociolinguistic and pedagogical art. In this respect, there is a pertinent correlation between Ngugi's fiction and the oral literary traditions that propelled modern literature in Africa.

As hinted above, Ngugi's *The River Between* is an experimental fiction containing a few artistic flaws which he has avoided in his later works. One of such flaws is the scanty use of aspects of indigenous literary traditions which would have enriched the cultural texture of the narrative, recommend it as a tool for cultural education and firmly placed it in a traditional milieu (Kabir, 1995). Although the traditional society that is created in the novel is imbued with knowledge of tribal secrets and cultural heritage, the virtues fail to manifest themselves because of the dearth of proverbs which are always used to bring about such wisdom.

However, *The River Between* still contains some elements of indigenous literary traditions which are worth discussing. For instance, Chege, the father of Waiyaki, is portrayed as a legendary hero in the story:

Many stories ran around him. Some people said that he had the gift of magic. Others said he was a seer and Murungu often spoke to him ... (7).

Kabonyi is also portrayed as a man of tradition. He has a good command of proverbs, riddles and epigrams. This makes him an embodiment of these three aspects of indigenous literary tradition. He even narrates his riddles, bearing in mind the tastes of his audience: "besides, he knew his audience well and knew what to appeal to ..." (51). This shows Kabonyi to be a traditional storyteller employed by Ngugi as a vehicle for cultural propagation.

The progression from *The River Between* to *Petals of Blood* is precisely along the line of adequate mastery of indigenous literary traditions. Actually, when Ngugi wrote *Petals of Blood*, "his grasp of orature was deeper, and his employment of it in the novel more confident" (Kabir, 1995:50). In this novel, Ngugi blends the resources of the indigenous literary traditions with modernist fictional techniques to convey his disgust at the collusion of neo-colonialists with international monopoly capitalism in activities seemingly designed to dispossess the Kenyan peasants and workers. Thus, in *Petals of Blood*, Ngugi is more confident to articulate his message through reflected aspects of the indigenous literary traditions.

Moreover, in *Petals of Blood*, Ngugi succeeds, through characterization, to capture and express the mood and soul of a generation. The span, both space and time, covered by this novel, its themes and narrative techniques make it an African epic (Tillyard, 1958). It is arguable that the Mau Mau struggle, the dissatisfaction that had gripped post-colonial Africa following the hopes and expectations brought by independence provided a single temper which animated the whole nation (Kenya) and the African continent, offering a creative artist a potentiality for epic effect. Indeed, *Petals of Blood* is a celebration of the epic struggle against dehumanization, oppression, alienation, capitalism and imperialism. The crisis of the moment has provided a new heroic spirit; and the struggle continues.

*Petals of Blood* is indeed a quasi-historical novel. The historical element is however subjected to Ngugi's world-outlook and his socialist thinking. He has used historical materialism to be the umbrella under which various standpoints are examined. Ngugi believes that in Africa, where the business of liberation is yet to be completed, we cannot ignore legends and past heroes, as it is from them we get inspiration. Nor are legends without some truth, as collective memory can be trusted to be reliable:

This history and legend showed that Ilmorog had always been threatened by the twin cruelties of unprepared for vagaries of nature and the uncontrolled actions of men (101).

*Petals of Blood* traces the history of Kenyan people in general and of the Gikuyu in particular to the earliest times down the ages. The starting point is the legend of their progenitors (Gikuyu and Mumbi), how Murungu gave them land to till and live on. Ngugi, in *Petals of Blood*, brings together history, legends and folklore as a way of tracing the continuum from time immemorial, time of Mumbi and Gikuyu, to the present. This vast sweep also dramatizes the African experience, struggle, hopes and fears. These socio-historical elements afford expansiveness, weight and mass to the novel, thus intensifying its epic and pedagogical impulse.



Furthermore, in *Petals of Blood*, several traditional songs are rendered. For the circumcision ceremony, Ngugi uses 'Mumboro', a traditional Gikuyu song, to make a point about Munira, one of the central characters in the novel. This song is usually performed four months before initiation. In the words of Sicherman (1994), "the dancing takes the form of a contest between teams of boys from different villages" (221). A Mumboro song in the novel can be likened to a musical opera, complete with a chorus. Njugiana and Nyakinyua participate in this. At the tail end of the performance, the uncommitted Munira joins in and interrupts its steady flow thereby inviting chastisement from Nyakinyua:

You now break harmony of voices  
You now break harmony of voices  
It's the way you'll surely break our harmony  
When the time of initiation comes (209).

Nyakinyua thus throws a challenge in song: "if a thread was broken, to whom were the pieces thrown to mend them into a new thread?" (209). This quest is responded to by Abdulla, a veteran Mau Mau activist, in a song. Also, 'Gitiro', a Gikuyu wedding song, is used in *Petals of Blood*. Through this song, Nyakinyua comments on Ilmorog's recent history, describing how the people had been turned into paupers and asks: "Who had swallowed all the wealth of the land?" (210). Nyakinyua puts the drought affecting Ilmorog into a wider historical and legendary context. She sings of struggle.

Ngugi, in *Petals of Blood*, also uses traditional story-telling technique. This device is used to familiarize the reader with the content of the story. An example of the traditional story-telling technique in the novel is used by Abdulla, who exhibits his talent for story-telling, alerting the reader to his link with the oral culture of the Gikuyu. Among the folktales narrated by Abdulla are: "Ant and Louse"; "How Chameleon Defeated Hare in a Race"; and "How and Why Moon and Sun Became Enemies." These tales recur throughout in the novel.

In *Devil on the Cross*, Ngugi makes use of elements of indigenous literary traditions abundantly. Apart from the fact that it was originally written in Gikuyu, with the title *Caitaani Mutharaba Ini*, *Devil on the Cross* generously employs aspects of Gikuyu oral traditions. This is not done unintentionally; rather it is a means of reaching the Kenyan peasants, workers and youths. In this novel, Ngugi employs the technique of traditional story telling. An example will suffice:

Certain people in Ilmorog, our Ilmorog, told me that  
this story was too disgraceful, too shameful that it  
should be concealed in the depths of ever-lasting darkness (7).

The conversational style of the excerpt is characteristic of *Devil on the Cross*, which is essentially cast in the mode of folktale. Also, the novelist employs story-telling technique through the narrator's use of direct address to the listeners; for instance, "Let me tell you the lesson Wariinga taught that man" (221); "You who were there, what more can I say?" (246). To emphasize the oral quality of the novel, Ngugi uses the variant of Gicanndi player to narrate the story. The method ensures that the attention of the audience is sustained. Ngugi is bent on capturing the attention of his audience to convey the message that the Kenyan middle-class elite are exploitative, and therefore deserve condemnation from the Kenyan masses. It seems Ngugi is in agreement with the postulation of Ruth Finnegan that "songs can be used to report and

comment on affairs for political pressure, for propaganda, and to reflect and mould public opinion” (1992:272). Thus, Ngugi employs songs to maximum use in *Devil on the Cross*:

I shall knock – a knock the Devil  
I shall knock – a knock the Devil  
I shall tell him: Leave me alone  
I do not belong to demons (46).

And Muturi and Wangari actually burst into song together without any preamble or preparation:

Famine has increased in our lands,  
But it has been given other names,  
So that the people should not discover  
Where all the food has been hidden (50).

The singers have become a kind of Brechtian chorus, allowing us to stand back and contemplate the issues. The prose narrative is freely interlarded with quotations from pop-songs, freedom fighters’ songs and hymns.

Another feature taken over from the indigenous folk traditions in *Devil on the Cross* is the frequent use of African proverbs. These are sometimes employed in specific traditional patterns of discussion and debate so that they form an essential part of the argument as when they operate in clusters and develop a point. For instance, Gitutu asserts his sexual potency with his three women, in spite of his obesity, thus:

As the dancer prepares himself for the arena, it’s he  
Who knows how he is going to dance, The elephant  
is able to carry his tusks, however huge. And again,  
whoever is able to resist money today is beyond human help (100).

Also, Waringa indicates her choice of a student-lover in preference to Bose Kihara in like manner: “The yam that one has dug for oneself has no mouldy patches. The sugar cane that one has picked out has no unripe edges” (22-23).

## CONCLUSION

The foregoing exploration has centered on the ways and manners contemporary African novelists have been carrying out the task of cultural education in their works. It has been revealed that the contemporary African novel is very useful for acculturation and enculturation. Some novels of Achebe and Ngugi have been used for textual exemplification. The two novelists evince a consciousness of the necessity of borrowing from their cultural milieus forms of indigenous expression so as to develop a truly African fiction. Actually, it is an indubitable fact that the contemporary African novel is a strong tool for cultural education, and it is a veritable agency of cultural pedagogy.

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**A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROCRASTINATORY BEHAVIOUR  
AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN A  
NIGERIAN UNIVERSITY**

By

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**ABSTRACT**

The study investigated the relationship between academic procrastination and academic performance of university students in a Nigerian university. Subjects consisted of 185 final-year education students (Male = 98, Female = 87) of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria. One research instrument, the Procrastination Scale (PS), developed and validated by Lay (1986), was used to collect data for the study. Data on subjects' academic performance using their Cumulative Grade Point Average (CCPA) were also collected from their respective departments.

Results from Pearson Product Moment Correlation analysis and one-way Analysis of Variance indicate that subjects' academic performance had significant inverse relationship with procrastination. The results also showed that there was a significant difference between the academic performance of low and moderate procrastinators with low procrastinators performing better than moderate procrastinators.

The study brings into focus the need for Nigerian counsellors to recognize procrastination as a behavioural problem which requires professional counselling intervention

**Key Words:** Procrastination, Academic Procrastination, **Procrastinatory behaviour,**  
**Academic performance**

**INTRODUCTION**

The lives of university students are characterized by frequent deadlines given by university teachers and administrators to carry out various responsibilities such as registration for courses, completion of course forms and submission of class assignments or term papers. Many students are in the habit of putting off these responsibilities until the last minute, a practice referred to in research literature as procrastination. A common form of academic procrastination among students is waiting until the last minute to turn in papers or to study for an examination (Milgram, Batori, & Mowrer, 1993).

Ellis and Knaus (2002) defined procrastination as "the desire to avoid an activity, the promise to get to it later, and the use of excuse making to justify the delay and avoid blame". Silver and Sabini (1981) described the procrastinator as "...someone who knows what he wants to do in some sense, can do it, is trying to do it, yet doesn't do it".

Procrastination is regarded as a dispositional trait which has cognitive, behavioural and emotional components. According to Solomon and Rothblum (1984), people tend to avoid tasks which they find unpleasant and engage in activities which are more rewarding, especially with short term over long term gain (McCown, Carise & Johnson, 1991). Ferrari & Emmons (1995) found that procrastinators have low self esteem and delay task completion because they believe they lack the ability to achieve task success. An individual postpones doing things that make

him or her anxious, apprehensive, or likely to lose face in the presence of peers (Milgram, Dangour & Raviv, 1992).

Effert and Ferrari (1989) have demonstrated that procrastinators often lack self-efficacy, self-esteem and are publicly self-conscious and highly self-critical. They often have perfectionist expectations and are over-conscientious. They display irrational fear of success or failure which may lead to neurotic avoidance. They may also be emotionally overwhelmed and anxious. They have less need for cognitive complexity and are more likely to attribute success to external and unstable factors (Rothblum & Solomon, 1986).

Research findings on the proportion of students who procrastinate have not been consistent. For instance, while Solomon and Rothblum (1984) estimated that at least half of all students consistently and problematically procrastinate, Ellis and Knaus (1977) found that the number of students who procrastinate at some point approaches 95%. As reviewed by Ferrari and Beck (1998), approximately 70% of US college students engage in frequent procrastination and this occurs regardless of race or gender.

There is no doubt that procrastination can have particularly serious consequences for university students. For instance, Tice and Baumeister (1997) found that procrastinators received significantly lower paper and examination grades than non-procrastinators. On a larger scale, procrastination could lead to total failure. Though there is some evidence in research literature that procrastination is associated with poor academic performance (Wesley, 1994; Beck, Koons & Migram, 2000; Tuckman, Abry & Smith, 2002), the nature and strength of this association is not yet ascertained. This study therefore sought to ascertain the relationship between procrastination and academic performance of university students. The following hypotheses were postulated:

- (1) There is no significant relationship between academic procrastination and academic performance of university undergraduates.
- (2) There is no significant difference in the academic performance of university undergraduates who are low, moderate and high procrastinators.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Subjects for the study consisted of 185 final-year education students (Male = 98, Female = 87) selected from a class of students offering a compulsory education course in the Faculty of Education, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife. The students, who were asked to volunteer their class time to complete the research instrument, were not necessarily randomly selected.

One research instrument, the Procrastination Scale (PS), developed and validated by Lay (1986), was used to collect data for the study. The scale is a 20-item self-report instrument of the Likert type. It consists of items intended to find out the extent to which subjects procrastinate on issues that cover various aspects of life. The original author of the instrument had found it to possess high internal consistency and convincing construct validity. A high score on the scale indicates a high level of procrastination while a low score is indicative of a low level of procrastination. After the administration of the instrument, data on subjects' academic performance using their Cumulative Grade Point Average (CCPA) were collected from their respective departments.

## RESULTS

The major hypothesis for the study stipulates that there is no significant relationship between procrastination and academic performance of university undergraduates. To test this hypothesis, data collected from the administration of the Procrastination Scale were correlated with subjects' cumulative GPA using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Correlation Between Academic Procrastination and Academic Performance**

Variable	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r	P
Procrastination	185	52.68	15.28	-0.50*	<0.05
CGPA	185	2.59	0.75		

\*Significant,  $P < 0.05$

As shown in Table 1, the correlation between procrastination and students' CGPA is -0.50, which is significant at 0.05 probability level. This implies that there is a significant inverse relationship between procrastination and students' academic performance. In other words, the students' academic performance tends to diminish as their levels of procrastination increased. Thus, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between academic procrastination and academic performance of university undergraduates is rejected.

To test the second hypothesis which stipulates that there is no significant difference in the academic performance of university undergraduates who are low, moderate and high procrastinators, subjects were classified as low, moderate and high procrastinators on the basis of their scores on the Procrastination Scale. Thereafter, data on their academic performance were subjected to One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to ascertain the influence of level of procrastination on their academic performance. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 2:

**Table 2: Influence of Level of Academic Procrastination on Academic Performance**

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	P
Between Groups	29.14	2	14.57	36.06*	< 0.05
Within Groups	73.54	182	.40		
Total	102.68	184	14.97		

\*Significant,  $P < 0.05$

The results in Table 2 indicate an F-ratio of 36.05, which is significant at the 0.05 probability level. This suggests that subjects' level of procrastination has a significant influence on their academic performance. Therefore, the hypothesis which stipulates there is no significant difference in the academic performance of university undergraduates who are low, moderate and high procrastinators is rejected.

A further attempt was made to ascertain which group of procrastinators has superior academic records over the others. To this end, data on the academic performance of subjects in

the three levels of procrastination were subjected to a post-hoc multiple comparison test using the Least Significant Difference (LSD) formula. The results are presented in Table 3:

**Table 3: Multiple Comparisons of CGPA of Students with Different Levels of Procrastination**

Levels of Procrastination	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Mean Difference	Standard Error	P
Low Procrastinator	48	3.25	0.47	0.83*	0.118	<0.05
Moderate Procrastinator	72	2.42	0.71			
Low Procrastinator	48	3.25	0.47	0.96*	0.121	<0.05
High Procrastinator	65	2.29	0.65			
Moderate Procrastinator	72	2.42	0.71	0.13	0.109	>0.05
High Procrastinator	65	2.29	0.65			

\*Significant,  $P < 0.05$

From the data in Table 3, low procrastinators had a mean CGPA of 3.25 and a standard deviation of 0.47 while moderate procrastinators had a mean CGPA of 2.42 and a standard deviation of 0.71. The difference between the mean values of the two groups (0.83) is statistically significant at 0.05 level. This result suggests that there is a significant difference between the academic performance of low and moderate procrastinators with low procrastinators performing better than moderate procrastinators.

Also, data on the CGPA of low procrastinators ( $\bar{x} = 3.25$ ,  $SD = 0.47$ ) were compared with those of high procrastinators ( $\bar{x} = 2.29$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ). The analysis yielded a mean difference of 0.96, which is significant at the 0.05 level. This result shows that the academic performance of low procrastinators as measured by their CGPA were statistically better than those of high procrastinators ( $P < 0.05$ ). However, another comparison of the mean CCPA of moderate ( $\bar{x} = 2.42$ ,  $SD = 0.71$ ) and high procrastinators ( $\bar{x} = 2.29$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ) as shown in Table 3 produced a mean difference of 0.13, which is not significant at 0.05 probability level. This also suggests that the academic performances of moderate and high procrastinators are not statistically different even though moderate procrastinators recorded a slightly higher CGPA than high procrastinators.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study have shown that procrastination has a significant inverse relationship with students' academic performance. This tends to confirm the view that procrastination might have serious consequences for academic performance. In this study students who reported strong tendencies to procrastinate also tended to have lower GPAs and vice-versa. This tends to support earlier findings by Steel, Brothen & Wambach (2001) which indicate that procrastination did not only have negative consequences on academic performance but that it could serve as an excellent predictor of academic performance. Hartman (2001) agreed with this opinion but added that successful academic performance was six times more likely for students who did not self-report as being procrastinator than for procrastinating students.

There are a number of reasons why procrastination might hamper students' academic performance. Ferrari and Emmons (1993) believed that procrastinators might not do well academically because of their low self-esteem. They usually delay task completion because they

believe they lack the ability to achieve task success (Ferrari & Emmons, 1995). According to Tuckman (1991), procrastinators tend to describe themselves as people who doubt their capabilities.

The negative effect of procrastination on academic performance can also be explained in terms of the low-level of achievement motivation characteristic of most procrastinators. Procrastinators might be ambivalent about achievement itself, especially if the task is associated with a rite of passage like a dissertation or examination. They might exhibit some measure of anxiety and emotional disturbance capable of jeopardizing their chances of academic success.

## CONCLUSION

This study has brought into focus the need for Nigerian counsellors to recognize procrastination as a behavioural problem which requires professional counselling intervention. Students must be made to realize the need to change their procrastinatory behaviours in order to succeed in their academic endeavours. Milgram (1993) suggested three levels of guidance for students. First, there must be intervention workshops set up for all students to aid them in recognizing procrastination. Secondly, there must be secondary interventions for at risk students and finally there must be counselling provided for students who may damage their academic career due to procrastination.

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