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**Comparative Analysis of Education Systems in Estonia and North Macedonia
Structural and Policy Factors**

Received: 26 January 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi:doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18966787

Abstract

This study presents a comparative analysis of the education systems of Estonia and North Macedonia, with particular attention to their contrasting outcomes in international large-scale assessments, especially PISA. Empirical evidence demonstrates that Estonian students consistently achieve high levels of performance, while students in North Macedonia continue to experience structural underachievement. The analysis examines five interrelated dimensions: curriculum design and systemic organization, levels and efficiency of educational funding, teacher education and professional development, governance and policy implementation, and equity of access across socio-economic groups. Estonia's strong results are associated with a competency-based curriculum, coherent system architecture, highly professionalized teacher education, depoliticized governance, and strategic, needs-based resource allocation that supports both excellence and inclusion. By contrast, the education system in North Macedonia is characterized by fragmented institutional structures, persistent socio-economic inequalities, underinvestment, and politicized decision-making, all of which constrain sustainable reform and learning outcomes. The study also reviews recent reform initiatives in North Macedonia, including curriculum revision, funding adjustments, and vocational education modernization, which signal incremental progress but remain insufficient to address deep-rooted challenges in early childhood education, teacher quality, and system coherence. Drawing on Estonia's experience, the study formulates evidence-based policy recommendations for North Macedonia, emphasizing transparent and accountable governance, systematic investment in teacher education, strengthened early learning provision, and equity-oriented reforms. These measures are presented as essential for enhancing educational quality, reducing disparities, and developing a resilient, inclusive, and

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future-oriented education system capable of meeting contemporary social and economic demands. Such reforms align education policy with long-term national development priorities.

Keywords: *Comparative Education, Curriculum and Pedagogy, Teacher Professionalization, Educational Equity, Governance, PISA Outcomes*

Introduction

Education is a cornerstone of national development, fostering creativity, critical thinking, and civic responsibility, which in turn enhance workforce productivity, innovation, and societal resilience (Lutz et al., 2019). Human capital development is crucial for leveraging demographic dividends, yet such benefits materialize only if education systems deliver quality learning outcomes (Lutz et al., 2019). When education systems underperform, social inequalities are exacerbated, public trust erodes, and opportunities for upward mobility are constrained. The COVID-19 pandemic further highlighted these vulnerabilities, as the shift to remote learning disproportionately affected marginalized students, deepening digital divides (Golden et al., 2023).

In North Macedonia, PISA 2022 results revealed significant weaknesses: the country ranked 61st in mathematics, 71st in reading, and 68th in science out of 81 participating nations (Nikolik, 2023). These outcomes reflect structural deficits that threaten educational quality and socio-economic stability.

In contrast, Estonia consistently achieves top-tier results in international assessments. PISA 2022 scores—510 in mathematics, 526 in science, and 511 in reading—demonstrate the effectiveness of professionalized teaching, innovative curricula, digital integration, and equity-driven policies (Ministry of Education and Research, 2024; Tambur, 2024). This study provides a comparative analysis of Estonia and North Macedonia, two post-socialist countries with divergent educational outcomes. By examining systemic factors—curriculum design, funding, teacher professionalism, governance, and equity—this paper identifies the mechanisms underlying Estonia’s success and North Macedonia’s persistent challenges. Evidence-based recommendations are formulated to guide North Macedonia toward transparent governance, comprehensive teacher development, and inclusive policies. Ultimately, this analysis aims to inform policymakers and scholars on strategies for sustainable educational reform in transition countries, promoting long-term equity, quality, and resilience.

Contextual Framework and Methodology

Estonia has emerged as a global model of educational equity and excellence, achieved through competency-based curricula, inclusive policies, teacher development, and accountable governance. In contrast, North Macedonia experiences curriculum gaps, limited

teacher training, underfunding, and ethnic and regional disparities, which constrain achievement and public trust.

This study employs a comparative descriptive design, drawing on peer-reviewed research, policy reports, OECD and Eurostat data, and official publications accessed via academic platforms. The analysis focuses on five pivotal dimensions:

1. Education System Overview and Curriculum Design
2. Funding in Education
3. Teacher Training and Qualifications
4. Governance and Policy Implementation
5. Equity and Access to Education

The primary objective is to identify strategies from Estonia's experience that can inform evidence-based policy in North Macedonia, thereby enhancing equity, quality, and student outcomes.

Research Questions

The study addresses the following questions:

1. Which factors explain Estonia's consistent PISA excellence compared with North Macedonia's underperformance?
2. What structural and policy differences exist between the two education systems?
3. Which elements most significantly contribute to disparities in student learning outcomes?
4. How does educational investment and resource allocation affect quality in both countries?
5. In what ways do teacher preparation, pedagogy, and infrastructure influence achievement?

By examining these questions, the study provides an actionable analysis of structural and policy determinants of educational outcomes, offering guidance for educators, researchers, and policymakers aiming to strengthen North Macedonia's education system.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Education System Overview and Curriculum Design

1.1 Estonia's Education System

The Estonian education system functions as a cornerstone of national identity, cultural continuity, and societal cohesion. Beyond knowledge acquisition, it supports economic modernization, democratic stability, and resilience, encapsulated in the national slogan “*Education Nation*” (Jürimäe, 2022). Even during Soviet occupation, Estonia preserved pedagogical autonomy and intellectual traditions (Jürimäe, 2022). Post-independence reforms positioned education as a catalyst for societal transformation. Early childhood programs emphasize play-based, exploratory learning, integrated with cultural traditions, ensuring smooth transitions to student-centered primary education. Enrollment in pre-school reaches 94% for ages 3–6, contributing to Estonia’s high international performance, including first in Europe and fourth globally in PISA 2022 (Daxow, 2025; Rashidi, 2023; OECD, 2023).

The system comprises four levels: pre-school, basic, secondary, and higher education, with general and vocational pathways. Governance is decentralized, with municipalities overseeing schools and the state ensuring equitable access through per-pupil and block grants, though rural disparities persist (Ministry of Education and Research, 2024). Estonia’s learner-centered curriculum fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and digital literacy (OECD, 2019, 2020). Digital initiatives, including Tiigrihüpe and ProgeTiger, integrate programming across levels, supported by near-universal online public services (Education Estonia, 2021; NCEE, n.d.). Teacher professionalism underpins this system: all educators hold master’s degrees and full licensure, with structured induction, mentoring, and ongoing development (>1% of payroll) (Leijen et al., 2024; National Audit Office, 2024; Eisenschmidt, 2023). Equity and efficiency are demonstrated through minimal grade repetition, high completion rates, and reduced socio-economic gaps, although gender imbalances in STEM fields remain (OECD, 2024; Eurydice, 2025).

1.2 North Macedonia's Education System

North Macedonia’s education system has been shaped by frequent leadership changes, affecting policy continuity. Between 1991 and 2017, fifteen education ministers introduced reforms in higher education, standardized testing, minority-language instruction, teacher

training, and digitalization (Fakulteti.mk, 2017). Despite modernization efforts, structural challenges and political influence persist. The system encompasses preschool, primary, secondary, vocational, higher education, adult learning, and transversal priorities such as employability and digital skills (National Development Strategy, 2022). Public schools provide free education, while private institutions rely on tuition, creating potential disparities. Governance is decentralized, yet resource allocation varies, particularly between urban and rural areas (Eurydice, 2025; Ministry of Education and Science, 2022).

PISA 2022 results indicate underperformance: 75% of 15-year-olds scored low in reading, and 66% underperformed in mathematics and science (UNICEF North Macedonia, 2024). Factors include limited preschool access (43% of children aged 3–6 enrolled), fewer instructional hours than OECD peers, socio-economic inequities, and ethnic divisions (Hlasny, 2017; Sosu & Pimenta, 2023). Curriculum fragmentation, outdated teaching methods, and insufficient teacher preparation further undermine learning outcomes (National Development Strategy, 2022; OECD, 2019; Sharlamanov & Mitevska Petrusheva, 2023). Higher education quality is constrained by weak governance, fragmented policy, and limited accountability, reflected in low global rankings (Salmi, 2017; World Bank, n.d.). Ethnic segregation in schools persists, impeding inclusivity (Bloodworth, 2020). Although the 2018–2025 Comprehensive Strategy aims to enhance integration, success depends on changes in teacher attitudes and national mindsets (Bloodworth, 2020).

1.3 Comparative Insights

Estonia demonstrates a coherent, competency-based curriculum integrated with digital innovation and teacher professionalism, yielding high performance and equity. In contrast, North Macedonia exhibits fragmentation, inconsistent teacher training, underfunding, and socio-economic and ethnic disparities, limiting student achievement. These divergences provide a framework for understanding systemic determinants of educational outcomes and informing targeted reforms.

2. Funding in Education

2.1 Estonia

Estonia demonstrates efficient, equitable education financing, with total public expenditure on education at 6.8% of GDP (OECD, 2023). Funding is largely public, with municipalities managing per-pupil and block grants, ensuring schools have predictable, needs-based resources. Allocation emphasizes quality, equity, and digital infrastructure, contributing to high PISA performance (OECD, 2023; Education Estonia, 2021). Higher education funding combines state-financed and tuition-based models. Merit- and need-based scholarships and competitive grants foster access and reduce socio-economic disparities (Leijen et al., 2024). Accountability mechanisms, including regular audits and performance monitoring, maintain transparency and prevent inefficiency (National Audit Office, 2024). Private contributions remain minor, reflecting strong state responsibility for educational equity.

2.2 North Macedonia

North Macedonia's public funding for education is lower and less consistent, at 4.2% of GDP (World Bank, 2022). Resource allocation is fragmented, with urban schools often better funded than rural or minority-language institutions. Per-student spending is variable, affecting infrastructure, digital access, and teacher compensation (Ministry of Finance, 2022; UNICEF North Macedonia, 2024). Higher education relies partially on tuition, with scholarships limited and unevenly distributed, exacerbating socio-economic disparities. Decentralized governance complicates equitable fund distribution, and insufficient accountability mechanisms hinder efficiency and transparency (Sharlamanov & Mitevskva Petrusheva, 2023). While recent reforms aim to improve funding equity and introduce performance-based incentives, implementation remains inconsistent, limiting systemic impact (National Development Strategy, 2022).

2.3 Comparative Insights

Estonia exemplifies sustainable, transparent, and needs-based education funding, directly linked to high achievement, equity, and digital integration. In contrast, North Macedonia struggles with underfunding, inequitable allocation, and limited accountability, contributing

to low student performance and persistent socio-economic disparities. Comparative analysis underscores the role of coherent financial policy in achieving educational outcomes.

3. Teacher Training and Qualifications

Teacher quality is widely recognized as a pivotal determinant of student outcomes, system efficiency, and educational equity (OECD, 2019; European Commission, 2022). Preparation, professional development, and recognition collectively influence classroom practice, curriculum implementation, and systemic responsiveness. Comparative analysis of Estonia and North Macedonia highlights critical divergences affecting equity, innovation, and labor-market alignment.

3.1 Estonia

Estonia maintains high standards for teacher education. All educators hold master's degrees and full licensure. Bachelor's programs (3 years) and master's programs (2 years) integrate pedagogy, subject specialization, and supervised practicum (Eisenschmidt, 2023; OECD, 2021). Selective admissions, based on academic achievement, interviews, and collaborative assessment, ensure high-caliber entrants (European Agency, 2023). Novice teachers undergo a one-year induction with mentoring that emphasizes reflective, inclusive practice, followed by continuous professional development (>1% of payroll), reinforcing digital competence, innovation, and equity (Education Estonia, 2023; OECD, 2021). Competitive remuneration and societal recognition enhance recruitment, retention, and instructional quality, supporting student-centered learning and labor-market alignment (Leijen et al., 2024).

3.2 North Macedonia

North Macedonia faces persistent challenges in teacher preparation. Programs vary in quality, often lacking modern pedagogy, digital literacy, and inclusive practices (UNICEF, 2019; OECD, 2019). Practicum experiences are limited, and admissions are largely non-selective, resulting in unevenly prepared teachers. Teacher allocation is unequal, particularly in rural areas, and professional development is fragmented, voluntary, and weakly linked to career progression (ETF, 2020; UNICEF, 2020).

Low pay, especially in minority-language schools, undermines retention and professional status. Although primary teachers with degrees increased from 61% to 72%, program quality, practical training, and inclusivity remain inadequate (World Bank, n.d.; UNICEF North Macedonia, 2024), limiting systemic effectiveness.

3.3 Comparative Overview

Estonia surpasses OECD benchmarks in selection, practicum quality, professional development, remuneration, and inclusivity (OECD, 2019; Eisenschmidt, 2023). North Macedonia falls below these standards across all dimensions, reflecting structural weaknesses, fragmented oversight, and underinvestment (OECD, 2019; UNICEF, 2019). Selective, research-informed training, continuous development, competitive pay, and inclusive pedagogy emerge as critical levers for high-quality, equitable outcomes.

3.4 Implications

Teacher quality relies not only on formal qualifications but also on systemic coherence, structured career pathways, and sustained investment. North Macedonia should prioritize selective admissions, structured practicum, continuous professional development, competitive remuneration, and integrated inclusive pedagogy, aligning with OECD best practices to enhance instructional quality and student outcomes.

4. Governance and Policy Implementation

Governance shapes policy coherence, equity, curriculum implementation, teacher development, and student outcomes (Teachers Institute, 2023). Estonia and North Macedonia exemplify divergent governance models with significant implications for systemic effectiveness and equity.

4.1 Estonia

Estonia effectively balances decentralized school management with robust national oversight, promoting pedagogical flexibility, fiscal discretion, and quality assurance (OECD, 2016;

UNESCO, 2023). Municipalities allocate approximately 40% of local budgets to education (Lääne et al., 2022), while data-driven policymaking, including integration of PISA-style items into national assessments, aligns domestic standards with international benchmarks (OECD, 2022). These governance mechanisms underpin consistently high outcomes. PISA 2022 Level 2+ attainment reached 84% in reading, 83% in mathematics, and 86% in science (OECD, 2023). Structured teacher preparation, career-linked professional development, equitable access initiatives, and digital governance further reinforce educational quality (Eisenschmidt, 2023; Raal, 2021; SGI, 2022; OECD, 2020). Minor challenges, such as regional funding disparities or labor-market mismatches, are mitigated through employer collaboration and lifelong learning programs, while initiatives like *Taking Politics Outside Schools!* maintain neutrality and professional integrity (Töötukassa, 2021; Sylvester, 2022).

4.2 North Macedonia

In contrast, North Macedonia's decentralized system is weakened by uneven resource allocation, politicized decision-making, and frequent leadership changes (Eurydice, 2025; Velkovski, 2015; Ministry of Education and Science, 2022). Initiatives such as the MCEC decentralization project (2005–2006) aimed to strengthen municipal capacity, participatory governance, and targeted funding (MCEC, 2013). Nevertheless, weak municipal capacity, central oversight gaps, and political influence disproportionately affect rural and minority-language students (UNICEF, 2019; Kallxo, 2024; World Bank, 2021). Operational deficits, including textbook shortages, limited digital infrastructure, and labor-market misalignment, further constrain equity and outcomes. By the end of primary education, 38% of children lack basic reading skills, 8% remain unenrolled, and PISA 2022 indicates underperformance: 62% in reading, 61% in mathematics, and 65% in science (World Bank, 2021; OECD, 2023). Recent reforms in curriculum modernization, digital literacy, and vocational education have had limited impact due to uneven implementation and political interference (Eurydice, 2024a; ETF, 2024).

4.3 Comparative Indicators

Estonia outperforms North Macedonia across policy continuity, political neutrality, local autonomy, merit-based teacher appointments, transparent funding, and digital governance

(OECD, 2019; Sylvester, 2022; Raal, 2021). Conversely, North Macedonia's politicized, fragmented system undermines institutional stability, resource utilization, and student outcomes, perpetuating systemic inequities (Kallxo, 2024; UNICEF, 2019).

4.4 Implications

Governance is a critical determinant of educational quality and equity. North Macedonia should:

- Depoliticize governance to ensure school neutrality and institutional integrity.
- Implement evidence-based policymaking linking curricula to labor-market needs, digital literacy, and inclusive pedagogy.
- Strengthen local administrative capacity and adopt transparent, formula-driven resource allocation.

Collectively, these reforms are essential to establish a high-quality, equitable education system that approaches Estonia's evidence-driven model of excellence.

5. Equity and Access to Education

Equity in education ensures all students can achieve their potential regardless of socio-economic status, language, ethnicity, or geography (OECD, 2019; UNICEF, 2023). Estonia and North Macedonia demonstrate contrasting outcomes due to differences in governance, funding, and social policy integration.

5.1 Estonia

Estonia's system promotes near-universal access, high inclusion, and targeted support for vulnerable groups (Eisenschmidt, 2023; OECD, 2022). Inclusive practices encompass multilingual instruction, special-needs provisions, and early intervention programs, while digital learning tools mitigate geographic disparities (Raal, 2021; Sylvester, 2022).

Socio-economic gaps are minimized by formula-driven resource allocation, free textbooks, meal programs, and scholarships for disadvantaged students (OECD, 2022). Consequently, low-SES students perform comparatively well, with PISA 2022 Level 2+ attainment at 82%

in reading, 81% in mathematics, and 85% in science (OECD, 2023). Regional disparities are modest, and participation in upper-secondary education exceeds 95% (Eurydice, 2023a).

5.2 North Macedonia

North Macedonia faces persistent equity challenges. Socio-economic and geographic inequalities are amplified by uneven municipal capacity, limited infrastructure, and politicized resource distribution (World Bank, 2021; UNICEF, 2019; Kallxo, 2024). Minority-language and rural students are disproportionately affected, with significant gaps in literacy, numeracy, and digital skills (ETF, 2024; Eurydice, 2024a).

Early tracking, limited remedial support, and insufficiently inclusive pedagogies exacerbate disparities (Velkovski, 2015). Only 62% of students reach PISA 2022 Level 2+ in reading, 61% in mathematics, and 65% in science (OECD, 2023), with rural-urban gaps exceeding 15 percentage points. Dropout rates remain high, particularly in secondary vocational tracks, while access to quality digital learning and modern pedagogy is unevenly distributed (UNICEF, 2019; World Bank, 2021).

5.3 Comparative Indicators

Estonia demonstrates low equity gaps, high inclusion, and systemic support for vulnerable students, underpinned by evidence-based governance and digital integration (OECD, 2022; Sylvester, 2022). North Macedonia exhibits pronounced inequities in outcomes, participation, and resource allocation, highlighting the intersection of socio-economic, geographic, and political determinants (Kallxo, 2024; UNICEF, 2019).

5.4 Implications

To advance equity, North Macedonia should:

- Ensure formula-driven, transparent resource allocation to mitigate regional and socio-economic disparities.
- Expand early intervention and remedial programs, particularly for minority-language and rural students.

- Integrate digital learning and inclusive pedagogy across all levels of schooling.
- Depoliticize school governance to safeguard equitable decision-making.

Such reforms are critical for reducing systemic inequities and establishing inclusive, high-performing education pathways comparable to Estonia's model.

Conclusion

This study examined the divergent educational outcomes of Estonia and North Macedonia by addressing five research questions concerning performance, structure, policy, investment, and instructional capacity.

RQ1. Factors explaining Estonia’s PISA excellence versus North Macedonia’s underperformance - Estonia’s sustained high performance is driven by systemic coherence, long-term policy stability, and alignment of curriculum, assessment, and teacher professionalization. A competency-based curriculum, early investment in digital infrastructure, and evidence-driven governance enable both high achievement and equity. In contrast, North Macedonia underperforms due to fragmented policies, politicized governance, inconsistent teacher preparation, and unresolved socio-economic and ethnic disparities, which collectively hinder student learning.

RQ2. Structural and policy distinctions - Estonia’s education system combines decentralized school management with strong national oversight, promoting pedagogical flexibility, data-driven policymaking, and resource equity. North Macedonia exhibits structural fragmentation, frequent policy reversals, and weak coordination between national priorities and school-level implementation, limiting systemic effectiveness.

RQ3. Key elements contributing to disparities in student outcomes - Governance, teacher quality, and equity mechanisms are decisive. Estonia’s depoliticized governance, high-quality teacher workforce, and inclusive policies reduce socio-economic gaps. North Macedonia’s politicized decision-making, uneven teacher preparation, and limited support for vulnerable groups—including Roma children, low-income families, and students with disabilities—exacerbate disparities.

RQ4. Impact of educational investment and resource allocation - Estonia’s formula-based, needs-sensitive funding supports infrastructure, teacher development, and digital initiatives, producing measurable gains in learning outcomes. North Macedonia’s centralized system prioritizes salaries over professional development and infrastructure, reducing the effectiveness of financial inputs and limiting improvements in school quality.

RQ5. Influence of teacher preparation, pedagogy, and infrastructure - Teacher quality is a critical determinant of student achievement. Estonia’s selective admissions, structured

practicum, continuous mentoring, and competitive remuneration foster instructional excellence and labor-market alignment. In contrast, North Macedonia's low-entry standards, limited induction, fragmented professional development, and inadequate infrastructure contribute to uneven pedagogy and high turnover, constraining student learning.

Policy Implications - The evidence indicates that North Macedonia must pursue systemic reforms rather than incremental changes. Key priorities include depoliticizing governance, enhancing teacher education and career pathways, implementing equitable, formula-based funding, and expanding inclusive early childhood and digital learning opportunities. Estonia's model illustrates that sustained investment in coherence, professionalism, and equity is essential for high-performing, resilient education systems.

In conclusion, aligning structural reforms, strategic resource allocation, teacher development, and inclusive policies is central to improving educational outcomes. North Macedonia has the opportunity to close systemic gaps, enhance equity, and strengthen social and economic resilience by learning from evidence-based practices demonstrated in Estonia.

Strategic Reform Agenda for North Macedonia:

- Foster Long-Term, Equity-Driven Policy: Prioritize transparent, evidence-based reforms transcending political and socio-ethnic divisions.
- Develop a National Education Strategy: Legally binding, measurable goals for curriculum modernization, inclusivity, and digital integration.
- Depoliticize Governance: Ensure merit-based leadership, institutional accountability, and long-term strategic planning.
- Elevate Teacher Professionalism: Selective admission, structured mentoring, continuous professional development, and competitive pay.
- Adopt Needs-Sensitive Funding: Increase investment to $\geq 4.8\%$ of GDP, prioritize underserved regions, teacher training, and infrastructure.
- Modernize Curriculum and Assessment: Competency-based, student-centered curriculum emphasizing critical thinking and problem-solving; updated assessment frameworks.
- Invest in Inclusive Infrastructure: Digital tools, high-speed internet, and accessible facilities for all students.

- Promote Social Inclusion: Integrate equity practices into curricula, teacher training, and school management.
- Strengthen Global Engagement: Benchmark best practices via international networks (OECD, EU) to enhance innovation.
- Enhance Family and Community Engagement: Promote parental involvement and local accountability through workshops, advisory boards, and digital platforms.

Implementing these measures will enable North Macedonia to transform its educational system, reduce disparities, and align with global best practices. Success depends on coherent governance, professional teaching standards, equitable resource allocation, and inclusive policies that guarantee opportunities for all students, particularly marginalized groups. Lessons from Estonia's evidence-driven and inclusive model provide a roadmap to achieve high-quality education, social cohesion, and economic resilience.

Limitations: This study relies on publicly available quantitative data, focusing on curriculum, funding, teacher training, governance, and equity. It does not fully capture regional or local variations or qualitative perspectives from teachers, students, and parents. Further research is recommended to explore localized dynamics and the impact of recent policy shifts.

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Familjet e mëdha në Elbasan dhe Kontributi i tyre në Rilindjen Kombëtare në Fund të Shek.XIX fillim të Shek. XX

Received: 2 February 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967619

“Një atdhe përbëhet nga të vdekurit që e kanë themeluar dhe nga të gjallët që e vazhdojnë.”

Ernest Renan.

Abstrakt

Familjet e Mëdha janë një kategori shoqërore historike, të cilat janë formuar gjatë rrjedhës së shekujve, si rezultat i ndryshimeve ekonomike-shoqërore. Gjatë historisë në Shqipëri ka pasur tipe të ndryshëm të familjes, që nga familja patriarkale e deri tek familja feudale, çifligare, borgjeze e mikroborgjeze, fshatare, punëtore etj., me zakone tradicionale krahinore e lokale. Në një periudhë të caktuar të historisë, gjatë sundimit osman, kanë qenë edhe “Familjet e Mëdha” ose “Oxhaqet”, të cilat do të luajnë rol në zhvillimet ekonomike, politike e sociale të vendit. Origjina e tyre është e largët dhe mbase e panjohur mirë. Disa mund të jenë vazhduese e familjeve fisnike të periudhës së mëparshme, por kjo nuk do të thotë që nuk janë krijuar rishtazi duke shfrytëzuar mundësitë që iu jepte situata. Për të shkruar artikullin jemi mbështetur në burime arkivore dhe letërsi historiografike, të cilat i kemi parë në një kontekst të ri historik. Të tilla familje janë në Elbasan ajo e Biçakçinjve, Vërlaci, Kraosmani dhe Taushani. Këto familje kanë kontribut të madh gjatë Lëvizjes Kombëtare. Elbasani është shquar në një nga periudhat më interesante të historisë sonë të re, Rilindjes Kombëtare, për kontributin që ka dhënë në historinë politike e kulturore të Shqipërisë. Në të gjitha zhvillimet e kësaj periudhe, vepronte edhe një faktor tjetër i rëndësishëm, që padyshim ndërhynte në ngjarjet: bejlerët, feudalët çifligarë. Me ndikimin ekonomik, me ndikimin e tyre politik, si pranë Portës ashtu dhe pranë masave popullore të prapambetura, bejlerët qenë një faktor, pa të cilin nuk mund të shpjegohen dot ngjarjet që u zhvilluan në Shqipëri dhe në Elbasan, në veçanti, gjatë kësaj periudhe. Fakti që Lëvizja Kombëtare shqiptare gjente përkrahjen e bejlerëve liberalë të vendit, i jepte kësaj lëvizjeje një forcë që nuk e kishte në vendet e tjera

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ku haste në kundërshtim të hapur të këtij faktori, që mbante një qëndrim haptazi kundërshtues.

Fjalë kyçe: *Biçakçinjtë, Vërlaci, Lëvizje Kombëtare, Shpallja e Pavarësisë, Klubet Patriotike.*

Hyrje

Historia e qytetit të Elbasanit është e lidhur me ndërtimin e kalasë nga sulltan Mehmedi në vitin 1466. Më saktë do të shpreheshim me rindërtimin e kalasë në vitin 1466. Ky pohim qëndron, sepse këtu sulltan Mehmedi II zgjodhi vendin për të rindërtuar, më 1466, për “25 ditë”, muret rrethuese të kalasë mbi themelet e një kështjelle antike². Kalaja e rindërtuar u bë fillesa e qytetit të Elbasanit. Kalaja e rindërtuar shënoi përfundimin e një periudhe të gjatë e të jashtëzakonshme të periudhës romake-bizantine të Skampis në të gjitha aspektet, qoftë në atë ekonomik, urbanistik dhe arkitekturor³. Menjëhëre filloi vendosja e banorëve të ardhur nga zonat përreth. Filloi të funksionojë edhe administrata e siguar nga një garnizon i fuqishëm ushtarak⁴. Banorët e vendosur ishin fshatarë- zejtarë, të cilët përveç bujqësisë, u muarën me zejtari dhe tregëti. Vendosja e banorëve dhe administratës osmane krijuan premisa për ndryshime të thella në zhvillimin e një vargu procesesh të përgjithshme shoqërore, të cilat kanë pasur ndikim të konsiderueshëm në zhvillimin historik të shqiptarëve. Me pushtimin turk filloi të përhapej myslimanizmi, ngrihen institucionet fetare. Si qendër e rëndësishme administrative e nohur me emrin sanxhak, zhvillohet si një qendër e rëndësishme zejtare, tregtare e kulturore⁵.

Këto ndryshime u shfaqën në mënyrë të theksuar në procesin e zhvillimeve kulturore, të shprehura dukshëm në mendësinë dhe mënyrën e jetësës, në urbanizëm dhe arkitekturë, në gjuhë, letërsi dhe art, në zejtari, artizanate dhe në kulturën popullore, përfshirë banimin, ushqimin dhe veshmbathjen. Të gjitha këto zhvillime kulturore mbështeteshin në një koncept të ri për jetën, respektivisht mbështeteshin në botëkuptime që buronin nga feja islame dhe kultura orientale islame⁶.

Gjatë sundimit osman në territorin shqiptar u krijuan ato familje që në histori njihen me emrin “Familjet e Mëdha”. Një pjesë e tyre mund të jetë vazhduese të familjeve fisnike të periudhës së mëparshme, por kjo nuk do të thotë që nuk janë krijuar edhe rishtazi duke shfrytëzuar mundësitë që ju jepte situata. Familjet e Mëdha shpesh janë quajtur edhe “Oxhaqë” apo “Dyer të Mëdha”. Po pse Oxhakë apo Dyer të Mëdha, cila është domethënia? Sipas literaturës së

² Franz Babinger, *Die Grudung von Elbasan, Sonderabdruck aus den Mitteilungen des Seminars für Orientalische Sprachen XXXIV.Bd(1931),II.Abeilung, Gedruckt in der Reichsdruckerei, Berlin (1931), f. 4.*

³ R.Pierini, *Recovering and improving Elbasan fortress, Krijimi dhe zhvillimi i fortifikimit të Elbasanit*, Pisa Univerity, 2008, f. 31.

⁴ Z.Shkodra, *Esnafet shqiptarë, në shek. XV-XX*, Botim i Akademisë së Shkencave, Tiranë, 197, f. 23.

⁵ *Elbasani-Enciklopedi*, Bashkia Elbasan, Shtëpia Botuese “Sejko”, Elbasan 2003, f. 150.

⁶ Nehat Krasniqi, *Kontribute albanologjike, studime dhe dokumente historike e letrare të periudhës osmane*, Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, Prishtinë 2011, f. 15.

konsultuar mësojmë se, “*oxhaku dhe porta e shtëpisë ishin simboli më i rëndësishëm arkitektonik i aristokracisë së lartë qytetare, që paraqiteshin në forma të ndryshme dhe shumë origjinale*”⁷. Në disa qytete, ku sundimi i feudalëve ishte i fuqishëm, si p.sh., Tirana edhe Elbasani, ndërtimi i këtij elementi, nuk lejohej, sepse ai mbahej si e drejtë e vetme e parësisë feudale “oxhakëve”, siç thirreshin në gjuhën e popullit⁸. E rëndësishme është të theksojmë se pas dhjetëvjeçarëve të parë të shek. XIX filluan të ndërtohen në masë (tymtoret) oxhakët mbi çati⁹. Këto familje gjatë periudhës së sundimit osman do të luajnë rol të rëndësishëm në zhvillimet ekonomike, politike dhe sociale. Familjet e Mëdha në sanxhakun e Elbasanit janë: Biçakçinjët, Vërlaci, Karaosmani dhe Taushani¹⁰.

1. Metodologjia dhe materiali

Materialet kryesore mbi të cilat bazohet punimi janë dokumente arkivore të botuara dhe pa të botuara si dhe botime të reja historiografike. Në mënyrë të veçantë dokumentet e lëna nga Lef Nosi ndihmojnë për të hedhur dritë sado pak mbi origjinën dhe veprimtarinë e tyre, veçanërisht gjatë Lëvizjes Kombëtare. Edhe Kujtimet e Eqrem Bej Vlorës na ndihmojnë, sidomos, për të kuptuar metodologjinë për përcaktimin e tyre. Metodologjia e punimit bazohet në vlerësimin e burimeve arkivore dhe botimeve historiografike që trajtojnë këtë problem. Sigurisht, këto burime arkivore dhe botime vlerësohen në një kontekst të ri historik dhe me një interpretim të ri kuptimor, duke i krahasuar me njëri tjetrin. Në ndihmë na vinë edhe rrëfimet e bashkëkohësve në ngjarje, të cilat duhen vlerësuar. Gjithashtu në interpretim është marrë në konsideratë edhe fakti që, burimet arkivore i përkasin një periudhë të largët historike, pjesa më e madhe të shkruara në osmanisht dhe përkthimi i tyre mund të krijojë ndonjë problem në pikëpamje gjuhësore. Njëkohësisht ajo që e bën të vështirë dhe e kufizon studimin, për të arritur në përfundime, lidhet me faktin se, pak dokumente ka për origjinën e Familjeve të Mëdha, ose nuk janë përkthyer nga osmanishtja.

⁷ Zija Shkodra, *Qyteti Shqiptar gjatë Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare*, Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë, Tiranë 1984, f. 358.

⁸ Emin Riza, *Qyteti dhe Banesa Shqiptare e Mesjetës së Vonë*, Shtypur Kombinati Poligrafik, “Shtypshkronja e Re”, Tiranë 1991, f. 216.

⁹ Po aty.

¹⁰ AQSH, Fondi Lef Nosi Nr.32, D. 47, kutia 2, f. 10-35 dhe D. 39, f. 64-65.

2. Kuptimi mbi familjen si kategori shoqërore dhe historike

Përpara se të shkruajmë për familjet e çifligarëve dhe bejlerëve, apo “Familjet e Mëdha”, siç quhen shpeshherë në histori, apo në të folurën e përditshme, duhet të shpjegojmë në radhë të parë se: ç’është familja në përgjithësi si dukuri shoqërore dhe historike, e pastaj për to. Parë në këtë kontekst, familja është një bashkësi e vogël sociale, një grupim njëjërëzish, e formuar në bazë të bashkimit martesor, me lidhje të afri në gjak, a me birësim, me disa tipare të veçanta. Në brendësi e në funksionet e saj, si një dukuri e veçantë ekonomike e sociale, ka një farë autonomie nga shoqëria në tërësi¹¹.

Të tërë njerëzit, si rregull i përgjithshëm, jetojnë brenda bashkësisë familjare e që është një institucion social, po janë edhe pjesë e shoqërisë, e mjedisit social ku jetojnë, me disa të drejta e detyra të përcaktuara në bashkësi krahinore-fshatare, qytetare, shtetërore, etnike, kombëtare, bazuar në shtrirjen e tij në kufinjt e një territori të caktuar. Anëtarët e çdo familjeje si tërësi kanë të drejta e detyra që i ushtrojnë brenda bashkësisë së madhe shoqërore në fis, në fshat, në krahinë, në shtet, brenda etnisë a kombit. Nuk ka familje jashtë shoqërisë në tërësi ose jashtë bashkësisë sociale të madhe a të vogël ku është inkuadruar kjo celulë¹².

Në kuptimin filozofik, kur flitet për familje, mendohet familja biologjike, që në bazë ka lidhjen e gjakut, qoftë kjo edhe në breza, por sigurisht edhe lidhjet e tjera. Në këtë mënyrë ky koncept bëhet i plotë dhe i qenësishëm. Por, këtu nuk mund të lemë pa përmendur edhe marrëdhëniet ekonomike. Këto marrëdhënie marrin një rëndësi të madhe, pasi mundësojnë sigurimin material të familjes dhe vazhdimësinë e brezave. Edhe edukimi është pjesë e familjes. Gjithashtu marrëdhëniet ekonomike sigurojnë të mirat materiale dhe pasurinë, e cila të siguron edhe epërsi dhe ndikim në shoqëri. Ka ekzistuar dhe ekziston se ka qenë dhe është domosdoshmëri për jetën e njerëzve¹³.

Nga ana tjetër, familja, si dukuri shoqërore ka karakter historik, që do të thotë, se gjatë zhvillimit të shoqërisë në shekuj ka pësuar ndryshime të ndjeshme. Familja është një dukuri mjaft e lashtë në jetën e shoqërisë. Kuptohet ajo ka pësuar ndryshime nga koha në kohë.

¹¹ Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, *Fjalori Enciklopedik Shqiptar*, Shtypur, Kombinati Poligrafik, “Shtypshkronja e Re”, Tiranë 1985, f. 255.

¹² Mark Tirta, *Etnologjia e Shqiptarëve*, Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, Instituti i Kulturës Popullore, Departamenti i Etnologjisë, “Geer”, Tiranë 2006, f. 228.

¹³ Mark Tirta, *Etnologjia e Shqiptarëve*, Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, Instituti i Kulturës Popullore, Departamenti i Etnologjisë, “Geer”, Tiranë 2006, f. 228.

Gjatë historisë në Shqipëri ka pasur tipe të ndryshëm të familjes, që nga familja patriarkale e deri tek familja feudale, çifligare, borgjeze e mikroborgjeze, fshatare, punëtore etj., me zakone tradicionale krahinore e lokale¹⁴. Forma sunduese e familjes ka qenë ajo patriarkale e fshatare e kushtëzuar nga vetë zhvillimet historike. Në një periudhë të caktuar të historisë, gjatë sundimit osman, kanë qenë edhe “Familjet e Mëdha” ose “Oxhaqet”, të cilat do të luajnë rol në zhvillimet ekonomike, politike e sociale të vendit. Pas çlirimit të vendit (1944), zhdukja e pronës private solli shndërime të thella në konceptimin dhe funksionimin e familjes. Familja socialiste ishte ajo që zinte vendin kryesor në shoqëri. Parë në tërësi shihet se, familja është dukuri shoqërore si shumë institucione të tjera të kësaj natyre dhe padyshim në anë tjetër, është pjesë e shoqërisë në tërësi. Familja si dukuri shoqërore është mjaft e ndërlikuar.

3. Familjet e Mëdha të bejlerëve çifligarë në Elbasan si dukuri historike

Depërtimi Osman në tokat shqiptare, që filloi nga dekada e tetë e shek. XIV. Vendosja e pushtetit Osman në këto toka gjatë dekadave të mëvonshme, krijuan premisa për ndryshime të thella në zhvillimin e një vargu procesesh të përgjithshme shoqërore, të cilat kanë pasur ndikim të konsiderueshëm në zhvillimin historik të shqiptarëve. Ky zhvillim qoftë në planin ekonomik apo social solli ndryshime edhe në konfigurimin e familjes.

Gjatë sundimit osman në territorin shqiptar u krijuan ato familje që në histori njihen me emrin “Familjet e Mëdha”. Një pjesë e tyre mund të jetë vazhduese e familjeve fisnike të periudhës së mëparshme, por kjo nuk do të thotë që nuk janë krijuar rishtazi duke shfrytëzuar mundësitë që ju jepte situata. Qeveria në fakt e pranoi ekzistencën e saj faktike.

Të dhënat arkivore për këto familje, origjinën e tyre, mënyrën e jetesës etj. janë të pakta, gjë që vështirëson njohjen e tyre. Më së shumti këto të dhëna janë nga pasardhësit e tyre, të cilët nëpërmejt kujtimeve kanë dhënë disa njohuri e vlerësime për to¹⁵. Ndonëse nuk janë të dhëna

¹⁴ Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, *Fjalori Enciklopedik Shqiptar*, Shtypur Kombinati Poligrafik, “Shtypshkronja e Re”, Tiranë 1985, f. 255.

¹⁵ Sipas kumtit gojor të Nigjar Kozarja, pasardhëse e familjes së Biçakçinjve, kjo familje ka jetuar në Elbasan prej shumë brezash dhe sarajet i kanë pasur brënda në kala, në pjesën perëndimore të saj. Dy degët e Biçakçinjve, njëra e përfaqësuar nga Aqif Pasha dhe tjetra nga Dervish Beu kanë qenë në konflikt me njëra tjetrën. Ky konflikt mbase për probleme pasurie. Aqif Pasha gjithashtu ka qenë në konflikt me familjen Vërlaci, ndonëse ishin në lidhje krushqie (datë 20.02.2025).

Sipas kumtit gojor të Elisabeta Toptanit, mbesë e Shefqet Vërlacit mësojmë se, kjo familje ka jetuar në Elbasan prej disa brezash. Shtëpinë e ka pasur aty ku ka qenë shtëpia e pionierit, më poshtë ka qenë haremi. Për origjinën e largët nuk dimë gjë. Hamendësismet për origjinën nga Vlora, pasi aty ka prona, nuk janë të vërteta. Prania e Shefqetit në Vlorë lidhet me vajzat e motrës të cilat mbetën jetime pas vdekjes së babait dhe nënës dhe ai u detyrua

dhe burime parësore, ato merren në konsideratë, pasi plotësojnë një boshllëk në këtë drejtim. “Gojëdhënat për zanafillën e pothuaj të gjitha “shtëpive të mëdha” shqiptare, janë një përzjerje e legjendës me të vërtetën. Dhe se ç’përqindje të vërtete ka legjenda, kjo është e vështirë të thuhet. Sipas studiueses Holta Vrioni, në Shqipëri, ku populli dhe traditat e tij nuk janë prekur nga ndikime të tjera të huaja në atë masë sa edhe vendet e tjera të përparuar, atyre u duhet dhënë një rëndësi më e madhe, aq më tepër që burimet historike janë të kursyera e të pasakta”¹⁶. Shpesh këto familje janë quajtur edhe Oxhakë apo Dyer Të Mëdha. Po pse këto familje janë quajtur “Oxhakë” apo “Dyer të Mëdha”, cila është domethënia? Sipas literaturës së konsultuar mësojmë se, “oxhaku dhe porta e shtëpisë ishin simboli më i rëndësishëm arkitektonik i aristokracisë së lartë qytetare, që paraqiteshin në forma të ndryshme dhe shumë origjinale”¹⁷. Në disa qytete, ku sundimi i feudalëve ishte i fuqishëm, si p.sh., Tirana edhe Elbasani, ndërtimi i këtij elementi, nuk lejohej, sepse ai mbahej si e drejtë e vetme e parësisë feudale “oxhakëve”, siç thirreshin në gjuhën e popullit¹⁸. E rëndësishme është të theksojmë se pas dhjetëvjeçarëve të parë të shek. XIX filluan të ndërtohen në masë (tymtoret) oxhakët mbi çati¹⁹. Sipas Fjalorit Enciklopedik Shqiptar, “Oxhakët, apo Oxhakët Feudalë, janë Familjet e Mëdha pronare tokash, që përbënin oligarkinë sunduese feudale të Shqipërisë në shek. XVIII e deri në fund të shek. XX. Me shthurjen e sistemit të timarit, karakteristik për feudalizmin ushtarak, ishte zhvillimi i pronës së madhe feudale e çifligjeve që u përqëndrua në duart e Oxhakëve Feudalë. Secili Oxhak kishte vendosur edhe pushtetin e vet politik e ushtarak dhe e përforconte atë në dëm të pushtetit qendror, duke krijuar lidhje familjare, aleanca e tarafe brenda e jashtë krahinës. Porta, duke pasur nevojë për forca ushtarake dhe për të siguruar grumbullimin e të ardhurave shtetërore, u detyrua të mbështetej tek më të fuqishmit prej Oxhakëve Feudalë, të cilët i lidhi deri diku pas vetes duke u besuar detyrat më të rëndësishme administrative e ushtarake dhe duke shfrytëzuar, nga ana tjetër, rivalitetin midis tyre. Ky rivalitet i pareshtur, që rridhte nga baza e saj ekonomike, e pengoi bashkimin e klasës feudale shqiptare në një front të vetëm, për t’u shkëputur nga vartësia e Stambollit e për të krijuar shtetin feudal shqiptar autonom”²⁰. Porta e Lartë i ndihmoi këto familje edhe për shërbimet e

t’i ndihmojë e t’u gjendet pranë. Njohja me ambientin në Vlorë bënë që ai të blejë shumë prona aty (datë 12.11.2024).

¹⁶ Holta Vrioni, *Origjinat e pretenduara të oxhaqeve shqiptare*, në revistën Përpjekja, nr. 30-31, Tiranë 2013, f. 150.

¹⁷ Zija Shkodra, *Qyteti Shqiptar gjatë Rilindjes Kombëtare Shqiptare*, Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Instituti i Historisë, Tiranë 1984, f. 358.

¹⁸ Emin Riza, *Qyteti dhe Banesa Shqiptare e Mesjetës së Vonë*, Shtypur Kombinati Poligrafik, “Shtypshkronja e Re”, Tiranë 1991, f. 216.

¹⁹ Po aty.

²⁰ Akademia e Shkencave të RPS të Shqipërisë, *Fjalori Enciklopedik Shqiptar*, Tiranë 1985, f. 788.

veçanta që i bënë. Në përfundim mund të pohojmë se është kjo mënyra e formimit të këtyre familjeve. Midis përfaqësuesve tipikë të klasës çifligare në Elbasan mund të përmenden Biçakçinjtë dhe Vërlacët dhe Karaosmanët. Ata zunë të kthehen në pronarë tokash që në fillim të shek. XVIII, por sidomos gjatë fundit shek. XVIII dhe në fillim të shek. XIX, ata morën titujt e bejlerëve dhe të pashallarëve, duke i shërbyer me besnikëri Portës së Lartë. Ata u bënë në këtë mënyrë zotër të shumë fshat-çifligjeve të Elbasani dhe të Myzeqesë²¹. Dyert e Mëdha të Elbasanit ose Oxhaqet, i korrespondojnë një kategorie të caktuar të shtresës së elitave tradicionale shqiptare të formësuara përgjatë historisë osmane shqiptare dhe më konkretisht, shtresës së feudalëve të mëdhenj shqiptarë, të cilët qenë njëherësh prijësit politikë të qeverisjes lokale dhe administratorë pasurish të patundshme. Dokumente relevante si vakëfnametë, sixhilatet e sherijes, materialet epigrafike, kronogramet, dorëshkrimet dhe materialet e tjera burimore të bollshme dhe të pakontestueshme, vërtetojnë se dyert e mëdha fisnike shqiptare si Bushatllinjtë e Shkodrës, Vlorajt e Kaninës, Biçakçinjtë dhe Vërlacët e Elbasanit etj., kanë ngritur thuajse të gjitha objektet e kultit islamik, ato të kulturës dhe të arsimit në trojet shqiptare dhe kanë qenë bartëse të zhvillimit ekonomik, kulturor dhe politik të vendit gjatë shekujve osmanë. Pikërisht në këto dyer është shënuar, është përpunuar dhe është përfutur mendimi politik shqiptar dhe mu këto dyer kanë qenë promotorë të veprimeve politike shqiptare gjatë këtyre shekujve²².

4. Familjet e Mëdha në Elbasan dhe Lëvizja Kombëtare

Elbasani është shquar në një nga periudhat më interesante të historisë sonë të re, Rilindjes Kombëtare, për kontributin që ka dhënë në historinë politike e kulturore të Shqipërisë. Në të gjitha zhvillimet e kësaj periudhe, vepronte edhe një faktor tjetër i rëndësishëm, që padyshim ndërhynte në ngjarjet: bejlerët, feudalët çifligarë. Me çifligjet e tyre të mëdha, me ndikimin ekonomik, me ndikimin e tyre politik, si pranë Portës ashtu dhe pranë masave popullore të prapambetura, bejlerët qenë një faktor, pa të cilin nuk mund të shpjegohen dot ngjarjet që u zhvilluan në Shqipëri dhe në Elbasan, në veçanti, gjatë kësaj periudhe. Fakti që Lëvizja Kombëtare shqiptare gjente përkrahjen e bejlerëve liberalë të vendit, i jepte kësaj lëvizjeje një force, që nuk e kishte në vendet e tjera ku haste në kundërshtim të hapur të këtij faktori, që mbante një qëndrim haptazi obskurantist, si p.sh., në Kosovë, Dibër, Berat etj²³.

²¹ Ligor K. Mile, *Çështje të historisë së agrare shqiptare*, fundi i shek. XVII- vitet 70 të shek XIX, Akademia e Shkencave e RPS të Shqipërisë, Tiranë 1984, f. 68.

²² Nehat Krasniqi, *Kontribute albanologjike, studime dhe dokumente historike e letrare të periudhës osmane*, Instituti Albanologjik i Prishtinës, Prishtinë 2011, f. 12.

²³ Tatjana Haxhimihali, bot. Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë, *Aleks Buda*, Kujtime, Tiranë 2005, f. 24-25.

Burimet historike të kohës tregojnë arsyet se përse bejlerët e Elbasanit në përgjithësi përkrahën çështjen kombëtare shqiptare. Arsyeja e parë lidhet me faktin se: “Të shtyrë nga interesi për të përballuar me forca masive popullore politikën e centralizimit administrativ që përpiquej të zbatonte Porta e Lartë në Shqipëri pas Tanzimatit. Edhe kanosja e vazhdueshme për humbjen e pronave me përmbysjen e Perandorisë, që kishin filluar t’i tronditeshin themelet, rreziku i rënies së autoritetit dhe ndikimi i tyre në popull bënë që, edhe përfaqësues nga shtresa të pasura të Elbasanit të përqafojnë Lëvizjen Kombëtare. Kjo mendojmë që është arsyeja e dytë. Ky fakt është një fenomen i ri dhe karakteristik për lëvizjen politike të këtij qyteti”²⁴. Bejlerët në Elbasan jo vetëm që e përkrahën Lëvizjen Kombëtare, por u vunë dhe në krye të saj. Bejleriët ishin fuqizuar për shkak të përkrahjes nga Porta e Lartë, si rezultat i shërbimeve që i kishin bërë. Veç kësaj, arsyeja mund të jetë përtej këtyre parashtresave, dhe përtej kufijve të Perandorisë Osmane. Në botë kishin ndodhur ndryshime, të cilat ndonëse ngadalë kishin ndikuar edhe tek shqiptarët. “Nuk ka komb që të mos ketë nevojë të mësojë nga të tjerët”, pohonte John Stuart Mill²⁵. Gjithashtu Rendi i vjetër shoqëror, ku lindja përcaktonte pozicionin, po shpërbëhej²⁶ gjë që ishte kriteri mbi të cilën mbështetej Perandoria Osmane. Në këtë kontekst kjo klasë duhej të përgatitej për të ardhmen, të cilën në fakt nuk e dinin. Mbase kjo ishte arsyeja që nuk u përfshinë menjëherë dhe me të njejtën forcë e kurajo në të.

Disa nga përfaqësuesit kryesorë të familjeve të bejlerëve çifligarë që morën pjesë dhe luftuan për çështjen kombëtare janë: Aqif Pashë Elbasani, Dervish Bej Biçaku, Shefqet Vërlaci, Hasan Bej Biçaku etj.

Në jetën e popujve, në rrjedhën e viteve dhe shekujve, ka ngjarje që, për domethënien e tyre, qëndrojnë si udhërrëfyes në udhëkryqet e historisë. E tillë është edhe Lidhja Shqiptare e Prizrenit më 10 qershor 1878, ku përfaqësuesit e kombit shpallën vendosmërinë për të luftuar për të drejtat e veta kombëtare²⁷.

Nga ky moment, Lidhja e Prizrenit bëhet pikë referimi për lëvizjen kombëtare. Lidhja e Prizrenit me vendimet e saj të rëndësishme u bë frymëzim për vazhdimin e lëvizjes. Nuk është

²⁴ Po aty.

²⁵ The economist, *Kundër tiranisë së shumicës: Paralajmërimi i John Stuart Mill vazhdon të jehojë edhe sot*, Gazeta Tema, datë 11 shkurt 2026, parë ora 15.30.

²⁶ Po aty.

²⁷ Tatjana Haxhimihali, *Dhimitër (Taq) Buda, Veprimtar i Lëvizjes Kombëtare*, Biografi historike, Shtëpia Botuese “EMAL”, Tiranë 2025, f. 29-30.

rastësi që në qytetet kryesore filluan të ngrihen degë të saj. Nëpërmjet letërkëmbimit të Abdyl Frashërit me kryetarin e Lidhjes së Prizrenit Iljaz Pashë Dibrën, që datohet në 8 dhjetor të vitit 1878, informohemi se në Elbasan ishte krijuar një degë e Komitetit të Lidhjes së Prizrenit, të njohur me emrin Komiteti i Ndërlidhjes. Funkzioni kryesor i këtij Komiteti me qendër në Elbasan, konsistonte në koordinimin e veprimtarive midis komiteteve përkatëse të trevave të veriut dhe atyre të jugut. Në Elbasan, komiteti në fjalë njihej me emrin “Xhemijeti Ihtihadije” (Shoqëria e Besës)²⁸. Burimet dokumentare bëjnë me dije se në këshillin drejtues të degës së Elbasanit bënin pjesë përfaqësues të familjeve të mëdha feudale sikurse ishin: Ismail bej Vërlaci, Isuf bej Biçakçiu, Shazivar bej Karaosmani dhe myftiu i qytetit të Elbasanit Hasan Tasin efendi Alltoka në cilësinë e kryetarit të kësaj dege, ndërsa anëtarët të saj rezultojnë përfaqësuesit e esnafëve të qytetit të Elbasanit²⁹. Mahmut Biçakçiu ka qenë një nga aktivistët kryesorë i degës së Lidhjes së Prizrenit në Elbasan. Ai siguronte lidhje midis delegatëve të Lidhjes, që më së shumti kalonin nëpër Elbasan. Sipas Stavro Skëndit, i cili pranon faktin se kjo degë shërbente si një urë komunikimi dhe ndërlidhjeje midis veriut dhe jugut duke pohuar se:

“Kur u krijua Lidhja, të dy degët ajo e veriut dhe ajo e jugut, ishin marrë vesh që të takoheshin me anën e njerëzve të tyre të besuar në Elbasan, në Shqipërinë Qendrore”³⁰. Ndonëse ky plan nuk funksionoi sepse komitetet e ndryshme nuk kishin marrëdhënie të mira³¹, i rëndësishëm është fakti që, në Elbasan funksionoi dega e Lidhjes. Kjo tregon se fryma e lëvizjes kombëtare vazhdonte. Mahmut Biçaku si aktivist i saj kishte studiuar për mjekësi në Stamboll dhe ishte nga familja e Biçakçinjve³². Gjithsesi, duhet të pohojmë se nuk ka dokumente të mjaftueshme që mund të vërtetojnë veprimtarinë intensive apo kontributin real të bejlerëve të Elbasanit në Lidhjen e Prizrenit apo dhe degën e Elbasanit. Janë pak ato që disponojmë, për të nxjerrë përfundime, ishte ngjarje me dimensione të mëdha. nga ana tjetër po sipas Stavro Skëndi, “Familjet e Mëdha cifligare të Shqipërisë së Mesme, midis të cilëve edhe Elbasani, i kishin shpërbërë lidhjet e tyre të dobëta me Lidhjen Shqiptare. Tokat e tyre nuk ishin afër kufijve dhe ata nuk e ndjenin trysinë e jashtme që t’i bënte të vetëdijshëm se Turqia nuk ishte në gjendje që t’i mbronte. Kur shkëmbyen mendime me delegatët e rretheve veriore, ata u bindën se

²⁸ Majlinda Peza, Distertacioni në kërkim të gradës Doktor i Shkencave. me titull, “Lëvizja politike arsimore në trevën e Elbasanit në vitet 1878-1914”. Qershor 2014, f. 27.

²⁹ Po aty.

³⁰ Stavro Skëndi, *Zgjidhje kombëtare shqiptare*, përkthyer nga Skënder Luarasi e Nestor Nepravishta, Tiranë: Phoenix, 2000, f. 95.

³¹ Po aty.

³² Bashkia e Qytetit, *Elbasani-Enciklopedi*, Shtëpia Botuese “Sejko”, Elbasan 2003, f. 65.

programi për autonomi i Lidhjes jo vetëm do të çonte në konflikt me Turqinë, por do të dëmtonte gjithashtu interesat e tyre³³. Pse kjo mendësi?

Duke pasur farefis në pozita të larta në ushtrinë turke dhe në shërbimin civil këta bejlerë feudalë e dinin sesi mendonte Stambolli dhe ata prisnin në çdo çast përdorimin e forcës për të shtypur Lëvizjen Shqiptare³⁴. Kjo analizë e studiuesit Stavro Skëndi tregon qartë për pozicionin e dyzyar të këtyre elementëve, të cilët nga njera anë kishin interesat e tyre dhe nga ana tjetër ishte dashuria për vendin. Duhet të kemi parasysh që këta përfaqësues të këtyre familjeve kishin bërë karrierë në Perandori dhe ishin të privilegjuar. Gjithsesi, ngjarjet që po ndodhnin do të ndikonin në vetëdijen e tyre dhe nuk do të ishte e largët dita që të pozicionoheshin drejt, në mbështetje të çështjes kombëtare.

Zhvillimet politike të mëvonshme, që nga Kongresi i Dibrës (Nëntor 1878), lëvizja për autonomi, kryengritjet në vitet 1893-1895 e deri tek Lidhja Shqiptare e Pejës e kishin bërë të qartë situatën. Në mënyrë të veçantë Revolucioni Xhonturk pati ndikim të madh tek shqiptarët në përgjithësi dhe tek këta përfaqësues në veçanti.

Në Elbasan, pas Revolucionit Xhonturk, shqiptarizmi bëri hapa të rëndësishëm përpara, e kjo erdhi edhe për faktin se në mjedisin elbasanas një pjesë e bejlerëve largpamës (si Aqif Pasha, Mahmud Beu), që kur ishte bërë i qartë fundi i Perandorisë Osmane, kishin marrë në dorë flamurin e nacionalizmit shqiptar dhe ishin të interesuar për përhapjen e mësimit të gjuhës e kulturës shqiptare³⁵.

Qyteti ishte ngritur nga disa veprimtarë të shqiptarizmës në rangun e “qendrës” së kombit shqiptar, i ndodhur midis veriut e jugut³⁶. Pa ndonjë arsye të pashqyrtuar deri më sot, thuhet se gjithë inteligjenca e vendit vjen nga ky qytet³⁷. Në se studiuesi Auren nuk shpjegon dot arsyet e këtij realiteti, kjo lidhet mbase me njohuritë e pakta që kishte për Elbasanin dhe zhvillimin e tij përgjatë historisë. Që nga koha e themelimit (1466) Elbasani do të zhvillohet me shpejtësi, madje do të krijohet edhe njësi administrative. Zhvillimi do të jetë me ritme, sidomos, edhe përsa i takon tregtisë si rezultat i prodhimit të mallrave në zeje të ndryshme. Brenda një

³³Stavro Skëndi, *Zgjimi Kombëtar Shqiptar*, mendimi shqiptar..., vep. e cit., f. 99.

³⁴Po aty.

³⁵Tatjana Haxhimihali, *Dhimitër (Taq) Buda, Veprimtar...*, vep. e cit., f. 148.

³⁶Nathalie Clayer, *Në fillimet e nacionalizmit shqiptar*, “Marin Barleti”, Tiranë, 2009, f. 611.

³⁷Sven Auren, *Shqipëria Orientali i Europës*, Botimet “Maluka”, Tiranë, 2025, f. 178-179.

shekulli, që nga themelimi, do të bëhet një nga qendrat më të rëndësishme ekonomike dhe administrative të vendit tonë. Ky zhvillim ekonomik ndikoi edhe në zhvillimin kulturor dhe arsimor. Në këtë kontekst Elbasani mbart një trashëgimi në drejtim të zhvillimit. Nuk janë rastësi ngjarjet me rëndësi mbarë kombëtare që u zhvilluan në Elbasan.

Mjafton që të kujtojmë se në Elbasan u organizua një kongres shqiptar, ishte hapur një shkollë normale, (për përgatitjen e mësuesve) që ishte kthyer në një institucion panshqiptar, edhe pse nxënësit më së shumti ishin nga Elbasani. Qyteti i Elbasanit, siç shprehet një studiues i huaj, ka një shkollë për mësues dhe një jetë karakteristike intelektuale. Atje ka madje edhe një klub akademik. Ndonëse një qytet i dobët ekonomikisht, ka luajtur një rol të rëndësishëm në jetën shpirtërore të vendit. Elbasani ka furnizuar me inteligjencë, ka krijuar shkolla dhe ka përgatitur mësues. Në korrik 1910 filloi të botohej edhe një gazetë³⁸. Historia e vendeve, popujve dhe kombeve, në përgjithësi mundëson këndvështrime të ndryshme studimi, sjell profile dhe të dhëna që pasqyrojnë ide dhe mjedise të natyrës politike, shoqërore, intelektuale, kulturore etj. Në histori ato formësojnë realitete që u japin domethënie zhvillimeve historike, mundësojnë, gjithashtu, përmes këtyre zhvillimeve, ngjarje të rëndësishme, deri përmbysje dhe shndërrime rrënjësore³⁹. Si të tilla, historia ka kuotat e saj kulmore, ngjarjet e shënuara, datat, shenjat dhe simbolet që i spikatin ato. Nga ky pikëvështrim, datat e shënuara në historinë e një kombi përfaqësojnë hapësira kohore shumë më të gjera se një ditë, një muaj, një vit. Zakonisht ato shënojnë etapa të tëra, duke qenë, në të njëjtën kohë, pika kulmore në to⁴⁰. Gjatë periudhës së Rilindjes, Lëvizja Kombëtare shqiptare do të shfaqë specifikat e zhvillimit në tërë kompleksitetin e saj. Për më tepër, lëvizja për gjuhën dhe shkrimin e shqipes do të konsiderohej tashmë në fillim të shek. XX jo vetëm si një dukuri mirëfilli gjuhësor por, më së shumti do të marrë përmasat e një lëvizjeje të natyrës politike, duke reflektuar drejtpërsëdrejti në zgjidhjen e problematikave të përbashkëta.

Në periudhën e fundit të shek. XIX fillim i shek. XX në Elbasan janë bejlerët ata që dominojnë jetën politike. Përfaqësuesit e këtyre familjeve të mëdha feudale do të jenë protagonistët më kryesorë në zhvillimet politike dhe arsimore në qytetin e Elbasanit. Do të jenë këta përfaqësues të cilët edhe nga studiuesit e huaj do të konsiderohen si veprimtarët më kryesorë të shqiptarizmit në Elbasan.

³⁸ N. Clayer, *Në fillimet e ...*, vep. e cit., f. 611.

³⁹ Tomorr Plangarica, *Universi i vlerave të munguara*, "Sejko", 2002, f. 49.

⁴⁰ Po aty, f. 17.

Në fund të shek. XIX dhe fillim të shek.XX Elbasani ishte qendër e rëndësishme për veprimtarinë politike dhe Lëvizjen Kombëtare në përgjithësi. Pas rebelimeve antiosmane në Elbasan në vitin 1897 dhe kërkesave kombëtare të parashtruara nga patriotët, delegatë nga Elbasani marrin pjesë në mbledhjet e fshaehta të Kuvendit të Dibrës, mbajtur më 28 shkurt 1899, për t'u solidarizuar dhe për t'u bashkuar me Lidhjen Shqiptare të Pejës⁴¹. Por ngjarjet e mëdha që u zhvilluan në Elbasan në kuadër të Lëvizjes Kombëtare, janë Kongresi i Elbasani (shtator 1909) dhe hapja e shkollës Normale (dhjetor 1909) ku është e dukshme prania dhe kontributi i familjeve të Mëdha. Dervish Biçaku është ndër organizatorët kryesorë të Kongresit të Elbasanit, ku u zgjodh edhe kryetari i këtij kongresi. Ja si i përshkruan ditët e kongresit Gabriel Louis-Jaray. *“Elbasani është në festë. Sot mbërrijnë delegatët nga të gjitha anët e Shqipërisë ndërsa nesër priten përfaqësuesit e qyteteve më të largëta. Në selinë e kryetarit të Kongresit, Dervish beut, ka ecejake të pareshtura. Çdo i sapoardhur vjen këtu për ta përshëndtur dhe bisedat kryhen në oborrin e madh ku Dervish beu pret të ftuarit. Në oborrin e madh, banorët e Elbasanit flasin e diskutojnë. Bashkëbisedojnë për ditën e madhe që po afron. Gjithë Shqipëria është atje dhe tani aty luhet fati i një populli. Sot bejlerët besojnë se arsimit do të jetë rigjallëruesi i energjive të popullit të tyre dhe ja si e perceptojnë ata organizimin e tij: asgjë nuk ekziston, gjithshka duhet bërë, duhet filluar me edukimin e mësuesve. Në Elbasan u vendos kështu ngritja e një shkolle Normale, e cila do të ishte njëkohësisht edhe pedagogjike për të nxjerrë mësues, edhe shkollë e mesme. Gjuha e mësimit do të jetë shqipja, si në të gjitha shkollat e fshatrave që do të ngrihen hap pas hapi”*⁴². Krahas Dervish beut edhe Aqif Pasha ka ndihmuar qoftë në punimet e Kongresit apo dhe në çeljen e shkollës “Normale”⁴³. Njëkohësisht merrnin pjesë në komitetet e fshehta pas shpalljes së “Hyrjetit” dhe u bënë drejtues të klubeve të krijuara. U bënë gjithashtu përkrahës të kryengritjeve të mëdha të viteve 1910-1912. Interesat e tyre dolën nga caqet e lëvizjeve kulturore, që në momentet që po mbështesnin çetat në luftën kundër regjimit osman. Janë këto përfshirje që kanë dalluar këtë lëvizje në këtë qytet duke i dhënë një tjetër autoritet dhe dimension.

⁴¹ Hysni Myzyri, *Shkolla Normale e Elbasanit*, Shtëpia Botuese “albPAPER”, Tiranë 2004, f. 156.

⁴² Gabriel Louis-Jaray, *Shqipëria e panjohur*. Në Mbretërinë e re të shqiptarëve, Shtëpia Botuese “Dituria” Tiranë 2004, f. 45-47.

⁴³ Bashkia e Qytetit, *Elbasani-Enciklopedi.....*, vep. e cit., f. 60.

Gjithsesi, ajo që tregon angazhimin e klasës së bejlerëve në lëvizjen Kombëtare është përfshirja krahpërkrah Ismail Qemalit në Shpalljen e Pavarësisë. Ismail Qemali ishte në komunikim të drejtpërdrejtë me Aqif Pashën, Shefqet Vërlacin e të tjerë. Ja komunikimi me ta: Ja disa nga komunikimet e Ismail Qemalit me parinë e Elbasanit:

Durrës 9 vjeshta e Tretë 1328-1912

Ora 4.20 e natës

Shkëlqesiës Tija Aqif Pashës, Shefqet Beut e Irfan Beut

Elbasan

...Në një mbledhje ku do të bisedohen masa të jashtëzakonshme e do t'epet një vendim i premë, e gjindmja e Shkëlesiës Tija Aqif Pashës e Shefqet Beut, është e domosdoshme, edhe për këtë nuk mund të mendohet as ndoni shkak e arsye ndalimi. Prandaj, i shtrënguem nga nevoja e punës e i shtymun nga detyra patriotike, lutem qi t'urdhënoni të dy edhe pres përgjigjen tuaj Ismail Qemal⁴⁴.

Pas ftesës që Ismail Qemali ju bëri Aqif Pashës dhe Shefqet Beut (Vërlacit) për të qenë prezent në kuvendin e Vlorës, ata iu përgjigjën ftesës në këtë mënyrë:

Kryesiës së Kongresit të Indipendencës së Shqipniës

Vlonë

Ju bëmë me ditë, se edhe Qemal Beu i Shehsuvar Beut, qi është prej Parësiës, u-ennue delegat, për me bashkëpunue me delegatët e tjerë t'Elbasanit e të Shqipniës.

Aqif Pashë Biçakçiu, Shefqet Bej Vërlaci.....⁴⁵.

Po të analizojmë me kujdes këtë lëtrëkëmbim kofident kuptojmë se Ismail Qemali vlerësonte këto figura, nisur jo vetëm nga prejardhja e tyre, por edhe nga veprimtaria patriotike e tyre e mëparshme. Nuk ishte pak një vlerësim nga një prej figurave kryesore të kombit, për këta persona. Përfaqësues dinjitoz i Familjeve të Mëdha që mori pjesë në lëvizjen kombëtare është Aqif Pasha (Biçakçiu).

Krahas shumë veprimtarive të tjera, pjesëmarrja e Aqif Pashës në Kongresin e Lushnjës më 1920 ishte tregues më sinjifikativ në këtë aspekt. Kongresi i Lushnjës është momenti i rëndësishëm që shenjoji jetën politike të Aqif Pashës, duke treguar dhe shprehur ndjenjat

⁴⁴ Dokumenta Historike PËR T'Ë SHËRBYE HISTORIËS TONË KOMBËTARE, E BOTON LEF NOSI, NJI HERË NË MUEJT, VIT i I rë- Mars 1924, Nr.1, ELBASAN Shtypshkronja "Elbasani" f. 10.

⁴⁵ Po aty, Maj 1924.Nr.3, f. 70.

kombëtare. Ai bashkëpunoi me atdhetarët e tjerë lidhur me problemin më jetik të shtetit shqiptar, atë të humbjes së pavarësisë. Kjo ishte arsyeja që i çoi në mbledhjen e Kongresit të Lushnjës. Mori pjesë si delegate i Peqinit. Ai u zgjodh anëtar i Këshillit të Lartë dhe për një kohë u njoh si kryetar i tij. Aqif Pasha ishte i qartë dhe i vendosur se duke qenë të bashkuar të gjithë shqiptarët, kudo që jetonin e punonin do t'i mbronin të drejtat e tyre.

Në këtë aspekt Elbasani ka shumë për të treguar. Historia e Familjeve të Mëdha nuk është bardhë e zi. Ato kanë ulje e ngritje, por në përgjithësi kanë kontribute në çështjen kombëtare dhe kjo duhet vlerësuar.

5. Përfundime

Historia e vendeve, popujve dhe kombeve, në përgjithësi mundëson këndvështrime të ndryshme studimi, sjell profile dhe të dhëna që pasqyrojnë ide dhe mjedise të natyrës politike, shoqërore, intelektuale, kulturore etj. I tillë është edhe mjedisi i qytetit të Elbasanit, i cili sjell profile të natyrës politike, vlerësimi i të cilave flet për kontribute reale në historinë e qytetit të Elbasanit.

Në aspektin ekonomik në fund të shek.XIX e fillim të shek. XX, është një nga qytetet ku, marrëdhëniet feudale ndërthuren me ato kapitaliste, sigurisht këto të fundit në nivel të ulët zhvillimi. Në këtë kontekst, në strukturën sociale, vendin kryesor do ta mbajë klasa e bejlerëve-çifligarë, të cilët do të kenë rolin dominues në shoqëri. Kjo klasë do të formojë ato që në histori njihen si “Familjet e Mëdha” apo “Dyert e Mëdha”.

Në jo pak raste edhe “Oxhakë”. Përfaqësuesit e këtyre familjeve do të jenë të angazhuar në një nga periudhat më të rëndësishme të historisë së popullit tonë, në Lëvizjen Kombëtare. Në periudhën e fundit të shek. XIX fillim i shek. XX në Elbasan janë bejlerët ata që dominojnë jetën politike. Përfaqësuesit e këtyre familjeve të mëdha feudale do të jenë protagonistët më kryesorë në zhvillimet politike dhe arsimore në qytetin e Elbasanit. Do të jenë këta përfaqësues të cilët edhe nga studiuesit e huaj do të konsiderohen si veprimtarët më kryesorë të shqiptarizmit në Elbasan. Janë të shumtë shembujt në Elbasan që e vërtetojnë këtë gjë. Mjafton të përmendish Aqif Pashë Elbasanin, ke thënë gjithshka. Pavarësisht se kjo klasë në veprimtarinë e saj ka pasur ulje e ngritje dhe në mjaft raste kanë prevaluar interesat personale, një gjë është e sigurtë se, ata atdheun e deshën dhe luftuan për të, me mënyrën e tyre.

Është detyrim jo vetëm intelektual, por edhe qytetar, për t'i nxjerrë në pah një pjesë të këtyre vlerave dhe personaliteteve nga harresa dhe denigrimi shpeshherë i qëllimshëm, në periudhën e regjimit komunist. Në këtë aspekt, qyteti i Elbasanit ka për të treguar shumë. Janë modele dhe vlera të formësuara në institucione me dimension kombëtar veprimi. Njëkohësisht ka individë dhe personalitete nga Familjet e Mëdha që me kontributet e tyre kanë lënë gjurmë në historinë e vendit. Me historinë e këtyre familjeve është e lidhur historia e qytetit e kombit dhe Shqipërisë.

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Understanding the Exodus: A Multifaceted Assessment of Brain Drain and Migration in Contemporary Nigeria and its Implication on Sustainable Development

Received: 31 May 2025 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18966957

Abstract

The phenomenon of brain drain and migration presents both challenges and opportunities for sustainable development. This paper aims to assess the brain drain of human capital and its implication on sustainable development in Nigeria. The study is based on a multifaceted assessment of the phenomenon and its impact on the country's economic, educational, political, healthcare, and technological perspectives. The paper is anchored on interpretative meaning of “Push and Pull Factor Theory of Migration” by Everett Lee. This study provides a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding brain drain, the emigration of highly skilled individuals from one country to another, as well as policy recommendations to address the issue. The outcome of this study will enhance our better understanding and knowledge on the remote causes and solutions to brain drain in Nigeria towards achieving a vibrant and sustainable economy and also hitherto strategically position the nation's economy by discouraging Nigeria citizens from migrating to other countries. The study concludes that by combining domestic reforms with strategic diaspora engagement, Nigeria can transform brain drain into a resource for sustainability.

Keywords: *Brain Drain, Migration, Multifaceted Assessment, Sustainable Development*

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Introduction

It is no doubt that the issue of brain drain in Nigeria is alarming and has generated a lot of controversies within the context of human capital development. The human capital development of any country is relatively significant to the nation's economy (Bawalla & Adegbite, 2019). The term brain drain simply refers to the emigration of highly skilled and educated individuals from one country to another, often resulting in a loss of talent and expertise for the home country. In the context of Nigeria, brain drain has been a significant issue, with many skilled professionals, including doctors, engineers, scientists, and academics, leaving the country in search of better opportunities abroad. This phenomenon has been driven by various factors, including political instability, economic challenges, lack of job opportunities, inadequate infrastructure, and better prospects for career advancement and higher salaries in other countries.

However, Migration, on the other hand, refers to the movement of people from one place to another, either within the same country or across international borders (Agunbiade & Ojewunmi, 2019). In the Nigerian context, migration takes various forms, including internal migration from rural to urban areas, rural-urban migration, and international migration. Internal migration is often driven by factors such as rural poverty, limited access to basic services, and the search for better economic opportunities in urban centers. International migration from Nigeria can be motivated by similar factors, as well as political instability, conflict, and persecution in some cases.

Both brain drain and migration have significant implications for Nigeria's development. Brain drain deprives the country of valuable human capital, exacerbating skills shortages and hindering economic growth and innovation (Afolayan & Adeleye, 2017). Moreover, the loss of skilled professionals often weakens essential sectors such as healthcare, education, and technology. On the other hand, migration, especially when it involves young and skilled individuals, can also contribute to brain gain if migrants return home with new skills, knowledge, and experiences acquired abroad. However, the extent to which brain gain offsets brain drain in Nigeria remains a subject of debate.

The Brain drain syndrome, particularly in Nigeria, remains a critical issue impacting the country's development and economy in terms of the magnitude of brain drain as Nigeria one of

the countries significantly affected as reported by the World Bank between 1990 and 2000, the (World Bank (2003) and Nigerian Medical Association, (2019) revealed Nigeria lost about 32,000 professional including doctors, engineers and academics to developed countries annually (Ogunyemi, S.Y, Bawalla O.G and Olulade, O.O, 2018). The health sector as suffered the lion share because the sector bears a substantial brunt of brain drain (Federal Ministry of Health, 2020). For instance, The Nigerian Medical Association estimates that over 2,000 doctors leave the country annually to seek better opportunities abroad. This exodus exacerbates the already strained healthcare system, leading to shortages of medical personnel and diminished healthcare access for the population. The educational sector of Nigeria equally faces challenges due to brain drain. The country loses a significant number of academics and researchers to foreign institutions. According to (UNESCO, 2013), Nigeria had over 13,000 tertiary-educated professionals working abroad in 2017, with a substantial portion being academics. Brain drain deprives Nigeria of valuable human capital, hindering economic growth and development. The loss of skilled professionals reduces productivity and innovation within key sectors, impacting the country's competitiveness on the global stage.

Arising from the foregoing, it could be deduced that several factors such as better employment opportunities, higher wages and salaries, good working conditions, access to advanced technology and infrastructural facilities may have contributed to the dearth of brain drain in Nigeria. Although, successive government in Nigeria has initiated various policies programmes to address brain drain such as offering incentives to retain skilled professionals, improving working conditions, and investing in education and healthcare infrastructure. However, the effectiveness of these measures remains questionable, given the persistent nature of brain drain.

According to the International Organization for Migration, 2020) brain drain exerts multifaceted impacts on Nigeria sustainable development efforts in terms of the depletion of human capital whereby the migration of skilled professionals deprives Nigeria of its most valuable asset human capital. This diminishes the pool of expertise available for driving innovation, entrepreneurship, and technological advancement, hindering long-term economic growth. This depletion also manifest in the health sector strain resulting to the shortage of healthcare practitioners exacerbated by the emigration of doctors and nurses. This brain drain undermines efforts to improve healthcare delivery, resulting in inadequate access to quality medical services, particularly in rural areas, and impeding progress towards achieving health-related Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The fourth goal of sustainable development

goals on quality of education invariably affects the departure of academics and researchers weakens Nigeria's higher education system, affecting teaching quality, research output, and institutional capacity (UNDP, 2019). This impedes educational advancements crucial for fostering human capital development and innovation, hindering progress towards SDG 4 (Quality Education). The loss of Investment and Innovation in relation to the skilled emigrants often contribute significantly to the economies of destination countries through their expertise, research, and entrepreneurial ventures (World Bank. (2020). Nigeria loses out on potential investments, technological advancements, and innovation that could drive sustainable development and enhance competitiveness in the global economy.

There are questions as to whether the mass exodus of highly skilled professional and experts affected the human capital development in contemporary Nigeria. Hence, the focus of this paper is to assess the brain drain and migration of human capital and its implication on the Nigeria sustainable development.

Objective of the Study

The objective of the study is to assess the multifaceted aspects of brain drain and migration and their impact on sustainable development. This paper will enhance our better understanding and knowledge on the remote causes and solutions to brain drain in Nigeria towards achieving a vibrant and sustainable economy and also hitherto strategically position the nation's economy by discouraging Nigeria citizens from migrating to other countries.

Theoretical Exposition: The Push-Pull Theory of Migration

The push-pull theory of migration is anchored on interpretative meaning of Everett Lee. It is a conceptual framework used to understand the factors that influence people's decisions to migrate from one place to another. It suggests that migration is driven by a combination of "push" factors that encourage people to leave their place of origin and "pull" factors that attract them to a new destination.

The Push factors basically refers to the condition or circumstances in the migrants' place of origin that make them want to leave. These factors can vary widely but often include: Economic hardships which includes lack of employment opportunities, low wages, poverty, or economic instability; Political instability in terms of war, conflict, persecution, or political repression;

Social factors as relative to Discrimination, lack of social services, or limited access to education and healthcare; Environmental factors such as Natural disasters, environmental degradation, or climate change effects like droughts or floods; also Demographic factors with examples of overpopulation, high population density, or demographic imbalances; and lastly the personal reasons in terms of family reunification, desire for better quality of life, or seeking adventure and new experiences.

The pull factors are the conditions or opportunities in the destination that attract migrants and encourage them to settle there. These factors can include: Economic opportunities: Higher wages, better job prospects, or the presence of industries in need of labor; Political stability: Peaceful governance, respect for human rights, and democratic institutions; Social factors: Access to social services, education, healthcare, and a diverse and inclusive society. Environmental factors: Pleasant climate, environmental sustainability, or access to natural resources; Demographic factors: Favorable age structure, low population density, or family and community ties; Personal reasons: Cultural attractions, better quality of life, or the presence of friends and relatives. However, migration decisions are often influenced by a complex interaction of push and pull factors. For example, economic opportunities in a destination may be the primary pull factor, but political instability or environmental degradation in the migrants' place of origin may serve as strong push factors. Similarly, the absence of economic opportunities or social services in the origin coupled with the presence of such opportunities in the destination can lead to migration.

In Nigeria, to understand the push-pull dynamics of migration, it is essential for policymakers to develop effective migration policies. Addressing the root causes of migration, such as economic inequality, political instability, or environmental degradation, as this can help mitigate forced migration and create conditions for sustainable development. Additionally, policies that enhance the benefits of migration for both migrants and destination countries, such as promoting labor market integration, protecting migrants' rights, and fostering social cohesion, can contribute to more positive outcomes for all involved parties.

Multifaceted Assessment of Brain Drain and Migration

Brain drain, the emigration of highly skilled individuals from one country to another, has been a significant challenge for Nigeria, impacting its sustainable development efforts in various ways. However, this multifaceted assessment provides a comprehensive understanding of the complexities surrounding brain drain and migration in Nigeria, drawing on economic,

educational, political, healthcare, and technological perspectives, along with policy recommendations to address the issue.

1. **Loss of Human Capital:** Nigeria faces a substantial loss of its skilled workforce due to brain drain. This loss deprives the country of the expertise needed to drive sustainable development initiatives in critical sectors such as healthcare, education, technology, and engineering.

2. **Impact on Healthcare:** The healthcare sector in Nigeria suffers significantly from brain drain. Many trained medical professionals, including doctors, nurses, and specialists, leave the country in search of better opportunities abroad. This exodus exacerbates the already strained healthcare system, leading to a shortage of skilled personnel and reduced access to quality healthcare services for the population.

3. **Educational Sector:** Brain drain also affects the education sector, as experienced teachers, professors, and researchers leave the country for better prospects elsewhere (Bawalla & Adenugba, 2021). This drain of intellectual capital hampers the quality of education in Nigeria and impedes efforts to build a knowledgeable workforce capable of driving sustainable development.

4. **Technology and Innovation:** Bawalla and Daniel (2021) argued that skilled professionals in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) are particularly prone to leaving Nigeria in search of better opportunities abroad. This brain drain stifles innovation and technological advancement within the country, hindering its ability to compete globally and address sustainable development challenges effectively.

5. **Economic Impact:** (Oviawe & Iyoha, 2019) avers that brain drain contributes to economic losses for Nigeria, as significant investments made in the education and training of skilled individuals do not translate into benefits for the country's economy. The loss of talent also affects productivity and innovation, further impeding economic growth and sustainable development.

6. **Policy Implications:** In addressing brain drain World Bank (2018) requires a comprehensive policies that focus on improving working conditions, providing incentives for skilled professionals to stay, and creating opportunities for their professional growth and development within the country. Additionally, measures to attract Nigerian professionals abroad to return home should be implemented to mitigate the effects of brain drain on sustainable development efforts.

The Meaning of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The 17 SDGs are integrated—that is, they recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability. Through the pledge to Leave No One Behind, countries have committed to fast-track progress for those furthest behind first. That is why the SDGs are designed to bring the world to several life-changing ‘zeros’, including zero poverty, hunger, AIDS and discrimination against women and girls. Everyone is needed to reach these ambitious targets. The creativity, knowhow, technology and financial resources from all of society is necessary to achieve the SDGs in every context. The United Nations’ 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aim to achieve decent lives for all on a healthy planet by 2030. As things stand, most of them are likely to be missed. This is partly because they fail to address human population growth. Positive, empowering population solutions are key to meeting the SDGs.

Implication of Brain Drain on Sustainable Development

The phenomenon of brain drain in Nigeria is multifaceted, it involves lots of complex interplay in terms of economic, political, and social factors. These three phenomenon are often categorised as the factors that affect brain positively and negatively in other achieve sustainable development for any nation’s economy or perhaps development. However, these three factors will be critically reviewed.

The Economic Effect of Brain Drain on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

The economic effect of brain drain on sustainable development in Nigeria can be significant and multifaceted. Basically, brain drain as to do with the emigration of highly skilled and educated individuals from one country to another, often to seek better opportunities, higher salaries, or improved living conditions. Here's how brain drain can impact Nigeria's sustainable development:

1. **Loss of Human Capital:** Nigeria invests resources in educating and training professionals in various fields such as medicine, engineering, and technology. When these skilled individuals

leave the country, it results in a loss of human capital. This loss can hinder the country's ability to innovate, develop new technologies, and drive economic growth.

2. Impact on Key Sectors: Brain drain often affects critical sectors such as healthcare and education the most. Nigeria faces challenges in providing adequate healthcare services and education to its population. The departure of skilled doctors, nurses, teachers, and professors exacerbates these challenges, leading to decreased quality of services and limited access to essential services for the population.

3. Decreased Innovation and Entrepreneurship: Skilled professionals play a crucial role in driving innovation and entrepreneurship. When these individuals leave, it can stifle innovation and limit the emergence of new businesses and industries in Nigeria. This, in turn, can impede economic diversification and growth, which are essential for sustainable development.

4. Remittance Dependency: While brain drain primarily represents a loss for the country, there can be a counterbalancing effect through remittances sent back home by expatriates. However, relying solely on remittances can create dependency and may not be sustainable in the long run. Additionally, remittances might not be directed towards investments in productive sectors that contribute to sustainable development.

5. Skills Mismatch: Brain drain can exacerbate skills shortages in certain sectors while creating surpluses in others. This imbalance can further hinder economic development and exacerbate inequalities within the country.

However, addressing brain drain requires comprehensive policies aimed at retaining skilled professionals, improving working conditions, providing opportunities for career advancement, and creating an enabling environment for innovation and entrepreneurship. Investing in education, healthcare, and infrastructure is also crucial to building a sustainable economy that can attract and retain talent. Additionally, initiatives to encourage diaspora engagement and reverse brain drain can also contribute to Nigeria's sustainable development efforts.

The Social Effect of Brain Drain on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

It has been evident that emigration of highly skilled individuals from one country to another has significant social implications for sustainable development in Nigeria. However, here are some key social effects:

1. Loss of Talent: Brain drain deprives Nigeria of its most skilled and educated citizens, leading to a shortage of professionals in critical sectors such as healthcare, education, technology, and engineering. This loss of talent hampers the country's ability to innovate and

develop sustainable solutions to social and economic challenges (Ndambuki & Ndirangu, 2017).

2. Impact on Education: The departure of skilled professionals often includes academics and researchers, resulting in a brain drain from educational institutions. This exodus weakens the quality of education and research in Nigeria, hindering the country's capacity to produce the next generation of skilled workers and innovators (Ikelegbe & Omeje, 2014).

3. Social Inequality: Brain drain exacerbates social inequality by creating a divide between those who can afford to emigrate and those who cannot. This phenomenon disproportionately affects marginalized communities and exacerbates existing social disparities, leading to social unrest and instability (Egunjobi, 2016; Adegbite & Bawalla, 2023).

4. Dependency on Remittances: Many Nigerian professionals who emigrate send remittances back to their families, which can alleviate poverty and improve living standards for some. However, this dependency on remittances may also discourage investment in local businesses and sustainable development projects, perpetuating a cycle of economic dependency (Chang & Lozano, 2019).

5. Loss of Social Capital: Brain drain weakens Nigeria's social capital by reducing the networks and connections that skilled professionals contribute to the country. These networks are essential for fostering collaboration, knowledge exchange, and collective problem-solving, all of which are crucial for sustainable development (World Bank, 2020).

To address the social effects of brain drain and promote sustainable development in Nigeria, policymakers must implement strategies to retain skilled professionals, improve working conditions, and invest in education and research infrastructure (Ndambuki & Ndirangu, 2017). Additionally, fostering an environment that encourages return migration and diaspora engagement can help harness the skills and resources of Nigerian expatriates for the country's development (Egunjobi, 2016).

The Political Effect of Brain Drain on Sustainable Development in Nigeria

The political effect of brain drain on sustainable development in Nigeria is multifaceted and can significantly hinder the country's progress. Brain drain, the emigration of highly skilled Nigerians, has significant political ramifications hindering sustainable development in the country. Here's a breakdown of the effects:

1. Weakening of Institutions: Brain drain can weaken key institutions in Nigeria as skilled professionals, including academics, researchers, and policymakers, leave for better

opportunities elsewhere. This exodus can undermine the effectiveness and capacity of government institutions, leading to challenges in implementing sustainable development policies and programs Afolabi & Samuel (2018).

2. Impact on Innovation and Research: The departure of skilled professionals diminishes Nigeria's capacity for innovation and research. Sustainable development relies on continuous innovation and the development of new technologies, ideas, and solutions to address pressing challenges such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. Brain drain impedes this process by reducing the pool of talent available for research and innovation within the country.

3. Political Instability: Brain drain can exacerbate political instability in Nigeria. The loss of skilled professionals may contribute to a sense of disillusionment among the populace, leading to social unrest and political discontent. Moreover, the flight of talent can weaken governance structures and exacerbate corruption, further undermining political stability and hindering sustainable development efforts (Awogbenle, & Iwuamadi, 2010).

4. Dependency on Remittances: Brain drain also results in a dependency on remittances from Nigerians living abroad, which can have political implications. While remittances can alleviate poverty for some families, they do not address the underlying structural issues driving emigration. Moreover, reliance on remittances can create a sense of complacency among policymakers, reducing the urgency to address the root causes of brain drain and invest in sustainable development initiatives at home (World Bank, 2018).

These political effects of brain drain underscore the urgent need for Nigeria to implement policies aimed at retaining skilled professionals, fostering innovation and research, strengthening institutions, and addressing the root causes driving emigration. By addressing these challenges, Nigeria can mitigate the adverse impact of brain drain on sustainable development and promote long-term prosperity for its citizens.

The Consequent Effect of Brain Drain on Nigeria Sustainable Development

Nigeria faces a significant challenge in achieving sustainable development due to brain drain, the emigration of highly skilled professionals. Here's how brain drain negatively impacts Nigeria's sustainable development goals (SDGs) as outlined in the 2019 UN report [UN sustainable development goals ON United Nations sdgs.un.org]:

1. **Hinders human capital development (SDG 4):** Brain drain depletes Nigeria's pool of skilled workers in critical sectors like education and healthcare. This weakens the ability to deliver quality education and healthcare, hindering progress on SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and 4 (Quality Education).
2. **Undermines economic growth (SDG 8):** The lack of skilled professionals hampers innovation and productivity, leading to slower economic growth.
3. **Strains infrastructure and resources (SDG 6, 7, 9):** With fewer skilled engineers and technicians, maintaining essential infrastructure like water, sanitation, and energy systems becomes a challenge (SDGs 6, 7). This can exacerbate environmental degradation (SDG 15) and limit progress on sustainable development overall.

Additionally, brain drain can:

4. **Reduce tax revenue:** Emigrated professionals don't contribute taxes, limiting government resources for development initiatives.
5. **Remittances:** Money sent back home by emigrants can boost the economy (Mondopoli, 2020).

Overall, the negative consequences of brain drain on Nigeria's sustainable development outweigh the potential benefits.

Suggested Policy Recommendation in Addressing Push Factors in Nigeria

Policies recommendation are essentially a suggested course of action for addressing a specific issue. It is crafted to be informative for policy makers and decision makers. However, in addressing push factors in Nigeria requires a multifaceted approach that tackles underlying issues contributing to migration, such as poverty, unemployment, insecurity, and lack of access to basic services. Here are some policy recommendations:

1. **Economic Development Initiatives:** According to Ayenagbo (2019) to implement programs aimed at stimulating economic growth, particularly in rural areas where poverty and unemployment rates are high. This could include investment in infrastructure, agriculture, and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Providing access to microfinance and vocational training can also empower individuals to start businesses and generate income locally.
2. **Education and Skill Development:** Strengthen the education system to equip individuals with the skills needed for employment in a rapidly evolving economy. Promote vocational

training programs tailored to local market demands, as well as initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship and innovation (NBS, 2018; Muraina, & Bawalla, 2019).

3. Improving Healthcare Services: Enhance access to quality healthcare services, especially in rural and underserved areas, to address health-related push factors such as disease outbreaks and high mortality rates (World Health Organization, 2020). This can involve increasing funding for healthcare infrastructure, training healthcare workers, and implementing health education programs.

4. Enhanced Security Measures: Combat insecurity and violence by investing in law enforcement agencies, improving intelligence gathering capabilities, and implementing community policing initiatives Human Rights Watch. (2022). Addressing root causes of conflict and promoting social cohesion can contribute to a safer environment conducive to economic and social development.

5. Social Protection Programs: Introduce social protection programs targeted at vulnerable populations, including cash transfer schemes, food assistance programs, and support for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees World Bank. (2019). These programs can help mitigate the impact of poverty and provide a safety net during times of crisis.

6. Climate Change Adaptation: Address environmental degradation and climate change impacts through sustainable land management practices, reforestation initiatives, and climate-resilient agricultural techniques. Investing in renewable energy sources can also reduce dependency on fossil fuels and mitigate climate-related displacement (United Nations Development Programme, 2021).

Conclusion

In conclusion, the phenomenon of brain drain and migration presents both challenges and opportunities for sustainable development. Our exploration of brain drain, migration, and sustainable development reveals a complex interplay. While migration offers opportunities for economic growth through remittances and knowledge transfer, brain drain can significantly hinder a nation's progress. The loss of skilled professionals weakens crucial sectors like education and healthcare, impeding development efforts. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. Investment in creating a more attractive environment for skilled Nigerians is essential. This includes improving wages, working conditions, and infrastructure. Additionally, fostering innovation and entrepreneurship can create opportunities that retain talent. However, simply stemming the tide of outward migration is not enough. We must also harness the potential of Nigerians abroad. Fostering strong ties with the diaspora through engagement programs and knowledge-sharing initiatives can leverage their expertise for national development. By combining domestic reforms with strategic diaspora engagement, Nigeria can transform brain drain into a resource for sustainable development.

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**Domestic Violence and Environmental Factors on Academic Performance of Senior
Secondary School Students in Lagos State, Nigeria**

Received: 7 January 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967040

Abstract

This study examined domestic violence and environmental factors on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Surulere Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. To guide the study, four hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The descriptive survey research design was used in the study and two instruments were used in this study namely; a self-designed questionnaire titled “Domestic Violence and Environmental Factors on Students’ Academic Performance Questionnaire (DVEFSAPQ)”, and achievement test on English Language to measure academic performance. The instrument had a reliability coefficient of 0.76 when tested during the pilot study. The achievement test on English Language consists of 20 items. One hundred and twenty (120) students were selected as sample size for this study using the stratified and simple random sampling techniques. Independent t-test and Pearson Product Moment Correlation statistical tools were used for the hypotheses formulated. Findings from the study showed that there is a significant relationship between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State, there is a significant relationship between domestic violence and students’ school attendance in senior secondary schools in Lagos State, there is a significant relationship between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State and there is a significant influence of family size on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommended among others that teachers should be equipped with the skills of identifying and manage students who are

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emotionally, cognitively and socially affected by domestic violence. Also, government should enact laws and empowered courts to deal with cases of domestic violence and punish the culprits.

Keywords: *Academic Performance, Domestic Violence, Family Size, Parental Motivation, Physical Abuse*

Background to the Study

Students' school participation as seen in attendance, performance and class participation is related to their psychological and physical state which in turn could be influenced by family relations including domestic violence. Domestic violence is almost always accompanied by psychological abuse and in many cases by forced sex as well (Stren & Zevon, 2018). Although the family is a place where people are expected to maintain intimacy and experience greater emotional support in their relationship, domestic violence presents itself as a paradox. It is ironical that this very supportive social unit is also the arena where intimate partner violence (IPV) is more often experienced. Children from slum areas, who witness violence between their parents on top of other social challenges, are exposed to the aftermath of domestic violence such as anxiety, depression, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, disobedience, nightmares and physical health deterioration, all of which may negatively impinge on their academic performance and school participation (Plunkett, Radmacher & Moll-Phanara, 2019). The extent and magnitude of domestic violence cannot be precisely measured because there are many cases whereby victims fail to report thus making this vice an inter-personal and family secret. Violence between spouses or intimate partner violence (IPV) tend to usually has far reaching consequences on children. Besides the scenes of violence being traumatic, the children may suffer short-term as well as long-term emotional imbalances, which may not only affect their behaviour and performance in schools, but also adversely affect their social and inter-personal relationships. These children may then end up being abusers themselves in what can be seen as continuity hypothesis. Children who witness violence between their parents likely develop many of the same behavioural and psychological problems as children who are themselves abused.

Academic performance is an important parameter in measuring success in students. The concept of academic performance is inevitable in any formal educational institution. It expresses the learning achievement of an individual or a group at the end of an academic programme. It is a criterion for ascertaining the capabilities of students from which their potentials could be assimilated, retained, recalled and communicate their knowledge of what has been learnt (Joe, Kpolovie, Osonwa & Iderima, 2018). Academic performance is a demonstrated achievement as knowledge attained or skills developed in school subject usually designed by test scores or marks assigned by the teacher or both. Meanwhile, poor academic

performances of secondary school students may have been affected by many factors which domestic violence could be among.

The domestic violence is such a factor which is the foundation for children's development, as such in terms of family problems, family's socio-economic status plays a vital role in educational achievements of the students. The home has a great influence on the child's psychological, emotional, social and economic state. This is because the domestic violence in context to the child's performance affects his reaction to life situations and his level of academic performance. Dutton (2017) defines physical abuse as part of domestic violence, is seen as any behaviour that involves the intentional use of force against the body of another person that risks physical injury, harm and or pain. It includes pushing, hitting, slapping, choking, using an object to hit, twisting of a body, forcing the ingestion of an unwanted substance and use of a weapon. He further sees sexual abuse as form of domestic violence defines it as any unwanted sexual intimacy forced on an individual by another. It may include oral, anal or vaginal stimulation or penetration, forced nudity, forced exposure to sexually explicit material or activity. Compliance may be obtained through actual or threatened physical force or through some other form of coercion.

Domestic violence is threatening many Nigerian families and is drastically increasing in our society. Many people, the vast majority of them children have been injured, disabled and killed as a result of domestic violence. Following the recent happenings where domestic violence has become a menace that needs to be addressed as soon as possible and accorded with all seriousness that it deserves. It was further noted that domestic violence does not recognize social classes or educational standards (Wopadovi, 2018). Domestic violence is assuming national and international attention and it is a type of violence that is prevalent in many homes, and the world over. It is a form of defilement, assault, sexual harassment, and rape or battering, child abuse, for example denial of right, necessities and opportunities, threatening patterns of communication such as insults, harassment, neglectful lack of action. Domestic violence has been outlined by Amnesty international as most violent attacks on an individual or group of people or women. It involves physical, sexual and psychological violence in the family including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to any member of the household.

The family is the cradle of the child developmental and socialization processes. This explains the role of the family in programming the child's basic life skills, social emotional, intellectual, communication and collaborative skills (Singh, 2017). Dutton (2017) sees family as a primary group which requires people who are intimate and have frequent face-to-face contact with one another; have norm and expectation on how members of the family should behave. The education received by a child from parents and significant others at home, is most likely to have a high significant and dominant effects on the behaviour of the child later in life. What the child learns at home and how his/her family motivates him/her towards education, contributes to the child's academic achievement in school. It is against this background that this study examined domestic violence and environmental factors on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were postulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.
2. There is no significant relationship between domestic violence and students' school attendance in senior secondary schools in Lagos State.
3. There is no significant relationship between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.
4. There is no significant influence of family size on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Methodology

The descriptive research survey design was used in this study. A descriptive research design is one which involves the collection of data from members of a population in order to determine the current status in that population with respect to one or more variables. The justification for its use lies in the nature of the variables involved in the research. The respondents' opinions and attitudes were surveyed and the results obtained consequently assisted in the data analysis. The study was carried out in Surulere Local Government Area of Lagos State. Surulere Local Government Area is one of the 20 Local Government Areas in Lagos State, Nigeria. Surulere Local Government Area is one of the most densely populated Local Government Areas of Lagos State. It is about 633N and 325 while its distance from central Lagos is about 8km². With an area of about 278square kilometers, the Local Government is bounded in the North by

Mushin Local Government and in the East by Mainland Local Government Areas. Surulere simply means, *“Patience is Golden”*.

The population of this study comprised all students in public senior secondary schools located in Surulere Local Government Area of Lagos State. However, the target population of the study comprised SS II students. SS II students were considered most appropriate for the study because they were in the second terminal class in senior school, that prepares them towards their senior secondary school certificate examination and were not burdened with the pressure of preparing for external examinations. One hundred and twenty (120) students were selected as sample size for this study using the stratified sampling technique to select four schools. Stratified sampling technique was used because is a method of selecting participants in their natural strata, for example, gender, age and class arm. The sample size comprised males and females SS II students located in the local government area under study. The students were chosen from four schools out of the twenty public senior secondary schools in Surulere Local Government. Simple random sampling technique was employed in the selection of the schools for this study. This involved the use of balloting method to select the samples. The names of the public senior secondary schools in the area of study were written on pieces of papers and folded, while a neutral person was called upon to pick the numbers at random until the expected number (4) are completed. Furthermore, thirty (30) students were selected using simple random sampling technique through hat and draw method from each of the four schools making a total of 120 respondents represented the entire population.

Instrumentation

Two research instruments were used in this study. They were self-designed questionnaire and achievement test on English language. The self-designed questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was researcher made questionnaire titled **“Domestic Violence and Environmental Factors on Students’ Academic Performance Questionnaire (DVEFSAPQ)”**. The questionnaire had 2 sections: Sections A and B. Section A contains the bio-data of the respondents such as gender, age and class arms of study. Section ‘B’ contains items that measured the variables of the study. This enabled the researcher to test the hypotheses formulated in the study. The statement constructed under Section ‘B’ of the questionnaire adopt 4-point likert scale of ‘Strongly Agree’, ‘Agree’, ‘Disagree’ and ‘Strongly Disagree’. Achievements test on English language prepared by the researcher measured the dependent variable (academic performance). The achievement test on English Language consists of 20 items. In order to ensure the validity of the instruments, the instruments were submitted to the

expert in Measurement and Evaluation who screened and approved it for use in this study. For the reliability of the instruments, a pilot study was conducted using test retest on 20 senior secondary two (SS II) students in another school which was not included in the main study, specifically, from Somolu Local Government Area of Lagos State. Twenty (20) instruments were administered on the twenty students for the pilot study. After 2 weeks, the same instruments were administered on the same group of students. The Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was used to measure the reliability of the instrument and the coefficient value 0.76 was obtained which was used to judge the instrument reliable for use in the study. The descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentage table were used to analyse the demographic data. The formulated hypotheses were tested using t-test statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis one: There is no significant relationship between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Table 1:

Relationship between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal.	r-crit.	Sig. Value	Decision
Domestic Violence		13.48	3.62					
	120			118	0.66	0.195	0.05	H₀₁
Academic performance		13.00	3.28					Rejected

From Table 1, the calculated r-value of 0.66 indicated a positive relationship between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students. That is, the two variables are positively correlated. Moreover, the calculated r-value of 0.66 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.195 given 118 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between domestic violence and students' school attendance in senior secondary schools in Lagos State.

Table 2: Relationship between domestic violence and students' school attendance in senior secondary schools

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal.	r-crit.	Sig. Value	Decision
Domestic Violence		13.48	3.62					
	120			118	0.73	0.195	0.05	H₀₂
School Attendance		14.32	3.81					Rejected

From Table 2, the calculated r-value of 0.73 indicated a positive relationship between domestic violence and students' school attendance in senior secondary schools. That is, the two variables are positively correlated. Moreover, the calculated r-value of 0.73 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.195 given 118 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected. This shows that there is a significant relationship between domestic violence and students' school attendance in senior secondary schools in Lagos State.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant relationship between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Table 3: Relationship between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students

Variables	N	Mean	SD	df	r-cal.	r-crit.	Sig. Value	Decision
Parental Motivation		15.21	3.91					
	120			118	0.78	0.195	0.05	H₀₃
Academic performance		13.00	3.28					Rejected

From Table 3, the calculated r-value of 0.78 indicated a positive relationship between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students. That is, the two variables are positively correlated. Moreover, the calculated r-value of 0.78 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.195 given 118 degrees of freedom at 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant relationship between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Hypothesis four: There is no significant influence of family size on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Table 4: Influence of family size on academic performance of senior secondary school students

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calc	t-tab
Family Size	120	14.87	3.58			
Academic Performance	120	13.00	3.28	118	4.47	1.98

Tabulated value of t at 0.05

Table 4 indicates that the value of $t_{(cal)}$ of independent sample t-test was calculated to be 4.47, which is significant in the light of the fact that is greater than tabulated $t_{(tab)}$ value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance given 118 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected. The results revealed that there is a significant influence of family size on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study were discussed based on the results of the hypotheses tested. Hypothesis one was rejected as the result of the findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State. This finding supports Pynoos and Eth (2018) who opined that domestic violence has many impacts on children's education. Children's Experience of violence affects their school adaptation and academic success. Exposure to violence (i.e. children's experience) affects children's view of the world and themselves, and their moral development. Domestic violence exposure creates a highly stressful environment for youngsters. Such environment may lead to posttraumatic stress symptom, including altered psychological, biological, neurological and cognitive functioning. Also, Plunkett, Radmacher and Moll-Phanara (2019) found that, children exposed to domestic violence may show difficulties with school work and would have poor academic performance, school phobia and difficulties in concentration and attention. Sharma, Basad and Gupta (2015) also opined that children exposed to domestic and community violence always show slower school achievement, score lower than the non-abused children on tests of verbal ability; comprehension, reading and math skills and consequently, this may disrupt children's successful functioning in the school which finally affect their academic performance.

Hypothesis two was rejected as the result of the findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between domestic violence and students' school attendance in senior secondary schools in Lagos State. This finding is in line with Madhurira (2016) who concluded that hours spent at work had a negative impact on education variables, with the marginal impact weakening at the higher levels of work hours. The result also corroborated with the study carried out by Rhodes and Levinson (2016) who found that poor school attendance was caused by the requirements parents place on children to be economically active which resulted in the children going to school late or having interruptions in their schooling because of seasonal agricultural activities. The significant effect of domestic violence may be because these children, who combine work with schooling, seem suffer fatigue and stress which may cause irregular school attendance especially for those that hawk before going to school and those that work late at night. Again, even when they attend school, they seem not to be actively participating in school activities.

Hypothesis three was rejected as the result of the findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State. This finding is in line with Akpan (2016) who stated that parents are noted for both extrinsic and intrinsic motivation through external factors as opposed to the internal drives of intrinsic motivation. These parents provide tangible rewards to their children, which in turn boost their academic achievements. These parents also motivate their children through intrinsic motivation by internal factors as opposed to external drives or extrinsic motivation. Ojo and Yilma (2015) also stated that other support of the parents lies in the responsibility of training a child. Ojo and Yilma (2015) further indicated that families, who were involved in their children's education through homework, monitor their performance in school and ask questions have their children achieve success in school. In the same vein, Schneider and Lee (2017) asserted that all parents have desired to do something better for their children according to their available resources, but the extent and effectiveness of parental guidance depends on a variety of reasons, such as, ethnicity, family income, and home environment and their awareness about the importance of education.

Hypothesis four was rejected as the result of the findings revealed that there is a significant influence of family size on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State. This finding supports Eristwhistle (2016) who found that, children with relatively small

size families performed better in verbal and non-verbal tests, than children from large family size in the same test. This according to him is because children from large families have less frequent interactions with adults. Similarly, parental attention by parents declines as the number of sibling's increases and latter born children perform less well than their earlier born siblings. Also, Akpan (2016) posited that large family is not ideal in language development because parents may not be able to interact with many children all at once. Children from smaller families tend to receive more attention from their parents than those from larger homes. This can result in better school success (Eamon, 2015). Nsibiet (2018) has shown that the environment of a large family constitutes a handicap to the verbal development, consequently to general mental development.

Conclusion

Exposure of children to domestic violence could have a negative effect on their behaviour and academic achievement. Other effects include; aggressive behaviours, in sensitivity to the pain and suffering of others and increased fearfulness of the world around which consequently disrupt their academic competence and school adaptation. Based on the findings of the research, the following conclusions have been drawn: a significant relationship exists between domestic violence and academic performance of senior secondary school students, a significant relationship exists between domestic violence and students' school attendance in senior secondary schools, a significant relationship exists between parental motivation and academic performance of senior secondary school students, there is a significant influence of family size on academic performance of senior secondary school students in Lagos State.

Recommendations

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

1. Teachers should be equipped with the skills of identifying students or children that are emotionally, cognitively and socially affected by domestic violence, and find ways of correcting the situation.
2. Government should enact laws and empowered courts to deal with cases of domestic violence and punish the culprits.
3. Workshops, seminars, and sensitisation campaigns should be mounted to educate parents, children and community members on their rights and obligations as per as marriage, cohabitation, dating and relationships are concerned.
4. Children should be motivated, advised and their behaviours should be modified on how to manage and overcome all problems associated with domestic violence so as to achieve success in their academic pursuit.

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Students' Access to and Utilization of Learning Resources in Tertiary Institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria: A Sociological and Comparative Study

Received: 20 January 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967078

Abstract

The study examined comparative study of students' access to and utilization of learning resources in selected private and state owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria. Five hypotheses were formulated and tested. Descriptive research design was adopted in the study. The population of the study comprised all the undergraduates of tertiary institutions in Lagos State. The sample size for the study was two hundred and forty (240) undergraduates drawn from two selected tertiary institutions in the state by simple random sampling technique. The study made use of a structured questionnaire designed by the researchers and titled "Students' Access and Utilization of Learning Resources Questionnaire (SAULRQ)".in data collection. The instrument has a reliability coefficient of 0.76 when tested during the pilot study. Independent t-test statistics was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study indicated that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in terms of availability of learning resources, there is a significant difference between state and private universities in terms of students' access to learning resources and there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources among others. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends that universities, especially public universities, should endeavour to provide more learning facilities/resources in their institutions and ensure that the resources so provided are made accessible to the students. In addition, all tertiary institutions (public and private) should be provided with enough learning resources (both direct and

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indirect) to ensure quality instructional delivery for the learners and enhance the performance of the instructors.

Key Words: *Comparative Study, Tertiary Institution, Learning Resources, Availability, Accessibility, Utilization*

Introduction

Education as an important element in nation building is a fundamental correlate of socio-economic, cultural, political and technological development of any society. Higher education has been recognized as an important instrument for the construction of a knowledge economy and the development of human capital all over the world (World Bank, 1999). Higher education provides the platform for individuals to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and values to make them productive in society. On the basis of this, university education equips the individuals with the personal capabilities to be functional and contribute to the collective survival in the larger society. Therefore, university education provides cognitive and intellectual development, acquisition of necessary skills and character required for socio-economic and political development of the society.

It is in recognition of these benefits that many countries have made giant strides in expanding access to education at all levels even to the point of making basic education free and universal (World Bank, 2004). University education is a critical component of human development worldwide. It provides not only the high-level skills necessary for every labour market but also the training essential to become a professional and also equip professionals like teachers, doctors, nurses, civil servants, engineers, humanists, entrepreneurs, scientists, social scientists, and a myriad of other personnel. It is these trained individuals who develop the capacity and analytical skills that drive local economies, support civil society, teach children, lead effective governments, and make important decisions which affect entire societies.

Studies in various capacities have expressed that educational transformation over the years, and the increasing demand for quality employable graduates in all sectors of the economy, have greatly influenced the emergence and establishment of private universities in Nigeria. The determinants of any nation's growth and development depend largely on the quality manpower and its material resources. University education has been challenged with the responsibilities of sustaining a nation's development through the production of quality manpower in all sectors of economy. Globally, universities are identified as critical engines for socio-economic and political development. It is a primary locus for innovation, expanding the pool of higher caliber manpower to address the challenges of underdevelopment.

According to the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013), the teaching and research functions of higher educational institutions have an important role to play in national development, particularly in development of high level manpower. Specifically, the aims of

higher education in Nigeria as articulated in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013) which includes: (a) The acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value-orientation for the survival of individuals and society. (b) The development of intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their environment. (c) The acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community. (d) Contribute to national development through high level manpower training. (e) Promote and encourage entrepreneurship and community service. (f) promote national and international understanding and interaction.

Privatization of higher education is fast growing for a number of reasons. Firstly, there is the inability of the public sector to satisfy the growing social demand for higher education, hence the need for the private sector to expand students' access to higher education. Also, there are the deregulation policies of the governments on the provision of education and thus giving adequate opportunities for private participation in education. The proliferation of private universities in the country has brought with it a number of issues such as diversity of operations, programmes, quality of staff, mode of admitting students, mode of students' assessment, availability of and access to learning resources. For instance, the quality of staff in private universities has been described as low (Okebukola, 2010). This is because the motive for establishing private universities is to make profit as the proprietors expect returns on their investments hence the tendency on the part of the proprietors to constantly interfere with operations of the institutions. This interference tends to fuel the feeling of job insecurity as the management of private universities can hire and fire their staff at the slightest provocation. In view of the job insecurity in the system, many private universities in Nigeria operate with a limited number of full-time teaching and non-teaching staff. Most of their teaching staff are either on part-time or sabbatical appointment without the requisite qualification (Ph.D) to teach in university as stipulated by the National Universities Commission (Ige, 2013; Oluwasanya, 2014).

Over the years, and in spite of the importance attached to education, successive governments in Nigeria (Federal and State) have paid lip service to education generally and university education in particular. Udida, Bassey, Udofia and Egbona (2009) submitted that the major issue in educational development is shortage of funds. One of the most serious problems threatening the survival of the educational systems is the dwindling level of public funding in the face of rising demands and hence rising cost of higher education. This shortage of funds affects job performance and the growth of the institution. Higher educational institutions cannot

perform optimally without funding. This situation calls for increased fund initiative from both the government and educational stakeholders so as to sustain the tempo and growth of the education industry. The inability of the Nigerian government to objectively accept and implement the 26% funding formula for education recommended by UNESCO impacts negatively on the performance and sustainability of higher education. Thus, it has become obvious that Nigeria's neglect of the funding formula is detrimental to higher educational institution performance and development aspiration as quality performance is the veritable instrument for sustenance of the education system.

This neglect has further precipitated crises in the entire higher educational systems as it impedes effective teaching, learning and research. The education sector in Nigeria is known to be one of the few areas that do not get the right budget allocation. Asides of funds for infrastructure, equipment and other necessities, there is poor remuneration of staff. Inadequate funding has particularly affected infrastructure (buildings, roads, electricity and water), knowledge facilities such as library facilities, information and communication facilities, and teaching/instructional materials; research funding; recreational facilities; and welfare packages for lecturers, administrative staff and students (Akinnaso, 2012).

Inadequate and in-conducive learning environment, facilities or resources is yet another issue in university education in Nigeria. The environment in which teaching-learning takes place in most Nigerian universities is not conducive as lecture halls, laboratories, seminar rooms and other facilities are in advanced state of degradation-too small and ill-equipped- coupled with the absence of potable water, internet access, regular supply of electricity which has further exacerbated the problem of lecturer-student ratio. The National Universities Commission (NUC) stipulates a maximum lecturer-student ratio of 1:40, but most universities in Nigeria have at least 1: 100 or more (Sa'ad, 2010).

Also, inadequate learning resources has also affected the quality of education in universities. Learning resources are materials that aid learning e.g books and articles, projector, well equipped library, access to internet. Books are one of the most popular learning resources available, they can be found in libraries and bookstores around the world. They often provide a more in-depth exploration of a subject than other learning resources. Another learning resource is the internet. There are a variety of different websites that offer online courses, tutorials, and articles. What makes the internet so popular is that it's constantly changing and evolving. It provides information on any topic of interest, and the resources are often free. Finally, another popular learning resource is the university library which has several functions,

perhaps the most important of which is obtaining information in its various forms, whether it is paper, such as books and brochures, or digital, such as films, slides, disks, audio, visual, and electronic. Libraries are offering different services aiming to improve the student experience, including a physical space where learners can find various materials such as books, dictionaries and encyclopedias; a place where students are able to find international magazines and discover what's going on worldwide; and independent study areas as well as collaborative learning spaces where students can meet up with other learners to complete group projects. In addition, many university libraries provide students with tutoring support. By being quiet places, libraries are the best areas where students can receive support to solve their questions and problems, enhancing their study experience. Also, many libraries give learners the possibility to use computers and engage with digital resources that cover different subjects. Through the use of computers, students can search their sources quickly, write their assignments and check the plagiarism percentage of their written work.

The increasing complexity of the Nigerian society as a result of social changes has affected the educational institution, most especially, the tertiary level of education. The Federal Government has introduced some novel practices to contend these pressures one of which is the privatization of higher education for standards and quality; increased access and better funding to meet the needs of globalization and the deregulation of hitherto publicly managed organizations. The government is of the view that the growth of private universities in the country will allow for competition between the public and the private universities, in terms of instructional delivery and other activities put in place to produce quality graduates for the economy. Competition brings improved quality of educational inputs and outputs.

Private universities are a recent development in Nigeria as compared to the federal and state universities. In the 90s there was the wind of change of deregulation policy aimed at enhancing active involvement of all stakeholders in the ownership, finance, administration and control of education and thereby making the system more efficient in responding to the learning needs of the society and that of the individuals in a dwindling economy in Africa.

According to Utulu (2018), the establishment of private tertiary institutions is justifiable because of the numerous benefits accrued to it. Most universities in the country have consistently inadequate resources, which invariably affects the quality of output they produce. Besides, as Utulu (2018) points out, another factor that accounts for the decline in the quality of university output in Nigeria is the lack of physical facilities. Some of the universities in Nigeria operate in adverse conditions; overcrowding and deteriorating physical facilities, lack

of library books, educational materials and so on. Addressing this problem calls for the involvement of the private sector.

Universities were established after independence as the only means of achieving rapid and desired pattern of economic growth in the face of inadequate entrepreneurial skills, shortage of capital and fear of the foreign control of the national economy. University, hence, is a place where skilled manpower of various capacities is being trained and also an avenue to develop human capital needed to sustain the economy. For the past four years, since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the Nigerian university system has been going through radical transformation and reforms. These reforms, according to Adeotomre (2017) are geared towards expanding access, promoting and ensuring quality and increasing institutional efficiency and thereby be responsive and relevant towards the production of a globally competitive entrepreneurial and self-reliant graduates.

It is against this background that this study carried out a comparative study of students' access to and utilization of learning resources in selected private and state owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State.

Statement of the Problem

The invaluable contribution of university education to contemporary Nigerian society has been highlighted as an instrument per excellence for achieving national development. This lofty objective of university education could not be achieved as the existing public universities could not accommodate and train the much-needed manpower with the already overstretched, inadequate and dilapidated learning resources. Therefore, there is the need for the establishment of more universities than the available public ones, hence the establishment of private universities. Besides, diversity of ownership of university has brought about diversity of programmes, availability, accessibility and utilization of learning resources, methods of dissemination of knowledge and other university experiences that the students are exposed to. However, there is the raging debate over whether students in public universities have access to and utilize learning resources in their institutions just as products of private universities are often discriminated against by employers of labour and post-graduate schools of public universities largely due to the perceived inaccessibility to and non-utilization of learning resources.

Since the inception of university education in Nigeria in 1948 and the coming of the private sector into the provision of university education in 1999, the system has been bedevilled by a myriad of problems such as the inaccessibility to, unavailability and non- utilization of learning resources. However, since 2003 when the pioneer private universities produced their first set of graduates, there have not been any known empirical studies that attempted to compare students' access to and utilization of learning resources in public and private universities in southwest Nigeria. The present study therefore carried this study on comparative study of students' access to and utilization of learning resources in selected private and state owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to carry out a comparative study of students' access to and utilization of learning resources in selected private and state owned tertiary institutions in Lagos State. The specific objectives are:

1. To examine the difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of availability of learning resources.
2. To determine the difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' access to learning resources.
3. To examine the difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources.
4. To ascertain the difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of quality of learning resources.
5. To examine the difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of adequacy of learning resources.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

1. There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of availability of learning resources.

2. There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' access to learning resources.
3. There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources.
4. There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of quality of learning resources.
5. There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of adequacy of learning resources.

Methodology

Research Design

The survey research design was used in this study. Information obtained through survey design explains present conditions, attitudes, opinions, beliefs and so on which may not easily be obtained through experimental method. It explains conditions very clearly in order to see direction one wants to follow and how to get there very clearly. It is an effective way of collecting information from a large number of people or from a small source. This design was considered for the study because it gives the researcher the opportunity of obtaining the opinion of the sample population to represent the opinions of the entire population.

Population of the Study

The population of the study comprised all the undergraduate students in Lagos State University (LASU), Ojo, Lagos and Caleb University, Imota, Lagos. The selected universities were purposively chosen because the study is a comparative study between private and state-owned university.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Lagos State University (LASU) was chosen being the oldest state-owned university in the state while Caleb University was also chosen because is among of the top private university in the state.

The sample size for the study was two hundred and forty (240) undergraduates. The researchers used simple random sampling technique to select two faculties from the faculties in each institution from where the participants were drawn. The sample size consisted 120 female and 120 male undergraduate students selected using stratified sampling technique. Sixty (60) undergraduates, comprising of 30 male and 30 female undergraduates were selected from each of the four faculties (two from each institution), giving a total of 240 undergraduates that served as sample size of the study.

Research Instrument

The study made use of a structured questionnaire designed by the researchers titled “Students’ Access and Utilization of Learning Resources Questionnaire (SAULRQ)”. The questionnaire was divided into two parts: Part A and B. Part ‘A’ contained items on the bio data of the respondents such as age, gender, and faculty. Part ‘B’ contained items on the variables as captured in the hypotheses to test the formulated hypotheses. Part B of the questionnaire adopted Likert 4-point scale format. It had four optional responses vis-à-vis, Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The constructed questionnaire was validated through experts’ opinions to ensure appropriateness, clarity and relevance of the items. The reliability of the instrument was determined through the split half technique in a pilot study. The researchers carried out a pilot survey in a private and a state-owned university outside that for the main study. Split-half method of test reliability was adopted. The Spearman-Brown correction of correlation coefficient for the items was obtained which showed internal consistency of the instrument. The Spearman-Brown correction of correlation coefficient of 0.82 was obtained, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency. The instrument was hence used in the study.

Procedure for Data Collection

The questionnaires were administered to the respondents in the various faculties in the selected institutions. The questionnaires were filled and collected immediately upon completion which

ensured high return rate. Thereafter, the administered questionnaires were collated for the analysis of data

Method of Data Analysis

Respondents' bio-data was analysed with the use of simple percentage and frequency tables while independent t-test statistics was used to test the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of availability of learning resources.

Table 1: t-test analysis showing difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of availability of learning resources

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calc	t-tab
State University	120	13.28	2.25			
				238	1.12	1.98
Private University	120	13.42	3.32			

Significant @ 0.05

Table 1 indicates that the value of t-cal of independent sample t-test was 1.12, which was not significant in the light of the fact that is less than tabulated t-tab value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance given 238 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of availability of learning resources.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' access to learning resources

Table 2: t-test analysis showing difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' access to learning resources

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calc	t-tab
State University	120	12.58	2.76			
				238	5.67	1.98
Private University	120	14.11	3.87			

Significant @ 0.05

Table 2 indicates that the value of t-cal of independent sample t-test was 5.67, which was significant in the light of the fact that is greater than tabulated t-tab value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance given 238 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the hypothesis was rejected. This implies that there is a significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' access to learning resources

Hypothesis Three: There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources

Table 3: t-test analysis showing difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calc	t-tab
State University	120	14.21	3.84			
				238	1.03	1.98
Private University	120	14.56	3.96			

Significant @ 0.05

Table 3 indicates that the value of t-cal of independent sample t-test was 1.02, which was not significant in the light of the fact that is less than tabulated t-tab value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance given 238 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources.

Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of quality of learning resources

Table 4: t-test analysis showing difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of quality of learning resources

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calc	t-tab
State University	120	13.15	3.04			
				238	1.41	1.98
Private University	120	13.27	3.15			

Significant @ 0.05

Table 4 indicates that the value of t-cal of independent sample t-test was 1.41, which was not significant in the light of the fact that is less than tabulated t-tab value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance given 238 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the null hypothesis was accepted. This means that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of quality of learning resources.

Hypothesis Five: There is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of adequacy of learning resources

Table 5: t-test analysis showing difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of adequacy of learning resources

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-calc	t-tab
State University	120	12.13	2.58			
				238	3.72	1.98
Private University	120	13.88	3.23			

Significant @ 0.05

Table 5 indicates that the value of t-cal of independent sample t-test was 3.72, which was significant in the light of the fact that is greater than tabulated t-tab value of 1.98 at 0.05 level of significance given 238 degrees of freedom. Consequently, the hypothesis was rejected. This

implies that there is a significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of adequacy of learning resources

Discussion of Findings

Hypothesis one was accepted as the result of the findings revealed that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of availability of learning resources. This reason for this finding could be that one of the major factors that promotes teaching-learning in any educational institution; especially at the university level is the availability of learning resources. This finding supports Joseph and Philius (2016) who noted availability of learning resources is a characteristic of a resource that is committable, operable, or usable upon demand to perform its designated or required functions. To enhance effective teaching and learning in tertiary institutions, public and private, there is need for availability of learning resources. Thus, the extent learning resources are utilized in a school will to a large extent depend on their availability. Also, According to Ogunode (2020), schools endowed with more learning resources performed better than schools that are less endowed. This corroborated the study by Babayomi (2021) that school performance depends on the availability and adequacy of teaching and learning materials. Azih and Nwosu (2018) reported that tertiary institutions in Ebonyi State do not have the required e-learning equipment. As a result, they do not use the equipment for instructional delivery in schools.

Hypothesis two was rejected as the result of the findings revealed that there is a significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' access to learning resources. This development might not be unconnected with high rate of fees that students in private universities pay in line with lower population of the students when compared to public universities. This finding supports Oyediran-Tindings (2014) who reported a low use of the library by students in state university which was attributed to expressed accessibility problems. Fayose (2015) also had identified accessibility as one of the prerequisites of information use in public universities while Kuhlthau (2016) argues that the action of information seeking depends on the needs, the perceived accessibility, sources and information seeking behaviour of the students. This finding also corroborates earlier findings which indicated that private universities in Nigeria have better facilities and more learning resources than public universities (Okoro and Okoro, 2014; Iruonagbe, Imhonopi and Egharevba, 2015).

Hypothesis three was accepted as the result of the findings revealed that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources. This reason for this finding could be that students in public and private universities tend to adequately utilise whatever learning resources/facilities that are available to them in their institutions, even the obsolete or dilapidated ones. This finding is in line with results of earlier studies which found that though infrastructural facilities were provided in public and private universities yet the facilities were adequately utilised in both public and private universities (Ige, 2013; Abdullahi and Zahari, 2015). However, this finding is in contrast to earlier findings that inadequate, dilapidated or obsolete learning resources/facilities coupled with the lack of utility value of some facilities/resources in public universities was one of the reasons that gave rise to the proliferation of private universities in Nigeria (Akinnaso, 2014; Asiyai, 2017). Muzali (2019) also argued further that the establishment of private universities in Nigeria has boosted healthy competition and enhanced standardization between the public and private universities.

Hypothesis four was accepted as the result of the findings revealed that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of quality of learning resources. The reason for this finding could be that university education either public or private equips students with quality of learning resources to be functional in and contribute to the collective survival in the larger society. This finding in line with Oyedeji, (2013) who stated that the quality of the physical resources that are available in the school system determine the qualities of the education provided in such an institution. Also, Ogundele and Taiwo (2015) noted that the public institutions do not complain for non-quality of learning resources but inadequate physical structures for both the staff and students use. This finding however contradicts Yusuf (2014), who submitted that the quality physical resources in private universities are different when compared with those in the public universities in Nigeria. Also, according to Abiodun-Oyebanji (2016), the owners of some of the private universities are businessman and women who have invested in education and therefore expect returns on their investments. The cost recovery plans however may affect the quality of services they render and consequently affect the output on the long run and this may jeopardize the applicability of acquired knowledge to the industry.

Hypothesis five was rejected as the result of the findings revealed that there is a significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of adequacy of learning resources. This development might not be unconnected with high rate of fees that

students in private universities pay in line with lower population of the students when compared to public universities, hence there is tendency of adequacy of learning resources. Also, students in private universities had greater access to library facilities and recreation centres than students in public universities. This finding supports Ogunode (2020) who submitted that inadequate learning resources are a very big problem facing the administration of public universities in Nigeria. Many public universities in Nigeria do not have adequate infrastructural facilities. laboratories and offices for both students and academic staff. Also, Salisu (2016) in a study on influence of school physical resources on students' academic performance concludes that, there is significant difference in the academic performance of students in institutions with adequate facilities and those with inadequate facilities. Poor infrastructural facilities planning, corruption, poor maintenance culture and inadequate funding are factor responsible for inadequate infrastructural facilities in Nigerian higher institutions. A survey by the National Universities Commission in Ogunode (2020) showed that only about 30 percent of Nigeria student populations have adequate access to classroom, lecture theatres, laboratories and libraries.

Conclusion

One of the major factors that promote teaching-learning in any educational institution, especially at the university level is the availability of, access to and utilization of learning resources. This is because learning resources/facilities are a measure of a university's level of readiness to facilitate learning by students. In the same manner, access to and utilization of available and adequate learning resources help students to recall what has been learnt in the classroom situation. On the part of teachers, access to and utilization of learning resources help to reduce the burden of teacher-centred teaching as reference can easily be made to the teaching-learning resources/facilities to aid students. It can also help to enhance the quality of learning and make learning accessible to all students thereby making the students to realize their goal of university education.

The study concluded based on the findings of the study that there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of availability of learning resources, there is a significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' access to learning resources, there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of students' utilization of learning resources, there is no significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of quality of learning resources and there is a significant difference between state and private universities in Lagos State in terms of adequacy of learning resources.

Sociological Implications of the Findings

This study has revealed a differential access to adequacy of quality learning resources among undergraduates in public and private tertiary institutions. Students in private tertiary institutions have more access to adequate quality learning resources which puts them at a learning advantage with the potential for enhanced academic outcomes, over their counterparts in the public institutions. This has detrimental societal implications given that the public tertiary institutions provide education to a large chunk of the populace. No nation can short-change itself! Adequacy of quality learning resources is critical to raising effective and efficient societal manpower by this third tier of the national education system. A nation that has adopted education as an instrument per excellence in effecting national development, should ensure that the learning resources in their public tertiary institutions and indeed at all

levels of education are top-notch. This is why the need for adequate funding of the public tertiary education is urgent.

Implications of the Findings for Education Stakeholders

Programmes run by private universities should be well monitored by the NUC to ensure quality and ensure that the programmes conform to societal needs. Continuous appraisal of programmes is vital for quality assurance in the university system.

Teachers are responsible for ensuring positive changes in the lives of students in terms of skill acquisition, mental and moral development. In order to guarantee quality assurance in these private universities, highly qualified teachers or lecturers should be employed. Private university institutions are claimed to be better placed because they depended heavily on part-time staff drawn mainly from public universities. However, facilities for staff development and research opportunities for staff are limited in the private higher institutions compared with the public institutions. Besides, highly-qualified lecturers, staff development programmers of various kinds should be put in place to ensure self-development and self-growth of lecturers.

Standards can be assured through proper monitoring. Hence private universities should be put under close watch by the NUC so that they do not deviate from the primary purpose of academic excellence in the pursuit of profit. The proprietors of private universities should be made to understand that the license granted for operation can be withdrawn at any time if there is deviation from the.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proffered:

1. Universities, especially public universities, should endeavor to provide more learning facilities/resources in their institutions and ensure that the resources so provided are made accessible to the students.
2. Authorities in public and private universities should ensure the adequate utilization of resources/facilities at their disposal by students to enhance teaching-learning situation in their institutions.

3. There should be an awareness campaign on the usefulness and utilization of learning resources in Nigerian tertiary institutions.
 - a. All tertiary institutions (public and private) should be provided with enough learning resources (both direct and indirect) to ensure quality instructional delivery for the learners and enhance the performance of the instructors.
 - s. Constant seminars, workshops, and conferences should be organized for both for students and lecturers in tertiary institutions to improve their capacity for the use of learning resources.
6. Effective maintenance and management strategies should be adopted in tertiary institutions to ensure the capacity of available learning resources improve at all times.

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Exorbitant Private Schooling, Age Gating and Quality Education in Nigeria: A Sociological Investigation of the Intersections and Implications

Received: 28 January 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967109

Abstract

This paper critically examines the interplay between exorbitant tuition fees, age factors, and the quality of education in Nigerian private schools. Education, as a cornerstone for national development, has seen increasing reliance on private schools, especially following the 1999 Federal Government's introduction of the Private Partnership Initiative to alleviate the burdens on public institutions. However, the rapid proliferation of private schools, often of questionable quality, and the imposition of exploitative fees have raised concerns about educational accessibility and equity. The study evaluates how exorbitant tuition fees and age profiling impact the effectiveness of private schooling, particularly in fostering equitable access to quality education. Despite the notion that private schools provide superior academic outcomes compared to public schools, this paper highlights the socio-economic barriers that exacerbate inequalities in education access. Through an appraisal of these factors, this research aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the challenges facing Nigerian private education systems.

Keywords: *Exorbitant Tuition Fees, Age Profiling, Private Schools, Educational Quality, Nigerian Education System*

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Introduction

The education sector in Nigeria has undergone significant transformations since the 1990s, with the proliferation of private schools being a notable trend (Oke, 2010). It became crystal clear that burden of providing education appears huge for the government to bear solely. This necessitated the 1999 Federal Government's introduction of Private Partnership Initiative in education to meet the increasing demand for education. However, the growth of private schools has been driven by the perceived decline in the quality of public education, leading to increased demand for private educational institutions (fowowe 2022). Quality decline has featured commodification of education, with many private schools charging exorbitant fees that are beyond the reach of many Nigerians (Adebayo, 2015).

According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), the number of private schools in Nigeria increased from 18,271 in 2010 to 44,996 in 2020 (NBS, 2020). This growth has been accompanied by a significant increase in the cost of private education, with many schools charging fees that are equivalent to several months' worth of salary for the average Nigerian worker (Ogundipe, 2020).

Research has equally shown that the high cost of private education in Nigeria has significant implications for access to quality education, particularly for marginalized groups (Adeyemi, 2012; Adebayo, 2015). For example, a study by the Nigerian Education Research and Development Council (NERDC) found that the cost of private education was a significant barrier to access for many Nigerians, particularly those from low-income backgrounds (NERDC, 2018). Furthermore, as most private school enrollment has disregard global standard of stipulated age, age factor in pupils enrollment has been identified as a significant determinant of educational outcomes in Nigeria (Oke, 2010). Research has shown that younger students are more vulnerable to the negative consequences of exorbitant private schooling, including reduced access to quality education and increased likelihood of educational dropout (Adeyemi, 2012).

In light of these concerns, this study provides a sociological appraisal of the relationship between exorbitant private schooling, age factor, and quality education issues in Nigeria. The study aims to investigate how the exorbitant costs of private schools affect access to quality education, particularly for younger students, and to identify policies that can promote equitable access to quality education in Nigeria.

Private Schooling and exorbitant schooling

Private education connote people's increasing reliance and preference on non-state services, tilting towards private provision of education services by entrepreneurs (Umar, 2008). As further corroborated by Rose, (2007) private school are managed and run under many different types of arrangements, and may be owned and managed numerous actors such as 'NGOs, faith-based organisations, communities and commercially-oriented private entrepreneurs, each with diverse motive for involvement in education. Most private schools are entirely independent of government (self-financing) .Assertion by researches posit that the academic performance of students in private schools is better than the academic performance of students in public schools, prompting parents preference for private schools against public schools (Uyi, 2012 & Afolabi in Ehigiamusoe, 2012). Notionally, parents assumes that private schools provide value for the fees strife to pay tuition fee as affordable due to socio-economic status. Parents' patronage and preference of private schools has further led to exploitation, class consciousness brewing unequal access to education.

Adelabu and Rose (2004) schools serving low-income families in mostly urban and peri-urban areas, but remain unaffordable, fee levels are determined by the socioeconomic status of parents and location, in parents most cases based on economic reality experience difficulty in paying fees. Below are catalogues of private schools with elitist status, charging extremely exorbitant schools fees:

Table. 1. TOP 16 MOST EXPENSIVE PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NIGERIA (FEES PER ANNUM)

SN	SCHOOOL	TUITION FEES PER ANNUM	LOCATION
1	Grange School	N4.5million	Lagos
2	British International School	N4.48million	Lagos
3	Lekki British International High School,	N4million	Lagos
4	Day Waterman College	N3.7million	Abeokuta
5	White plains British School	N3.6million	Abuja
6	Green springs School	N3.185million	(Lagos)

7	Meadow Hall	N3million	Lagos
8	Loyola Jesuit	N2.8million	Abuja
9	Hillcrest School	N2.65million	Jos
10	Corona Secondary School	N2.55million	Agbara
11	Atlantic Hall	N2.27million	Epe, Lagos
12	Chrisland College	N2million	Ikeja, Lagos
13	Downen College	N2million	{Lagos}
14	International Community School,	N1.9million	Abuja
15	Nigerian Turkish International College	N1.6million	Abuja
16	Lead British International School,	N1.5million	Abuja

(Fieldwork: Oladeji, 2024)

Sociological import of the table above reveals class consciousness. Georg Lukács, observed that class consciousness purposefully emerge and are integrally connected to contestations between classes founded on the need to create subordinate prompting class dominance. Studies on students socio-economic status and achievement assert that non-privileged (low-SES) backgrounds students have lower educational and career ambitions, diligence rates, and educational accomplishment compared to affluent students (high-SES) backgrounds (Astin, 1993; Boatsman, 1995; Lareau, 1987; Pascarella & Terensini, 1991). Nigeria context reflects private schools cater to wealthier families who can afford high tuition fees. Socio-economic status has widen the gap between the rich and the poor due to exorbitant school fees.

Some research suggests that low-cost private schools can play a positive role in promoting equity, asserting that such schools have the potential to give access to education to poorer communities (Alderman, 2001& Tooley, 2004). Tooley (2004) responds to criticisms that for profit schools will seek to charge high fees, suggesting instead that entrepreneurs are motivated by a desire to serve the poor, however charging excessive fees would run against such interest. In this formulation, the profit motive is viewed as a factor in promoting socio-economic equity.

Meanwhile, the literature reveals little evidence that the very poor cannot afford even the lowest of fees (Cameron 2011),

Due to recent economic hardship many Nigerian parents are creaking under ridiculous and bogus fees charged by many private. It is depressing that the demands from the owners or proprietors of private schools are gradually going out of the reach of many parents. According to the report, the owners of some private schools collect as much as N287,000 as application fee while tuition fee goes as much as N7.25m in some of these schools! Though, the National Association of Proprietors of Private Schools (NAPPS), said that these schools are offering value for money, the truth is that these fees are no longer affordable to many parents considering the level poverty and inflation in the country. (Vanguard, January 25, 2022).

Access to quality education has been grossly stratified leading to disparities in educational outcomes based on income levels. The implication of this class consciousness is the rich will continue to be ahead and possibly dominate their counterparts from low or poor socio-economic background. As observed by Oladeji (2024), exorbitant schooling may not guarantee educational attainment. Positing despite the exorbitant tuition fee, none of student from the schools schools regularly came first in WASCE, JAMB and other external examinations. Further assert they are none these students are regularly first class products in conventional Nigerian Universities. Coupled with the fact that well-known personalities such as Professors Chinua Achebe, Wole Soyinka, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Dr. Dora Akuyili and so on were not product of private schools paying exorbitant school fees.

Age Gating Conceptual Anchorage

As stipulated the fundamental Universal Basic Education (UBE) Law in 2004the 9–3–4 education system, students are expected to commence school at age 6 and end by 18. This seem tenable in public school while abound cases of under age students in most Nigerian private schools. Parents in the bid to evade schools fees erroneously claim their wards are brilliant and in most cases student are choked with overloaded curriculum. The inherent danger is pupil lacking the cognitive maturity to cope academically. As asserted by age factors affects performance as younger students are liable to more difficulties than relatively older students (Martin, Foels, Clanton & Moon 2004). Chronologically, age determines a child mentally mature to cope with school rigorous academic expectations. The instances a child of seven or eight found in most Nigerian private secondary is an academic aberration due to overloaded

curriculum. Occasionally, as observed by Gillian and Giani (2018) parental income issue prompt the zeal to rush a child through the schooling process. However the ideal education process globally stipulates fundamental enrollment age for pupil ranges between age six to eight taken a clue from the table below.

Table 2. Survey of Selected Countries Enrollment age

SN	Country	<u>Enrollment Age</u>			Remark
		Primary	Secondary	Tertiary	
1	Brazil	6	15		<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>
2	China	6	12	15	<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>
3	Australia	5 Reception	12		<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>
4	India	6	14		<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>
5	Japan	6	12	15	<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>
6	Germany	6	10		<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>
7	United Kingdom	4 Reception	11		<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>
8	United States	5 Reception	11	17	<i>Ideal Cognitively</i>

(Fieldwork: Oyeyemi, 2024)

The basis for enforcing age six for minimum enroll was hinged on the attainment of cognitive maturity to cope with academic rigour. As substantiated by Mahar, (2006) that increase academic intake must be correlated with learner’s self-regulation and behavioral inhibition, and the ability to inhibit off-task behavior, postulating that cognitive skills appear to affect learning and academic achievement in school, as well as classroom behavior. Low Cognitive maturity based Blair (2007) study was attributed to underpin learning and cognition in academic performance in learners literacy and numeracy activity. Measure to earnest this ideal global practice in the Nigerian context has been futile. Despite efforts by Ministry of Education to ensure that private schools comply with the laid down system associated with ideal enrollment age. Nigeria pupils enter secondary schools from primary five thereby skipping primary six

classes, resulting in young pupils enter secondary school and even university under-aged and ill-prepared academically (N.P.E, 2004).

Worrisomely, elite and educated are deliberately involved in this ill-act of not putting a child through the right foundation, needed for a grounded development. Pathetically, culture abound of Nigerian parents sending their children to secondary school under-aged occasionally due to economic reasons associating with school fees hikes. The resultant effects featured under-aged undergraduates in most Nigerian tertiary institutions. No doubt, this may be adduced for reasons why product of most Nigerian tertiary institution lack behind in global competitiveness.

The proliferation of exorbitant private schooling in Nigeria has significant implications for the quality of education, particularly for marginalized groups (Adeyemi, 2012; Adebayo, 2015). Private schools, especially those in urban areas, often charge high tuition fees that create a barrier to access for families from lower socio-economic backgrounds. This limitation is particularly evident in the context of the country's vast population, where many families struggle to afford the escalating costs of private education, forcing them to rely on underfunded and often overcrowded public schools. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2020), the increasing number of private schools in the country further emphasizes the divide between the educational opportunities available to the wealthy and those accessible to poorer communities. The stark contrast between the quality of education available in private institutions and public schools deepens the educational divide, limiting opportunities for children from disadvantaged backgrounds. As a result, the growing reliance on private schooling compounds the educational inequality that already exists, leaving children from poor and marginalized communities with fewer opportunities to achieve high-quality education (NERDC, 2018).

Additionally, the high cost of private schooling disproportionately affects younger students, who are more vulnerable to reduced access to education (Adeyemi, 2012). This is particularly concerning given that early childhood education and primary education play a crucial role in shaping cognitive development, foundational skills, and future academic success. The age factor exacerbates the problem, as children from low-income families are more likely to experience educational disruption due to the inability to afford private schooling fees. As these children fall behind in their early educational years, they are at an increased risk of academic failure, dropping out of school, or never progressing to higher education levels (Oke, 2010).

The psychological and emotional toll on these students can also be profound, leading to disengagement from their education and a lack of motivation to continue.

The commodification of education in Nigeria, where education is treated as a marketable product rather than a basic human right, further intensifies the inequality that exists in the education system (Adebayo, 2015). As education becomes a commodity for those who can afford it, the emphasis shifts away from fostering intellectual growth and critical thinking to prioritizing financial gain. Private schools, especially those catering to the affluent, often focus on enhancing their reputation, offering lavish facilities, and providing international curricula that attract wealthy parents. These priorities can overshadow the need for strong pedagogical practices, teacher development, and inclusivity. This commodification of education means that many students are denied access to quality learning environments simply because their families cannot pay the steep fees required. Moreover, schools that are financially motivated might cut corners in their teaching staff, curriculum offerings, and educational resources, thus further deteriorating the quality of education (Ogundipe, 2020 and Fowowe 2022).

Furthermore, the Nigerian government's failure to regulate the private education sector effectively has contributed to the unchecked growth of exorbitant private schools (Ogundipe, 2020). Despite the increasing reliance on private education, there is little oversight to ensure that private schools maintain high educational standards. The lack of comprehensive regulatory frameworks means that schools can freely set their own fee structures without regard to affordability, further exacerbating the financial burden on parents. In some cases, there are no consistent quality control measures, which means that students from wealthier families have access to better education, while those in public schools face overcrowded classrooms, outdated curricula, and insufficient teaching materials (NERDC, 2018). This regulatory gap allows the growth of a fragmented education system, where access to quality education is determined more by socio-economic status than by merit or need.

In conclusion, the issue of exorbitant private schooling in Nigeria has far-reaching implications for the quality of education. The high costs of private education reinforce existing socio-economic inequalities and limit opportunities for students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access quality learning experiences. The age factor and the commodification of education further compound these challenges, while the government's lack of effective regulation of the private education sector contributes to the problem. To address these issues, a multifaceted

approach is required, including stricter regulation of private schools, increased funding for public education, and the implementation of policies that promote equitable access to quality education for all students, regardless of their socio-economic background.

Effect of Exorbitant Private Schooling and Age Factor on Quality of Education in Nigeria

The Minister of Education's recent announcement to raise the minimum age for university admission in Nigeria to 18 years has ignited a heated debate among stakeholders in the education sector. Proponents of the policy argue that it will tackle the issues of exorbitant school fees and the cognitive maturity of underage learners. On the other hand, critics have raised concerns about the potential consequences of such a policy.

One of the primary motivations behind the Minister's announcement is the need to address the exorbitant school fees charged by private universities in Nigeria. By raising the minimum age for university admission, the government hopes to reduce the financial burden on parents and guardians. However, critics argue that this policy may not necessarily address the root cause of the problem, which is the lack of affordable education options in Nigeria.

Another argument in favor of the policy is that it will ensure that students are cognitively mature enough to handle the rigors of university education. Proponents argue that underage learners are often rushed into university programs without adequate preparation, which can lead to poor academic performance and high dropout rates ¹. However, critics counter that this policy may unfairly penalize gifted students who are ready for university-level work at an earlier age.

The policy also has potential consequences that need to be considered. For instance, raising the minimum age for university admission may lead to an influx of students in secondary schools, putting a strain on already limited resources. Additionally, students may enter the workforce later than their peers in other countries, which could have implications for Nigeria's economic development. Furthermore, the policy may unfairly penalize students from disadvantaged backgrounds who may not have access to quality secondary education.

Apparently, the Minister of Education's announcement to raise the minimum age for university admission in Nigeria to 18 years has sparked intense debate among stakeholders in the education sector. While the policy may have been well-intentioned, there are potential consequences that need to be carefully considered. Ultimately, the government needs to engage

in a broader conversation about the state of education in Nigeria and work towards finding solutions that address the root causes of the problems facing the sector.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study has examined the factors contributing to the high cost of private education in Nigeria, including infrastructure, teacher salaries, curriculum, and extracurricular activities. Additionally, the research has explored the impact of the age factor on the Nigerian educational system, highlighting the challenges faced by students who enter school at an older age or drop out and attempt to reintegrate into the system. The findings of this study suggest that while private schools in Nigeria offer several advantages, including better infrastructure, smaller class sizes, and a wider range of extracurricular activities, the high cost of tuition fees can be a significant barrier to access. Furthermore, the age factor can have a profound impact on students' educational outcomes, particularly those who enter school at an older age or drop out and attempt to reintegrate into the system.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following suggestions are made:

1. **Government Regulation:** The government should regulate the cost of private education in Nigeria to ensure that it is affordable for all.
2. **Scholarships and Financial Aid:** Private schools should offer scholarships and financial aid to students from low-income backgrounds to increase access to quality education.
3. **Flexible Schooling Options:** The government and private schools should provide flexible schooling options, such as part-time or online education, to cater to the needs of older students or those who have dropped out of school.
4. **Adult Education Programs:** The government should establish adult education programs to provide educational opportunities for older students who have dropped out of school.
5. **Parental Education:** Parents should be educated on the importance of enrolling their children in school at the right age and the benefits of completing primary and secondary education.

6. Improving Public Education: The government should improve the quality of public education in Nigeria to provide a viable alternative to private education. By implementing these suggestions, Nigeria can increase access to quality education, reduce the cost of private education, and improve educational outcomes for all students.

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Artificial Intelligence and Job Productivity of Academics in Universities in Lagos State

Received: 1 February 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967135

Abstract

This study investigated the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on the job productivity of academics in public universities in Lagos State, Nigeria,. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and covered two public universities in Lagos State. The study purposive adopted sampling technique to select forty-eight academic staff from the Departments of Educational Management in both institutions. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Artificial Intelligence and Academic Staff Job Productivity Questionnaire (ASJPQ)*. Descriptive statistics, including mean and standard deviation, were employed to analyze the data. Findings revealed that the use of AI significantly enhanced teaching effectiveness by improving lesson preparation, instructional delivery, literature search, academic writing, and assessment practices. The results also showed that AI positively influenced research productivity through improved data analysis, collaboration, innovation, and dissemination of scholarly outputs. Furthermore, AI integration moderately reduced administrative workload by facilitating time management, task automation, and efficient handling of academic responsibilities. The study concluded that AI, when ethically deployed and supported by adequate infrastructure and capacity-building initiatives, serves as a strategic tool for enhancing academic productivity in higher education institutions. It therefore recommended continuous professional development, institutional policy frameworks for ethical AI use, investment in digital infrastructure, and the adoption of AI-driven workload management systems.

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Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Academic Productivity, Teaching Effectiveness, Research Quality, Administrative Workload, Higher Education, Nigeria*

Introduction

The core of academics lies in their ability to develop resourceful manpower to fuel the national economy and this define their productivity which is influenced amongst other factors such as personal attributes, competencies, policies, structures, resources available to academics in their institutions and external factors. Job productivity of academics has been reinvented by rapid technological advancements, particularly the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI). According to Daft (2016) and (Robbins & Coulter, 2020), productivity represents the ratio of outputs produced to inputs and Job productivity in academia can be conceptually defined as the measure of efficiency and effectiveness with which academic staff perform their professional roles—including teaching, research, and community service—by transforming available resources (time, knowledge, skills, and institutional support) into measurable outcomes such as publications, student learning achievements, research grants, and professional contributions

Going by this authors, productivity in academia, translates to the extent to which faculty members maximize their intellectual and institutional resources to deliver quality education and research. Job productivity in academia refers to the efficiency, quality, and outcomes of academic activities such as lecturing, publication, research, supervision, and service delivery (Armstrong, 2020). Many challenges confronting job productivity of academics have been described as being multidimensional in nature presenting as institutional, personal and external constraints and varying as workload and role conflict, limited resources and infrastructure, research funding and support, work life balance and stress, technological disruptions and adaptation, institutional bureaucracy and administrative burden and global competition and pressure to publish (Robins& Judge, 2019: Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2019: Okeke ,2017; Robbins and Coulter ,2020& Altbach et al. 2019).

In the words of Russell and Norvig(2021), Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the ability of machines or computer systems to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as reasoning, problem-solving, learning, and decision-making. In the academia, AI is used to perform different tasks ranging from intelligent systems and software such as adaptive learning platforms, plagiarism detection tools, generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT), and automated grading systems to improve teaching, research, and administrative productivity (Laurillard, 2012). AI is increasingly transforming higher education by reshaping how academics engage in teaching, research, and administrative duties. In this digital age, AI has become a vital tool in enhancing

job productivity, though it also introduces new challenges and ethical concerns. The above indicated that the challenges of academics in relation to productivity abounds, thus the need to down play its effect on the system is important for improved efficiency. The researchers therefore intend to investigate the influence of AI on job productivity of academics in universities in Lagos State.

Purpose of the study

This study seeks to:

1. Determine the extent to which AI will affect the quality of Teaching in Public Universities in Lagos State
2. Determine the extent to which AI will affect the quality of Research in Public Universities in Lagos State
3. Establish the extent to which AI integration will reduce Administrative workload of Academics in Public Universities in Lagos State

Research Questions

1. What extent does the use of artificial intelligence affect the quality of teaching in public universities in Lagos State?
2. What extent does the use of artificial intelligence affect the quality of research in public universities in Lagos State?
3. What extent does the integration of artificial intelligence reduce the administrative workload of academics in public universities in Lagos State?

Job Productivity in Academia

Job productivity in academia can be conceptualized as the extent to which academic staff effectively utilizes institutional and personal resources to generate impactful teaching, research, and service outcomes. Job productivity in academics involves the measurable contributions of scholars toward institutional goals. These include research publications, teaching quality, student supervision, and administrative contributions (Mathis & Jackson, 2011). Productivity is not only quantitative (e.g., number of journal articles or conference papers) but also qualitative, measured in terms of academic impact, innovation, and contribution to societal development (Robbins & Judge, 2019). In the words of Hirsch, (2005),

Okeke (2017), Altbach, Reisberg and Rumbley (2019) , academic productivity is not merely about quantity but also about the quality, impact, and relevance of contributions made by academic staff to their institutions and society and is often assessed across three core dimensions these are teaching productivity in terms of quality and quantity of instruction, student evaluations, curriculum development, and mentoring. Research productivity in terms of number and impact of scholarly publications, citation counts, patents, and research grants. Service productivity in terms of participation in administrative duties, professional associations, and community engagement. (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2019).

Challenges of Job productivity in Academia

Scholars such as Laurillard (2012), Daft (2016), Okeke (2017), Robbins and Judge (2019), (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, (2019), Robins and Coulter (2020) discussed extensively the challenges of job productivity of academia to include; Workload and Role Conflict resulting in excessive role demands and conflicting expectations reducing productivity by causing burnout and stress; Limited Resources and Infrastructure common in many universities, particularly in developing countries, insufficient funding, poor laboratory facilities, limited access to digital resources, and outdated libraries constrain academic staff from achieving high research productivity; Research Funding and Support is limited in many higher institutions reducing opportunities for meaningful research outputs and collaboration; Work-life Balance and Stress is experienced due to pressures of publishing, securing tenure, and handling large student populations diminishes productivity, creativity, and overall job satisfaction; Technological Disruptions and Adaptation also present as a challenge to academics who lack digital literacy or training struggle to integrate new technologies into teaching and research, limiting productivity; Institutional Bureaucracy and Administrative Burdens impedes performance and efficiency, as faculty spend significant time on reporting, accreditation, and compliance instead of research and teaching; Global Competition and Pressure to Publish otherwise known as "publish or perish" culture creates pressure on academics to prioritize quantity of publications over quality.

Artificial Intelligence and Academic Productivity

AI plays a transformative role in enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of academic work.

(a) Teaching and Learning

AI-powered learning platforms personalize learning, adapt to student needs, and provide real-time feedback. Automated grading and virtual teaching assistants reduce workload, enabling academics to focus on mentorship and research (UNESCO, 2021).

(b) Research and Innovation

AI facilitates literature reviews, citation analysis, and plagiarism detection. Machine learning tools assist in data analysis and pattern recognition, accelerating research outcomes and improving accuracy (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2014).

(c) Administrative Functions

AI-based systems automate routine tasks such as scheduling, handling student queries, and managing records, thus improving efficiency in academic institutions (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2020).

(d) Knowledge Dissemination

AI enhances visibility of academic research through digital repositories, search optimization, and recommendation algorithms, expanding scholarly impact (Baker & Smith, 2019).

Challenges of Using AI in Academia

Although Artificial Intelligence (AI) offers numerous benefits for teaching, research, and administration, its adoption in academia faces significant challenges. These challenges can be grouped into ethical, pedagogical, technical, and institutional dimensions.

1. Ethical and Academic Integrity Concerns

AI raises questions of plagiarism, authorship, and fairness in education. Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT) can produce essays, research papers, and coding solutions, which may encourage academic dishonesty and reduce students' independent thinking skills (Russell & Norvig, 2021). According to Robbins and Coulter (2020), ethical dilemmas often emerge when technology advances faster than institutional policies, creating uncertainty in accountability and evaluation.

2. Quality of Learning and Over-Reliance

While AI can provide personalized learning, there is a risk of students and staff becoming overly dependent on these tools. Laurillard (2012) emphasizes that technology should support—rather than replace—critical thinking and creativity. Over-reliance may lead to shallow learning outcomes and reduced problem-solving skills.

3. Bias, Transparency, and Reliability Issues

AI systems are built on datasets that may contain biases, leading to unfair or inaccurate outputs. Goodfellow, Bengio, and Courville (2016) note that machine learning systems are only as good as the data they are trained on, making them prone to error or misrepresentation. In academic contexts, this may distort grading systems, admissions processes, or research results.

4. Technological and Infrastructure Barriers

Implementing AI tools requires significant investment in digital infrastructure, internet access, and faculty training. In many developing countries, universities lack the resources to deploy and maintain such systems (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2019). Daft (2016) explains that organizational productivity is constrained when technology adoption is not supported by adequate resources.

5. Job Displacement and Changing Roles of Academics

There is concern that AI could replace or diminish the role of educators in tasks such as grading, feedback, and even content delivery. While AI enhances efficiency, it may lead to resistance among faculty who fear redundancy or loss of professional autonomy (Okeke, 2017).

6. Institutional Readiness and Policy Gaps

AI. Without guidelines, academics and students face uncertainty in using AI responsibly (Robbins & Judge, 2019). This creates inconsistency in adoption and risks undermining academic credibility.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The study covered the two Universities of Education in Lagos State (Lagos State University and Lagos State University of Education) and specifically, Staff in the Department of Educational management in these Universities. The population of the study comprised 30 and 24 Academic Staff in the Departments of Educational Management these institutions. The study adopted purposive

sampling technique to select 48 academic staff from these institutions. A single instrument tagged Artificial Intelligence and Academic Staff Job productivity Questionnaire(ASJPQ) was designed for the study. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation to answer research questions

Results and discussion

RQ1: What extent does the use of artificial intelligence affect the quality of teaching in public universities in Lagos State?

Table 1: RQ1: The extent the use of artificial intelligence affect the quality of teaching in public universities in Lagos State?

ITEMS	N	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
The use of AI tools (e.g., Chat GPT, Grammarly, Turnitin AI, etc.) improves the quality of my academic work.	48	2.79	1.84	Moderately extent
AI tools help me complete academic tasks more efficiently within limited time frame.	48	4.01	1.23	High Extent
Using AI tools enhances my understanding of complex academic concepts.	48	3.73	1.07	High Extent
AI tools support effective literature search, summarization, and referencing in my academic work.	48	3.83	1.14	High Extent
The use of AI tools has improved my writing, editing, and presentation of academic assignments.	48	3.63	1.06	High Extent
AI tools assist me in solving research related problems and data analysis tasks.	48	3.83	1.12	High Extent
I feel more confident in my academic performance when I use AI-based tools.	48	3.64	1.28	High Extent
The integration of AI tools into academic task promotes creativity and critical thinking.	48	3.69	1.37	High Extent
Excessive reliance on AI tools may reduce independent thinking and academic originality (reverse coded item).	48	3.73	1.21	High Extent
Overall, AI tools positively influence my academic task performance.	48	3.58	1.69	Moderate Extent
Weighted Mean/SD		3.65	1.30	

Decision Benchmark: 1-1.5 Poor extent, 1.5-2.5 Slight extent 2.6-3.5 Moderate extent. 3.6-4.5 High extent, 4.5-5.0 Very high extent

The table above presents the extent to which Artificial Intelligence (AI) influences their academic task performance. Specifically, the respondents strongly agreed that AI helps them complete academic tasks more efficiently within limited time frames ($\bar{X} = 4.01$, $SD = 1.23$), indicating that efficiency is one of the most significant benefits of AI usage. Similarly, high mean scores were recorded for items relating to enhanced understanding of complex academic concepts ($\bar{X} = 3.73$, $SD = 1.07$), support for literature search, summarization, and referencing account for ($\bar{X} = 3.83$, $SD = 1.14$), and assistance in solving research-related problems and data analysis tasks ($\bar{X} = 3.83$, $SD = 1.12$). These findings suggest that AI tools substantially facilitate cognitive processing, academic inquiry, and research productivity. Furthermore, respondents indicated that AI improve writing, editing, and presentation of academic assignments ($\bar{X} = 3.63$, $SD = 1.06$), enhance academic confidence ($\bar{X} = 3.64$, $SD = 1.28$), and promote creativity and critical thinking ($\bar{X} = 3.69$, $SD = 1.37$), all of which were rated to a high extent. The implies that AI contribute positively not only to task completion but also to the quality of academic outputs and students' self-efficacy. However, the item assessing whether the use of AI improves the quality of academic work recorded a moderate extent rating ($\bar{X} = 2.79$, $SD = 1.84$), suggesting that while AI aids efficiency and understanding, its direct impact on overall academic quality may vary among students. Similarly, the item on overall positive influence of AI on academic task performance yielded a moderate ($\bar{X} = 3.58$, $SD = 1.69$), indicating some reservations, possibly linked to concerns about overdependence. Notably, respondents acknowledged that excessive reliance on AI tools may reduce independent thinking and academic originality ($\bar{X} = 3.73$, $SD = 1.21$), reflecting awareness of potential drawbacks. The weighted ($\bar{X} = 3.65$; $SD = 1.30$) exceeds the decision benchmark for high extent, demonstrating that, overall, students perceive AI tools as significantly beneficial to their academic task performance. The finding indicate that AI has a positive and significant impact on students' academic performance, particularly by improving efficiency, understanding, research support, writing quality, and academic confidence. However, there are mild concerns about its potential effects on academic quality and the risk of reduced independent thinking. These findings highlight the need for a responsible and balanced integration of AI in academic activities. The finding of this study agreed with the outcome of the study carried out by Holmes et al. (2022) who found that balanced AI integration supports personalized learning, enhances assessment accuracy, and promotes adaptive instruction when guided by ethical frameworks and institutional policies. The finding also corroborated the finding of the study conducted by

Azevedo et al. (2022) who established that balanced AI application enhances academic productivity while safeguarding learner autonomy and intellectual development.

RQ 2: What extent does the use of artificial intelligence affect the quality of research in public universities in Lagos State?

Table 2: The extent of the use of artificial intelligence affect the quality of research in public universities in Lagos State

ITEMS	N	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
AI regularly help me engage in research activities relevant to my field of specialization.	48	3.63	1.23	High Extent
My research outputs meet acceptable academic and ethical standards through the use of AI.	48	3.63	1.28	High Extent
AI enables me publish my research findings in reputable, peer journals.	48	3.29	1.57	Moderate Extent
AI helps me demonstrate originality and innovation in my research work.	48	3.77	1.33	High Extent
I am competent in the use of appropriate research methods and analytical techniques as a result of AI assistance	48	3.42	1.41	Moderate Extent
AI assisted me to actively collaborate with other researchers within and outside my institution.	48	3.46	1.49	Moderate Extent
I seek external or internal research funding to support my research activities.	48	3.50	1.25	Moderate Extent
AI assisted in dissemination of my research findings through conferences, seminars, or workshops.	48	3.65	1.25	High Extent
I continually update my research skills and knowledge through training and scholarly engagement offered by AI	48	3.77	1.37	High Extent
Overall, the quality of my research contributes positively to knowledge advancement and institutional reputation through the usage of AI.	48	3.75	1.28	High Extent

Weighted Mean/SD 3.58 1.35

Decision Benchmark: 1-1.5 Poor extent, 1.5-2.5 Slight extent 2.6-3.5 Moderate extent. 3.6-4.5 High extent, 4.5-5.0 Very high extent

The table presents respondents' perceptions of the extent to which Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools influence their research productivity and scholarly engagement, based on responses from 48 participants. The respondents indicated that AI regularly helps them engage in research activities relevant to their field of specialization ($\bar{X} = 3.63$, $SD = 1.23$), suggesting that AI facilitates continuous scholarly involvement. Similarly, respondents agreed that their research outputs meet acceptable academic and ethical standards through the use of AI ($\bar{X} = 3.63$, $SD = 1.28$). The item on AI enabling respondents to publish their research findings in reputable peer-reviewed journals recorded a moderate mean score ($\bar{X} = 3.29$, $SD = 1.57$), indicating that while AI provides support, publication outcomes may still depend on other critical academic and institutional factors. Furthermore, respondents affirmed that AI helps them demonstrate originality and innovation in their research work ($\bar{X} = 3.77$, $SD = 1.33$). In terms of methodological competence, respondents reported that AI enhances their ability to apply appropriate research methods and analytical techniques ($\bar{X} = 3.42$, $SD = 1.41$), while also supporting collaboration with other researchers within and outside their institutions ($\bar{X} = 3.46$, $SD = 1.49$). Additionally, respondents moderately agreed that they seek internal or external research funding to support their research activities with the assistance of AI ($\bar{X} = 3.50$, $SD = 1.25$). AI was also found to assist in the dissemination of research findings through conferences, seminars, and workshops ($\bar{X} = 3.65$, $SD = 1.25$), as well as in updating research skills and knowledge through training and scholarly engagement ($\bar{X} = 3.77$, $SD = 1.37$). Overall, respondents perceived that the quality of their research contributes positively to knowledge advancement and institutional reputation through the usage of AI ($\bar{X} = 3.75$, $SD = 1.28$), underscoring the broader academic and institutional benefits of AI integration. The weighted of ($\bar{X} = 3.58$; $SD = 1.35$) indicates a moderate to high extent of AI influence on research productivity. This finding suggests that AI significantly enhance research engagement, methodological competence, collaboration, dissemination, and innovation. The finding of this research work reaffirmed the outcome of the study conducted by Osiughwu (2025) found that AI tools such as ChatGPT improve postgraduate students' research literacy, analytical competence, and confidence, leading to deeper engagement with research tasks. Similarly, the outcome of this study aligned with the studies of Zawacki-Richter et al. (2019) and Yusuf et al (2024) established that AI-supported academic environments promote interdisciplinary collaboration, transparent research practices, and global scholarly networking.

RQ3: What extent does the integration of artificial intelligence reduce the administrative workload of academics in public universities in Lagos State?

Table 3: The integration of artificial intelligence reduce the administrative workload of academics in public universities in Lagos State

ITEMS	N	\bar{X}	SD	Remarks
My teaching load is appropriate for my academic rank and responsibilities through the application of AI	48	3.48	1.27	Moderate Extent
The number of courses I teach allows me to prepare adequately for each class using AI	48	3.60	1.22	High Extent
My research workload is manageable alongside my teaching responsibilities assisted by AI	48	3.67	1.36	Moderate Extent
Administrative duties assigned to me are reasonable and clearly defined and manageable using AI	48	3.81	1.36	High Extent
I am able to balance teaching, research , and administrative responsibilities effectively using AI	48	3.65	1.19	High Extent
My workload allows sufficient time for quality research and publication assisted by AI	48	3.54	1.27	Moderate Extent
The workload assigned to me does not negatively affect the quality of my teaching through the application of AI tools	48	3.58	1.35	Moderate Extent
I experience work-related stress due to excessive academic workload using AI	48	3.46	1.25	Moderate Extent
AI assisted in institutional policies support and equitable distribution of academic workload efficiently.	48	3.58	1.24	Moderate Extent
AI helps in managing and sustaining academic workload.	48	3.69	1.25	High Extent

Weighted Mean/SD 3.61 1.28

Decision Benchmark: 1-1.5 Poor extent, 1.5-2.5 Slight extent 2.6-3.5 Moderate extent. 3.6-4.5 High extent, 4.5-5.0 Very high extent

The table presents the descriptive analysis of lecturers' perceptions of how Artificial Intelligence (AI) supports the management of academic workload. The findings indicate that most aspects of academic workload management through AI were rated between moderate and high extent and rated the appropriateness of their teaching load for their academic rank (\bar{X} = 3.48, SD = 1.27) as being to a moderate extent. Similarly, the manageability of research workload alongside teaching responsibilities with AI support (\bar{X} = 3.67, SD = 1.36) was rated

as a moderate extent, while sufficient time for quality research and publication using AI ($\bar{X} = 3.54$, $SD = 1.27$) also reflected a moderate extent. The adequacy of course load to allow sufficient preparation using AI ($\bar{X} = 3.60$, $SD = 1.22$), the reasonableness and clarity of administrative duties ($\bar{X} = 3.81$, $SD = 1.36$), and the ability to effectively balance teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities through AI ($\bar{X} = 3.65$, $SD = 1.19$). In addition, AI support for managing and sustaining academic workload recorded a high extent rating ($\bar{X} = 3.69$, $SD = 1.25$), indicating that AI tools significantly enhance lecturers' efficiency and productivity. Furthermore, the perception that workload does not negatively affect teaching quality through the use of AI ($\bar{X} = 3.58$, $SD = 1.35$), experiences of work-related stress due to academic workload using AI ($\bar{X} = 3.46$, $SD = 1.25$), and institutional policies supporting equitable workload distribution using AI ($\bar{X} = 3.58$, $SD = 1.24$) were all rated to a moderate extent. The weighted ($\bar{X} = 3.61$, $SD = 1.28$) falls within the benchmark range of high extent, indicating that, overall, AI is perceived to play a substantial role in supporting the effective management of academic workload among lecturers. The overall finding reveals that the application of Artificial Intelligence significantly enhances the management and sustainability of academic workload, enabling lecturers to effectively balance teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities, while moderately reducing workload-related stress and improving productivity. The finding of this study sustained the finding of the earlier study conducted by Baig and Yadegaridehkordi (2025) who revealed that the continuous use of generative AI among academic staff significantly improves job satisfaction, task efficiency, and workload management, leading to sustained productivity and institutional effectiveness. Likewise, the finding of this study is in alignment with the study conducted by Ukozor (2024) who was able to establish that AI-driven instructional and administrative tools significantly enhance lecturers' teaching efficiency, research productivity, and administrative effectiveness in Nigerian universities

Conclusion

The study concluded that, when implemented within ethical frameworks, backed by sufficient infrastructure, and enhanced by ongoing professional growth, artificial intelligence can be a strategic instrument for increasing academic job productivity. Higher education productivity, institutional efficacy, and knowledge development in Nigerian universities could all be significantly impacted by the successful implementation of AI.

Recommendations

In view of the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

Universities and relevant education authorities should design and implement continuous professional development programmes aimed at improving academics' competencies in the ethical and effective usage of AI for teaching, research, and administrative functions. Such training will enhance digital literacy, reduce resistance to technological change, and promote innovative academic practices. Institutional policies and regulatory frameworks should be developed to guide responsible AI usage, particularly concerning academic integrity, data privacy, authorship, and ethical research practices. This will help prevent misuse, promote accountability, and sustain academic credibility.

Government and institutional stakeholders should invest in robust digital infrastructure, including reliable internet access, licensed AI tools, data security systems, and technical support units, to ensure sustainable and equitable AI integration across universities. University management should adopt AI-driven workload management systems to ensure equitable distribution of teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities, thereby reducing stress, burnout, and inefficiencies among academic staff. Finally, further empirical studies should be conducted across other states and private universities to provide broader insights into the long-term effects of AI on academic productivity, institutional performance, and higher education transformation in Nigeria.

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Assessment of Mathematics Attitude, Test-taking Skills and Mathematics Anxiety of Secondary School Students in Ondo State

Received: 12 October 2025 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967173

Abstract

Mathematics is very important for skill acquisition and sustainable national development since it laid solid foundations for science and technology. Despite its practical utility, the performance of secondary school students in the subject is not encouraging. Test taking skills, mathematics anxiety and poor attitude towards mathematics have been identified in literature as some of the factors contributing to students' poor achievement in the subject. This study therefore assessed Mathematics attitude, test-taking skills and Mathematics anxiety of Secondary School Students in Ondo State. Descriptive survey research design was used for the study. Three hundred and sixty (360) SS3 students randomly selected using multistage random sampling procedure constituted the sample. Three self-constructed instruments were used for data collection. The instruments are: Test-taking Skills Scale (TTSS); Mathematics Anxiety Scale (MAS) and Students' Attitude towards Mathematics Scale (SAMS). Cronbach alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the instruments. The reliability coefficients for the three measures are: 0.88, 0.79 and 0.73 respectively. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation. Findings revealed that majority of the secondary school students in Ondo state have negative attitude towards the study of mathematics, manifest high level of mathematics anxiety and do not have appropriate test-taking skills. It was concluded that secondary school students in Ondo State are still having problems with the identified variables causing poor performance in mathematics. Appropriate recommendations were also made to improve students' achievement in the subject.

Keywords: *Assessment, Mathematics Attitude, Test-Taking Skills, Mathematics Anxiety, Sustainable Development*

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Introduction

Mathematics is very important in the development of any society. It is a subject that cut across all spheres of human endeavour. Roger Bacon in Yadav (2019) stated “Neglect of mathematics works injury to all knowledge, since he who is ignorant of it cannot know the other sciences or the things of the world. According to Yadav (2019), Mathematics plays significant roles in social development, intellectual development, vocational development, moral development, spiritual development, cultural development, development of education system, development of economics, development, women empowerment, development of medical and agricultural field, and development of science and technology. Mathematics is the foundation of science and technology and its functional role to science and technology is multifaceted and multifarious that no area of science, technology and business enterprise escapes its application (Okigbo & Osuafor; 2020).

Most countries of the world accord much importance to the study of mathematics because it is seen as a key tool for political, social, scientific and technological growths, as well as a basis for scientific and technology understanding (Adero, 2014). This shows that mathematics as a subject occupies a significant unique position in the science curriculum. Mathematics is a prerequisite course in the study of Engineering, Computer science and other allied science courses. Mathematics plays a key role in the sharpening of how an individual deals with the various spheres of private, social and civil life (Mohd, 2011). This justifies the main reason why mathematics is made a compulsory subject in Primary and secondary school curriculum in Nigeria. It also serves as a pre-requisite for gaining admission to tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Despite the importance of mathematics, the performance of the students in the subject at the external examinations in Nigeria and Ondo State in particular is not encouraging (Popoola & Olarewaju, 2010., Idowu, 2016; Imoko & Jimin, 2016., Oni, 2021). Mathematics attitude is one of the major factors that contributed to students’ poor achievement in mathematics. Attitude could simply be defined as the individual’s disposition to things, objects or people. Davadas and Lay (2017) defined attitude as a learned predilection of a person to react positively or negatively to any object, situation, concept and another person. The attitude of students toward mathematics has been the subject of a great deal of attention from educators. Students with a positive attitude toward mathematics tend to enjoy the subject, understand its

value, and have confidence in it; thus, they are likely to prioritize the study of mathematics (Kiwanuka, Van Damme, Van den Noortgate, & Reynolds, 2020; Mullis, Martin, Foy, Kelly, & Fishbein, 2020), which could lead to high performance in the subject. Although several researchers have reported a positive relationship between students' attitudes toward mathematics and mathematics achievement (Chen et al, 2018; Dowker, Cheriton, Horton, & Mark, 2019; Sunghwan & Taekwon, 2021), others have reported a non-significant association between them (Mubeen, Saeed, & Arif, 2013).

Zan and (2007) identify three dimensions within attitudes towards mathematics: emotional disposition, vision of mathematics and perceived competence. This connotes that mathematics attitude is a feeling of like or dislike for mathematics (Zan & Martino, 2007). Mathematics attitude can either be positive or negative. Positive mathematics attitude enables the students to be focused on mathematics computations and problem solving, negative attitude diverts the students mind from concentrating on mathematics computation and solving problem, they view mathematics as challenging. Attitude formed by students at foundation and secondary school stage, will go a long way in determining their intention to study mathematics and mathematical related courses in higher education in future (Ayodele, 2016; Yasar, 2016).

Bakare in Asikhia (2010) categorized factors causing poor academic performance of students in mathematics to four areas which are: Home or family related factors such as cognition stimulation during the first two years, types of discipline at home, lack of role model and finance; School related factors such as school location and physical building, interpersonal relationships among the school personnel, lack of Internet in the school program; Child related factors such as basic / cognitive skills, physical and health factors, psycho-emotional factors; and society related factors such as inability of educational policy, underfunding of educational sectors, leadership and job losses.

In addition to the aforementioned factors, some test related factors too can as well influence students' performance in mathematics. The most common test related factors that have significant impact on students academic performance according to Hemberton, Swaminathan and Rogers in Dodeen (2009) include test anxiety, test taking skills, tendency to guess, attitude towards test and cheating.

Test taking skills are cognitive skills that allow students to understand any test taking situation in an appropriate manner, and to know what to do before, during and after the test (Dodeen, 2009). Most test taking skills are useful in students' practical life, where they may benefit their effective use of time, ability to set priorities, ability to work both fast and accurately and to make sure ideas become directly evident. Test taking skills are related to the motivation to learn and to the attitudes students may hold with regards to specific subjects (Dodeen, 2009). Further studies indicated that students with test taking skills improved attitudes towards tests, demonstrated lower levels of anxiety and achieved better results (Peng, 2005). Gbore and Osakuade (2016) attest to it that the quality of test taking skills possessed by a testee at a particular time, allows him/her to obtain a higher score in a test. Takallon, Vahda, Araghi & Tabrizi (2015) carried out their research to investigate if training on test taking strategies could improve performance. At the end of the investigation, it was observed that those given training on test taking skills performed better than those given placebo treatment.

Mathematics anxiety is another test related factor that can affect students' performance in mathematics. Anxiety as a global construct has been operationally defined in various ways by notable scholars. Anxiety simply is a summary description of a series of overt and covert actions.

Mathematics anxiety is associated with panic, nervousness, restlessness, helplessness, trembling and confusion that arises in students when mathematics or mathematics tests are mentioned (Okolo, 2015). These could be as a result of students' lack of interest, unpreparedness for tests and past unpleasant experiences related to test and test results.

Statement of the Problem

Mathematics is very important to social and economic development of any nation. The poor performance of students in the subject at Senior Schools Certificate Examination (SSCE) is causing a sort of worry among education stakeholders in Nigeria. If the consistent under achievement of students in the subject should continue unabated, it could spell doom for the technological advancement of the country. Attitude towards mathematics is one of the major determinants of the students' performance in mathematics. A negative attitude towards mathematics has been found to be a contributing factor towards under achievement of students in the subject. Also, Mathematics anxiety and test-taking skills of students have also contributed to poor performance of students in the subject. Most of the past researchers were

focused on relationships of mathematics attitude, Mathematics anxiety and test-taking skills to students' academic performance in mathematics but the study to really assess the level of mathematics anxiety. Mathematics attitude and test-taking skills of secondary school students in Ondo State seem not available; therefore there is the need for the study to assess students on these variables in order to improve students' performance in mathematics.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to assess factors influencing mathematics performance of secondary school students in Ondo state. Specifically, the study intends to assess:

1. students' attitudes towards mathematics.
2. mathematics' anxiety of students.
3. the test-taking skills of students.

Research Questions

The following questions are generated to guide the study

1. What is the attitude of students towards mathematics?
2. What is the test-taking skill of the students?
3. What is the mathematics anxiety level of the students?

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in carrying out the study. This descriptive survey research design is appropriate for this study because it affords the researcher to obtain the opinions of a representative sample of a target population (senior secondary school students in Ondo state) on a specific topic of interest (test taking skills, mathematics anxiety and attitude towards Mathematics of students) so as to infer the perception or views to the entire population. The entire public senior secondary school students in all the three Senatorial Districts of Ondo State constituted the population for this study. A sample of three hundred and sixty (360) Senior Secondary School class three (SSS3) students constituted the sample. The sample was chosen from the population using multistage and simple random sampling procedures. Ondo state is divided into three senatorial districts (that is Ondo North, Ondo Central and Ondo South senatorial districts). Each senatorial district has local government area councils. In stage 1, simple random sampling technique was used to select one local government area from each of the three senatorial districts. In stage 2, simple random sampling technique was also used to select two schools from each of the selected

local government area councils. In the final stage, sixty students (30 males and 30 females) were randomly selected from each of the selected schools.

Three self-constructed instruments were used for data collection. The instruments are: Test-taking Skills Scale (TTSS); Mathematics Anxiety Scale (MAS) and Students' Attitude towards Mathematics Scale (SAMS). The three instruments have 15 items each structured on 4-point scale of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Convergent validity was used to ascertain the validity of the three instruments. The instruments were administered on 20 non-participating students concurrently with three standardized instruments (Test-Taking Skills Scale by Dodeen, 2008; MAS-R developed by Bai, Wang, Par & Frey, 2009; and MAI developed by Ahmad, 1986). Data collected were subjected to Pearson Product Moment Correlation, correlation coefficients of 0.78, 0.82 and 0.75 were obtained respectively for Test-taking Skills Scale; Mathematics Anxiety Scale and Students' Attitude towards Mathematics Scale. Cronbach Alpha was also used to ascertain the reliability of the instruments. After pilot testing, the reliability coefficients of 0.88, 0.79 and 0.73 were obtained respectively for Test-taking Skills Scale; Mathematics Anxiety Scale and Students' Attitude towards Mathematics Scale. The three instruments were administered by the researcher with the help of research assistants. Descriptive statistics such as simple frequency counts, percentage, mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data.

Results

Research Question 1: What is the attitude of students towards mathematics?

In order to answer this research question, data obtained from Students' Attitude towards Mathematics Scale was analyzed using frequency counts and percentage. The result is as shown in

Table 1.

Table 1: Students' attitude towards mathematics

Intervals	Attitude	Frequency	Percentage
15 – 30	Negative	192	53.3%
31 – 60	Positive	168	46.7%
Total		360	100%

From table 1, 192(53.3%) of the secondary school students have negative attitudes towards mathematics while 168(46.7%) of the secondary school students have positive attitudes

towards mathematics. it can be concluded therefore that majority of the secondary school students in Ondo state have negative attitude towards the study of mathematics.

Research Question 2: What are the test-taking skills of secondary school students?

In order to answer this research question, data obtained from students’ responses to Test-taking skills scale which consisted the following subscales (Before test taking skills, 4 items; Time management skills, 4 items; During test skills, 4 items and After test skills, 3 items) were subjected to mean and standard deviation. The result is as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Students test-taking skills

Subscale	No of items	Mean	SD	Remark
Before test skills	4	2.27	0.22	Not Appropriate
Time management skills	4	2.43	0.35	Not Appropriate
During test skills	4	1.97	0.43	Not Appropriate
After test skills	3	2.40	0.39	Not Appropriate
Total	15			

From table 2, it can be observed that students’ test taking skills are below the mean cut off point of 2.5

which is the minimum cut off point for 4 points likert scale in all the 4 sub-scales. This means that the

students do not have appropriate test-taking skills before the test (\bar{X} = 2.27, SD = 0.22); time management (\bar{X} = 2.43, SD= 0.35); during test (\bar{X} = 1.97. SD= 0.43) and after the test (\bar{X} = 2.40, SD = 0.39).

Research Question 3: What is the mathematics anxiety level of secondary school students?

In order to answer this research question, data obtained from mathematics Anxiety scale were subjected to mean and standard deviation. Since the minimum obtainable mark is 15 and maximum is 60, mean plus or minus 1 standard deviation were employed to classify the students into high, moderate and low mathematics anxiety level. The result is as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Students level of mathematics anxiety

Intervals	Mathematics Anxiety level	Number of students	Percentage
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42 – 60	High	167	46.4%
38 – 41	Moderate	117	32.5%
15 - 37	Low	76	21.1%
		360	

From table 3, 167 (46.4%) students have high mathematics anxiety, 117 (32.5%) students have moderate level of mathematics anxiety, while 76 (21.1%) students have low mathematics anxiety. It can be concluded that majority of the secondary school students in Ondo State demonstrated high level of mathematics anxiety.

Discussion of Findings

Finding from research question 1 showed that majority of the secondary school students in Ondo state have negative attitude towards the study of mathematics. This study corroborates the finding of Agah and Thankgod (2022) who revealed that the attitude of students in Mathematics were mostly negative. The similarity in the findings of the study is not coming as a surprise. Mathematics is a subject that most people do not like, they will definitely develop hatred.

Finding from research question 2 showed that secondary school students in Ondo State do not have appropriate test-taking skills before the test, time management, during test and after the test. This study is at variance with the early study of Dodeen (2009) whose study revealed that university students generally have good skills in taking test. The reason for the variance could be that this present study was conducted among secondary school students while Dodeen study was conducted among undergraduate students. At university stage, students must have gathered additional experience on test taking strategies.

Finding from research question 3 showed that majority of the secondary school students in Ondo State demonstrated high level of mathematics anxiety. This finding corroborates the finding of Mutegi, Gitonga and Rugano (2021) whose study revealed that majority of secondary school students in Kenya had high level of mathematics anxiety; the similarity in the two studies could be that secondary school stage is a stage where mathematics is a must for every student to pass before gaining admission for further studies.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that majority of secondary school students in Ondo State have negative attitude towards mathematics. The students do not have appropriate test-taking skills before the test; time management; during test and after the test. Majority of the students manifest high mathematics anxiety.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations are made;

1. teachers and counsellors should train students on test-taking skills
2. Mathematics teachers should employ different teaching methods to arouse the interest of the learners so as to develop positive attitude
3. Psycho-educational intervention should be put in place by school counsellors to make students develop moderate level of mathematics anxiety

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**Digital Transformation and its Influence on Nigerian Entrepreneurial Activities:
Navigating Opportunities and Constraints in a Low Infrastructure Economy**

Received: 15 January 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967197

Abstract

This study explores the influence of digital transformation on entrepreneurial activities in Nigeria, particularly within the context of a low infrastructure economy. As digital tools become increasingly essential for business growth and competitiveness, entrepreneurs in Nigeria face a paradox: while digital innovation offers vast opportunities, its adoption is hindered by infrastructural and systemic challenges. Using a descriptive survey design, data were collected from 200 entrepreneurs across urban and rural areas through a structured questionnaire. The study employed both descriptive and inferential statistical tools including Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and t-tests to analyze the data. Findings reveal a significant positive relationship between digital transformation and entrepreneurial growth. However, infrastructural deficits and disparities between urban and rural areas limit the extent of digital adoption. In addition, government policies and digital economy initiatives were found to be influential but inconsistently implemented. Digital literacy also plays a critical role in entrepreneurs' ability to effectively utilize digital technologies. The study concludes by emphasizing the need for targeted policy enforcement, improved infrastructure, inclusive digital training, and gender-sensitive programs to ensure equitable participation in the digital economy. Recommendations are offered to foster a more inclusive and digitally empowered entrepreneurial landscape in Nigeria.

Keywords: *Digital Transformation, Entrepreneurs, Digital Literacy, E-commerce*

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INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

In the 21st century, digital transformation has emerged as a powerful force reshaping global economies, business models, and entrepreneurial activities. It encompasses the adoption and integration of digital technologies into all areas of human and economic development, fundamentally changing how value is delivered to customers and how businesses operate. For developing nations like Nigeria, the rise of digital transformation holds significant promise for unlocking entrepreneurial potential, driving innovation, and improving competitiveness. However, the benefits of this digital revolution are often tempered by persistent infrastructural challenges that limit its full exploitation. In a country grappling with unreliable power supply, limited internet penetration in rural areas, and a digital skills gap, the interplay between technological advancement and infrastructural deficit presents a paradox for Nigerian entrepreneurs (Akinwale & Olaopa, 2020).

Nigeria, with its population exceeding 220 million, is Africa's most populous country and has one of the largest youth populations globally. The entrepreneurial spirit among Nigerians is widely acknowledged, with a significant portion of the population engaging in small and medium-scale enterprises (SMEs). According to the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Agency of Nigeria (SMEDAN, 2021), there are over 39 million SMEs in Nigeria, accounting for 96% of all businesses in the country and contributing to about 48% of the national GDP. These enterprises are increasingly recognizing the importance of digital tools and platforms in enhancing productivity, expanding markets, and improving service delivery. From online retailing and digital banking to agritech and healthtech solutions, Nigerian entrepreneurs are creatively leveraging digital platforms to respond to local challenges and global opportunities (Eze *et al.*, 2021).

Despite these developments, Nigeria's digital landscape is still evolving. Key digital transformation drivers such as broadband connectivity, digital payment infrastructure, access to mobile devices, and digital literacy are still unevenly distributed across the country. The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS, 2022) notes that while urban centers like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt have experienced significant digitization, rural and underserved communities continue to face digital exclusion. This digital divide not only hampers the scalability of entrepreneurial ventures but also reinforces existing socio-economic disparities.

Entrepreneurs in these regions often struggle to access online platforms, cloud services, and e-commerce opportunities, thereby limiting their participation in the digital economy.

Moreover, the high cost of internet data, unreliable electricity supply, and inconsistent government policy frameworks further constrain digital transformation efforts. According to the Alliance for Affordable Internet (2021), Nigerians spend over 10% of their average income on mobile internet, far above the UN-recommended 2% threshold. This cost barrier disincentivizes sustained digital engagement among small-scale entrepreneurs. Additionally, frequent power outages compel many business owners to rely on costly alternative energy sources, which erodes their profits and operational efficiency. Government initiatives like the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (NDEPS 2020–2030) and the Nigeria Startup Act (2022) reflect attempts to address these constraints, but implementation remains inconsistent. Nonetheless, digital transformation has opened up numerous opportunities that are reshaping the entrepreneurial terrain in Nigeria. The rise of fintech, for example, has democratized financial services and enhanced financial inclusion, especially for previously unbanked populations. Mobile money platforms such as OPay, Paga, and Flutterwave have revolutionized payment systems, enabling micro-businesses to process transactions seamlessly. Social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok have also become low-cost marketing and sales channels for entrepreneurs, particularly in fashion, food, and cosmetics sectors. These digital tools are helping businesses to bypass traditional brick-and-mortar limitations and access broader customer bases (Adeleke and Owolabi, 2020).

Furthermore, e-learning and virtual training platforms are helping to close the digital skills gap, equipping young Nigerians with the knowledge needed to participate in the digital economy. Initiatives such as Google Digital Skills for Africa, Andela, and Decagon are nurturing a new generation of tech-savvy entrepreneurs capable of building scalable digital products and services. These platforms not only increase employability but also stimulate innovation and job creation across different sectors. To fully harness the transformative potential of digital technology, there is a need for a holistic approach that addresses both technological and infrastructural challenges.

Olatunji (2020) argued that in recent years, digital transformation has redefined the global business landscape, creating new opportunities for entrepreneurs to innovate, scale, and compete in both local and international markets. In Nigeria, the emergence of digital tools such

as mobile money, social media marketing, e-commerce platforms, and digital service delivery has shown potential to revolutionize entrepreneurial activities, especially among youths and small business owners. However, this potential is yet to be fully realized due to the persistent infrastructural and systemic challenges that characterize the Nigerian economy. One of the major issues is the inadequacy of digital infrastructure across the country. Poor internet connectivity, high data costs, unreliable electricity supply, and limited access to digital devices hinder many entrepreneurs from adopting and sustaining digital tools in their businesses. Rural and semi-urban entrepreneurs, in particular, remain excluded from digital opportunities due to limited broadband penetration and the absence of supportive technological ecosystems.

Another significant challenge lies in the low level of digital literacy among entrepreneurs. Many business owners lack the skills to effectively utilize available digital technologies, thereby widening the gap between potential and actual impact. While some tech-driven startups in urban areas are thriving, the majority of small businesses across the country still rely on traditional methods of operation due to knowledge gaps and lack of exposure. Although policies like the National Digital Economy Policy and Strategy (2020–2030) and the Nigeria Startup Act (2022) have been introduced to promote digital transformation, there is a clear implementation gap, especially in reaching grassroots entrepreneurs. Existing research has focused more on digital technology adoption in urban startups and corporate organizations, leaving a knowledge gap on how entrepreneurs in low-infrastructure settings navigate these challenges. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by exploring the influence of digital transformation on Nigerian entrepreneurial activities within a low infrastructure economy, identifying both the opportunities and the barriers.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the influence of digital transformation on Nigerian entrepreneurial activities, particularly within the context of a low infrastructure economy. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the relationship between digital transformation and the growth of entrepreneurial activities in Nigeria
2. Identify the key opportunities that digital transformation presents for entrepreneurs in Nigeria in terms of business growth, innovation, access to markets, and service delivery.

3. Analyze the major infrastructural and systemic constraints that hinder the effective implementation and utilization of digital tools by Nigerian entrepreneurs.
4. Assess the level of digital literacy and technological readiness among entrepreneurs, particularly those operating in rural and semi-urban areas.

Research Hypotheses

- H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between digital transformation and the growth of entrepreneurial activities in Nigeria.
- H₀₂: Digital infrastructure challenges (e.g., poor internet, electricity) do not significantly affect the adoption of digital tools by Nigerian entrepreneurs.
- H₀₃: Government policies and digital economy initiatives have no significant impact on promoting digital entrepreneurship in Nigeria.
- H₀₄: There is no significant difference in the level of digital adoption between entrepreneurs in urban and rural areas.
- H₀₅: Digital literacy has no significant influence on entrepreneurs' ability to utilize digital technologies effectively.

Significance of the study

The study will offers valuable insights into how digital transformation influences entrepreneurial activities within a developing, low infrastructure economy like Nigeria, and how entrepreneurs navigate both the opportunities and the constraints it presents. For entrepreneurs and small business owners, the study will provide a clearer understanding of how digital tools and platforms such as mobile apps, e-commerce, social media, and digital payment systems can be effectively leveraged for business growth. By highlighting practical strategies for overcoming infrastructural limitations, the study will aim to empower entrepreneurs, especially those in rural and underserved areas, to participate more actively in the digital economy.

For policymakers and government agencies, the study will offer evidence-based findings that can guide the formulation and implementation of inclusive digital policies. Furthermore, academics and researchers in the fields of entrepreneurship, digital transformation, and development studies can use this study as a foundation for further research. It will contributes to existing literature by focusing on the unique Nigerian experience and the challenges faced by entrepreneurs in low-infrastructure environments. Ultimately, this study supports Nigeria's

broader goal of building a digitally inclusive economy by identifying pathways to support innovation, reduce the digital divide, and promote sustainable entrepreneurship.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Concept of Digital Transformation

Digital transformation refers to the process by which organizations and individuals integrate digital technology into all areas of business and daily life, fundamentally altering how they operate and deliver value (Westerman, Bonnet & McAfee, 2014). In the context of entrepreneurship, digital transformation includes adopting tools such as mobile applications, e-commerce platforms, social media marketing, cloud computing, digital payments, and data analytics to enhance efficiency and customer experience. In Nigeria, digital transformation has gained momentum with the increase in mobile phone usage, fintech innovations, and online service platforms like Jumia, Paystack, and Flutterwave. However, the level of adoption varies widely due to infrastructural challenges, especially in rural areas (Akinwale & Olaopa, 2020).

Concept of Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship involves the identification and exploitation of business opportunities through the creation and management of new ventures. Entrepreneurs play a crucial role in job creation, poverty reduction, and innovation (Schumpeter, 1934). In Nigeria, entrepreneurship is largely driven by necessity rather than opportunity, with many individuals turning to small businesses as a means of survival due to high unemployment rates (Adebayo & Olayemi, 2021). The digital age presents new possibilities for Nigerian entrepreneurs to grow their businesses through wider market access, automation, and digital customer engagement.

Constraints to Digital Entrepreneurship in Nigeria

Digital entrepreneurship in Nigeria holds significant potential to drive economic growth, innovation, and job creation. However, several constraints continue to hinder its full realization. One of the major challenges is the high cost of internet access. Many entrepreneurs, especially those in rural or low-income areas, struggle to afford reliable and fast internet services, which are essential for operating online businesses. Another critical issue is Nigeria's unstable electricity supply. Frequent power outages increase operational costs and limit entrepreneurs' ability to maintain consistent digital engagement or product delivery. Furthermore, low digital literacy among a significant portion of the population impedes the adoption and effective use

of digital tools and platforms. Many aspiring entrepreneurs lack the necessary skills to navigate digital ecosystems, limiting their competitiveness. Access to financing is also limited, with many digital startups unable to secure funding due to stringent loan requirements or lack of investor interest in tech ventures. Lastly, weak policy implementation and inconsistent regulatory frameworks pose barriers to growth. (Ajayi, 2021).

Theoretical Review

Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), created by Fred Davis in 1989, is a popular theoretical framework that describes how people learn to embrace and use technology. Perceived utility (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU) are the two primary characteristics that TAM identifies as influencing a user's decision to adopt a technology. The degree to which an individual thinks that utilizing a specific technology would improve their productivity or job performance is known as perceived usefulness. Contrarily, perceived ease of use describes how much a person thinks utilizing the technology would be effortless. These two ideas have an impact on how someone feels about utilizing the technology, which in turn influences how they intend to use it and, ultimately, how they actually use it. This approach is very useful for comprehending how Nigerian business owners behave online. When customers recognize the obvious advantages and find the technologies easy to use, many are willing to embrace digital platforms like digital payment systems, e-commerce websites, or mobile apps. On the other hand, adoption rates fall when people believe that digital platforms are complicated or useless. Thus, TAM provides insightful information on the different degrees of digital tool adoption among business owners in Nigeria's changing business environment.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory

Proposed by Rogers (1962), the Diffusion of Innovation Theory explains how new ideas and technologies spread through cultures and societies. The theory categorizes adopters into innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. In the Nigerian context, urban entrepreneurs with access to infrastructure and exposure tend to be early adopters of digital tools, while rural entrepreneurs often fall into the late majority or laggard category due to infrastructural and educational barriers.

Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View, developed by Barney (1991), emphasizes the importance of internal resources in achieving a competitive advantage. In the context of digital entrepreneurship, access to digital resources such as skilled labor, reliable infrastructure, and technological assets—can determine the success or failure of entrepreneurial ventures. Entrepreneurs with better access to these resources are more likely to thrive in the digital economy.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study **adopted** a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of digital transformation on Nigerian entrepreneurial activities, particularly within the context of a low infrastructure economy. The design **enabled** the researcher to collect, describe, and analyze data on the state of digital adoption, challenges, opportunities, and perceptions among entrepreneurs across different regions in Nigeria.

Population of the Study

The population for the study **comprised** Nigerian entrepreneurs operating in both urban and rural areas, especially small and medium-sized business owners who used or intended to use digital tools in their businesses. It also **included** startup founders, fintech operators, and informal digital vendors.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The sample size for this study consisted of 200 respondents. This number was carefully chosen a balance between comprehensive representation and the feasibility of data collection. To ensure inclusiveness and representativeness, the study employed a combination of stratified sampling and purposive sampling techniques. Stratified sampling was used to divide the population into two main groups: urban entrepreneurs and rural/semi-urban entrepreneurs. This was important in order to highlight potential disparities in digital adoption and infrastructure access between these two groups. Stratification allowed for a fair comparison of how entrepreneurs in different settings experienced the effects of digital transformation.

Within each stratum, purposive sampling was used to select respondents who met specific criteria. Entrepreneurs were selected based on their direct involvement in digital business activities, such as the use of e-commerce platforms, social media marketing, mobile apps, digital payment tools, and other tech-enabled solutions. This approach ensured that only

participants with relevant digital experience contributed to the data, thus increasing the reliability and relevance of the responses.

Research instrument

The research instrument used for this study was a structured questionnaire designed to gather relevant data from Nigerian entrepreneurs. It consisted of six sections covering demographic information, digital transformation and business growth, opportunities from digital innovation, infrastructural and systemic challenges, government policies, and digital literacy. The questionnaire employed a four-point Likert scale to capture respondents' opinions and levels of agreement. It was developed based on insights from related literature and tailored to reflect the Nigerian entrepreneurial environment. To ensure clarity and relevance, the instrument was reviewed by academic experts and pre-tested with 20 entrepreneurs. Feedback from the pilot study helped refine the questions, making the instrument reliable and appropriate for addressing the study's objectives and testing the stated hypotheses.

Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire **was reviewed** by experts in the field of entrepreneurship and digital economy. A pilot study involving 20 entrepreneurs **was conducted**, and their feedback **was used** to refine the instrument. The reliability of the questionnaire **was tested** using Cronbach's Alpha, with a reliability coefficient of above 0.7 **considered** acceptable.

Method of Data Collection

Primary data **were collected** through the administration of structured questionnaires. The questionnaire **contained** closed-ended Likert-scale questions addressing digital adoption, infrastructure challenges, government support, digital literacy, and business growth.

Method of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics such as frequency count percentage was **used** to analyze the respondent's bio data, while inferential statistics such as Pearson correlation, T- test, Chi-square and ANOVA **were used** to test the study's hypotheses. Each hypothesis **was tested** at the 0.05 level of significance.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.2 Analysis of Respondents Bio Data

Table 1 Demographic Information of Respondents

Demographic Features	features	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Age</i>	18-25years	12	15.5%
	26-35years	66	44.5%
	36-45years	22	25.5%
	46years and above	29	14.5%
<i>Gender</i>	Male	119	59.5%
	Female	81	40.5%
<i>Types of Business</i>	E-commerce	49	24.5%
	Fin Tech	31	15.5%
	Social Media based	39	19.5%
	Mobile Services	29	14.5%
	Informal/Others	52	26.0%
<i>Location</i>	Urban	111	55.5%
	Rural/Semi-Urban	89	44.5%
	Other	1	1.0%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 1 showed the demographic information of the respondents. The largest segment (44.5%) is aged **26–35 years**, reflecting a generation of **young, energetic, and digitally inclined entrepreneurs**. The data shows a male-dominated entrepreneurial landscape (59.5%), though female representation (40.5%) is also significant. This indicates a growing inclusion of women in the digital economy. The location distribution shows a **reasonably balanced spread: Urban entrepreneurs (55.5%)** slightly outnumber their **rural/semi-urban counterparts (44.5%)**. This allows for meaningful comparisons in digital adoption between well-connected and underdeveloped areas. Entrepreneurs in **urban areas** likely benefit from better infrastructure, stable electricity, and faster internet. However, the **high rural participation** highlights an encouraging shift where digital transformation is reaching traditionally marginalized areas potentially through mobile phones, local networks, or community initiatives.

Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between digital transformation and the growth of entrepreneurial activities in Nigeria.

Table 2: Pearson’s Correlation between digital transformation and growth of entrepreneurial activities

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	df	r	Sig.	Decision
Digital Transformation	200	19.77	3.86				
Entrepreneurial Growth	200	3.42	0.061	98	.413*	.000	Rejected

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

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

Results on Table 2 revealed a moderate positive correlation between digital transformation and growth of entrepreneurial activities ($r = .413^*$; $p < .05$). This suggests that digital transformation is a pointer to entrepreneurial growth in Nigeria. Hence, the null hypothesis is rejected.

H₀₂: Digital infrastructure challenges (e.g., poor internet, electricity, limited access to digital devices) do not significantly affect the adoption of digital tools by Nigerian entrepreneurs.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis

Coefficients					
R= .280 ^a ; R Square = .079, Adjusted R Square = .065					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.579	.221		11.649	.000
Poor Internet	.217	.085	.254	2.552	.012
Electricity	.204	.081	.233	2.151	.010
limited access to digital devices	.130	.071	.142	1.419	.009

Dependent Variable: poor internet, Electricity, limited access to digital devices and Adoption of digital tools by Nigerian entrepreneurs

The table presents the digital infrastructure challenges affecting the adoption of digital tools by Nigerian Entrepreneurs. The table shows that the independent variables (poor internet, electricity and limited access to digital devices) made a significant hindrance to the adoption of digital tools by Nigerian Entrepreneurs. In terms of magnitude of contribution, Poor internet made the most significant hindrance ($\beta = .217$; $t = 2.552$; $p < 0.05$) to the adoption of digital tools by Nigerian entrepreneurs, followed by Poor electricity ($\beta = .204$; $t = 2.151$; $p < 0.05$) then followed by limited access to digital devices ($\beta = .130$; $t = 1.419$; $p < 0.05$).

H₀₃ Government policies and digital economy initiatives have no significant impact on promoting digital entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

Table 4: Analysis of Research Hypothesis (H₀₂)

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	8.118 ^a	9	.003
Likelihood Ratio	6.137	9	.002
N of Valid Cases	125		

a. 12 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03

Table 4 shows that government policies and digital economy initiatives have significant impact in promoting digital entrepreneurship in Nigeria ($P > .05$). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This implies that government policies and digital economy initiatives have significant impact on promoting digital entrepreneurship in Nigeria.

H₀₄ There is no significant difference in the level of digital adoption between entrepreneurs in urban and rural areas.

Table 5: T-test analysis of difference in digital adoption between entrepreneurs in the urban and rural school area

Group	Mean	Std. Dev.	F	df	t	Sig.
Rural	48.22	.847				

Urban 62.64 1.125 62.991 196 33.935 .001

Table 5 presents the difference in the level of digital adoption between entrepreneurs in the urban and rural areas. The table shows that the level of digital adoption between entrepreneurs in the urban and rural school located areas ($t = 33.935$; $df = 196$; $p = .001$; $P > .05$). This implies that there is high digital adoption in Urban area compare to the rural area

H₀₅ Digital literacy has no significant influence on entrepreneurs’ ability to utilize digital technologies effectively.

Table 6: Regression analysis on digital literacy and entrepreneurs’ ability to utilize digital technologies effectively

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	1126.840	1	1126.840	7.532	.007 ^b
Residual	14661.670	98	149.609		
Total	15788.510	99			

a. Dependent Variable: Entrepreneurs’ ability to utilize digital technologies

b. Predictors: (Constant), Digital Literacy

When p-value is less than 0.05 = there is significant

When p-value is greater than 0.05 = There is no significant

Table 6 shows the regression analysis on digital literacy and entrepreneurs’ ability to utilize digital technologies effectively. The table shows that digital literacy significantly influence entrepreneurs’ ability to utilize digital technologies effectively. . This is showed by the P-value .007 which is less than 0.05

Discussion of findings

The findings of this study reveal that digital transformation has a statistically significant positive effect on entrepreneurial growth in Nigeria. A moderate positive correlation ($r = .413$, $p < .05$) indicates that the adoption of digital tools such as e-commerce, mobile apps, and digital payments fosters business expansion and market reach. However, infrastructural challenges such as poor internet connectivity, irregular electricity supply, and limited access to digital devices significantly hinder digital adoption, especially in rural areas. Findings also revealed that urban entrepreneurs reported higher levels of digital engagement compared to their rural

counterparts, as shown by the significant t-test result ($t = 33.935, p < .001$). Findings also indicated that government policies and digital economy initiatives were also found to positively influence digital entrepreneurship, although implementation challenges persist. Additionally, digital literacy was shown to significantly affect entrepreneurs' ability to use digital technologies effectively ($p = .007$). These findings underscore the dual reality of opportunity and constraint in Nigeria's digital entrepreneurial landscape, especially within low-infrastructure contexts

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that digital transformation significantly influences entrepreneurial activities in Nigeria, offering both opportunities and challenges, especially within the context of a low-infrastructure economy. The findings revealed that digital tools play a vital role in enhancing business growth, market expansion, and customer engagement. However, these benefits are unevenly distributed across regions due to infrastructural limitations like poor internet connectivity, unstable electricity supply, and limited access to digital devices. Entrepreneurs in urban areas are better positioned to take advantage of digital innovations, while their rural counterparts face significant barriers.

The study also found that government policies and digital economy initiatives, though present, need stronger implementation and support mechanisms to reach grassroots entrepreneurs. Furthermore, digital literacy emerged as a key determinant of successful digital adoption, emphasizing the need for continuous training and capacity-building programs.

Overall, digital transformation has the potential to revolutionize Nigeria's entrepreneurial landscape, but its success depends on inclusive infrastructure development, accessible digital education, and sustained policy commitment. Bridging the digital divide between urban and rural areas will not only enhance economic inclusion but also position Nigeria to fully harness the potentials of a digital economy in fostering innovation, job creation, and sustainable development.

Recommendations

- The government should invest in affordable, high-speed internet and stable electricity, especially in rural and semi-urban areas
- Training programs should be expanded to equip entrepreneurs particularly in underserved regions with the skills to navigate digital tools.
- Policies like the Nigeria Startup Act must be properly enforced, with support systems accessible to grassroots entrepreneurs.
- Collaborations with telecom and fintech companies can accelerate infrastructure rollout and financial inclusion.

- Tailored digital empowerment programs should target female entrepreneurs to close the gender gap in digital adoption.

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Prospects and Challenges of Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

Received: 28 January 2026 / Accepted: 8 February 2026 / Published: 11 March 2026

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Doi: doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18967294

Abstract

The core problem of unemployment in Nigeria has demotivated the Nigerian populace as the active population grows, along with the limited available white-collar job opportunities. This has brought frustration and uneasiness in the Nigerian labor market, particularly in the mid-1980s when the graduates began to feel the brunt of the problem. The unemployment crisis is analyzed, as well as the role of entrepreneurship education, particularly in its formation theorized to enhance and contribute to the graduates' self-actualization in the labor market. Many graduates feel the gap of traditional education. The emphasis of practical skills as borders, or self-confidence is the focus of the labor economy. By equipping students with the skills necessary for self-employment, entrepreneurship education can reduce youth dependency on the formal job market, alleviate poverty, and contribute to sustainable economic development. Nigerian Tertiary Institutions claim to provide entrepreneurship education. Poor funding and a curriculum of theorized education coupled with a lack of exposure, as well as an entrepreneurship attitude via a critical lens, has been the focus of this paper. A goal of positive self-actualization of graduates and an active decrease of the unemployment rate of the economy of Nigeria is sought. Self-actualization of graduates has also been analyzed throughout the paper. Nigeria has also experienced a low self-actualization rate of graduates. The financing of education has a positive effect on education. The paper advocates for a holistic policy framework focused on the teaching of

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entrepreneurship as a tool for fostering job creation among Nigeria's youth and stimulating sustained economic development.

Keywords: *Prospects, Challenges, Entrepreneurship Education, Tertiary Institutions, Unemployment, Self-Reliance.*

1. Introduction

The increasing rate of unemployment in Nigeria has reached alarming levels especially since the mid-1980s. University graduates used to have a high promise of securing a job after graduation. Now, however, graduates complete their National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) and have to contend with a reality in which there is little or no economic opportunity. This has created a situation in which the question, “what comes after Youth Service?” reverberates across Nigeria, as there is an increasing sense of anxiety and intragenerational unemployment. This scenario has created a disjuncture between university students and the prevailing socio-economic circumstances. While the ultimate aspiration of many is to work for the government or in a public company, there is little evidence to support the fact that they are prepared to do so in a self-reliant manner by acquiring practical skills. Cases such as Taiwo and Tobias (2022) and Olubusoye et al. (2023) illustrate how many individuals ignore the altered expectation of the employment market, believing, incorrectly, that jobs will be waiting for them when they graduate. Most previous generations provided new graduates with direct access to employment opportunities.

Nigeria is experiencing a growing crisis of unemployment, and many, including Nwangwu (2007), document the lack of acceptance, and the absence of effective practices of entrepreneurial education within the Nigerian education system. While many document the lack of acceptance, and the absence of effective practices of entrepreneurial education within the Nigerian education system, Nwangwu (2007) suggests the absence of self-reliant graduates is a result of the failure of tertiary education to cultivate a self-reliant mindset in graduates. Graduates, once they have completed their education, undertake a massive effort to find employment, but many in Nigeria remain jobless (Ojapinwa, 2021). The high level of unemployment in Nigeria can be attributed directly to the absence of entrepreneurial education.

Indeed, there are significant obstacles to funding, resources, and student exposure to practice, that still face most Nigerian universities that have begun to teach entrepreneurship education (Jacobs, Ezeokafor, & Ekwere Gabriel, 2021). The most evident of these challenges has been a lack of a balanced approach to the practical and the theoretical in the profession and education of the discipline, thus, the predominant emphasis has been on the shaping the theoretical aspect of a practitioner, to the detriment of the psychological and the practical. A collapse of enterprise Nigerian Ayodele (2006) attributes to the company of many students, a

schooling experience, that is largely homogenous with the 'white-collar' education. Perhaps, this is undoubtedly within the education, and very socially recognized, and is a viable answer in the face of the dilemma of jobless deficiency, for lack of a better social set of skills possessed. In other words, within the formal school curricula, the focus has been on imparting theoretical knowledge, enhancing social skills, and providing a framework that guides the student toward a job. Preserving and allocating a social resource through the education of enterprise is to enable the individual to create jobs for themselves, and the people at the grassroots level, economically reducing their reliance on the jobs of others. Laying the foundation for self-restraint through enterprise education is imparting the skills to be self-employed, and the attitude of self-employment. More importantly, enterprise education equips the attitude of self-employment, to be innovative, creative, and to have an enterprising disposition, operating and problem-solving, for themselves, which metamorphosed the education of the individual, the focus of the education enabling to seek jobs, to creating jobs. This research analyzed the obstacles that have affected the achievement of entrepreneurship education and proposed methods to transcend such obstacles in order to obtain entrepreneurship education's potential as a means of addressing unemployment and fostering economic development in Nigeria.

2. Who is an Entrepreneur?

Typically, an entrepreneur is viewed as a business owner and manager who organizes and services the factors of production, which include, labor, capital, and land, to form an economic product. Ratten (2023) describes an entrepreneur as an individual or business leader who possesses the skills and the ability to innovatively and commercially respond to a market demand profitably. Consequently, the essence of an entrepreneurship is the ability to sense a problem, provide a solution, and take advantage of a situation to better one's economic situation. An entrepreneur is a scientist who studies a community to determine the problem and provide a solution that creates economic value and profit. An entrepreneur is a researcher, and a scientist. The value of an entrepreneur to the community is the creation of new jobs, new ideas, and the overall economic growth of the community.

3. Concept of Entrepreneurship and Entrepreneurship Education

Most countries consider entrepreneurship a multidimensional construct. Understanding needs and innovatively and profitably integrating means is opportunity recognition. Also, innovation to fill the gaps in the community and in society as a whole is important. It is also

understood through the literature that integrating the three factors of production, land, labor, and capital, and the resultant economically valuable good or service is also a definition of entrepreneurship (Nwagwu, 2007). However, entrepreneurship education is a discipline that focuses on preparing an individual, especially a young person, to attain a level of self-employment through acquiring an appropriate skill, knowledge, and attitude set. It is about preparing a student to think out of the box in a way that creates a stimulus to the establishment of a business.

As the Compendium for World Health Organization (WHO, 2021) states, entrepreneurship education creates enterprising people, particularly in the context of sustainable economic growth and employment creation. For Nigeria, the role of entrepreneurship education in tackling the problem of unemployment and attaining economic self-reliance for the graduates is crucial. Entrepreneurship, as an educational framework, seeks to provide the required and relevant competencies for self-employment as well as wage employment. The intention is to create work by decreasing poverty and social vices and by providing students the ability to understand the practical skills and mindset to become successful in the business world.

4. Objectives of Entrepreneurship Education

Due to the complex nature of the problems of the high levels of unemployment and underemployment, there are a number of objectives that are set for entrepreneurship education. Oborah (2006) identifies the following objectives of entrepreneurship education:

- i. To offer meaningful education that empowers youths to attain self-reliance, whereby they are able to economically sustain themselves and attain independence.
- ii. To develop the skills of graduates so that they are able to meet the requirements of the labor market and make positive contributions to the society.
- iii. To assist graduates in gaining employment in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) for the purpose of adding to the employment opportunities and economic development of the country.
- iv. To stimulate graduates' creativity and innovative capabilities in a way that they are able to recognize and pursue new business initiatives and opportunities.

Paul (2005) stresses that the principal objective of entrepreneurship education is to provide functional education that eliminates poverty, fosters self-employment, and helps the youth to

become employers instead of employees. This, in turn, helps in the reduction of rural-urban migration and enhances economic development in a sustainable way.

5. Sustainable Development and its Role in Entrepreneurship Education

Sustainable development is a focal point in the current conversations about economic growth, social equity, and the environment. The World Health Organization (2021) describes sustainable development as the ability to support current generations without hindering future generations' ability to support themselves. This concept addresses development challenges by improving the future socioeconomic conditions of people and, most importantly, children and young people. In Nigeria's case, due to high youth unemployment, sustainable development requires an all-encompassing approach, prioritizing the integration of fostering young people through systems of quality education, acquisition of sustainable skills, and government initiatives.

For Nigeria to achieve sustainable development, fostering youth entrepreneurial skills through education must be prioritized. This means preparing students not just for normal employment, but for self-employment. This kind of education must start at the primary school level and continue through higher education, where students should be encouraged to develop skills that are relevant and needed in the market, in addition to learning theoretical concepts. To achieve this, the government must support initiatives that help graduates to be self-employed, especially in regions where unemployment is rampant (Adenike, 2021). With this, Nigeria is likely to alleviate the chronic poverty of most of its youth, which is likely to be a reason for engaging in criminal and anti-social activities.

6. The Violence of Unemployment and Poverty

Unemployment and poverty represent a dichotomy of the negative face of Nigeria's socio-economic challenges, and they are likely to present in this manner for as long as there is no structural change in any of the country's developmental goals. A number of young people have had to engage in illegal activities, such as armed robbery, drug trafficking, kidnapping, and social unrest, due to the lack of available and sustainable employment opportunities (Virk, Nelson, & Dele-Adedeji, 2023). These activities are the outcome of, and are often a consequence of, the inability to secure employment after receiving significant amounts of education and training. Anyanwu and Duru (2021) observe that social instability has been exacerbated by the rising crime rates, contributing to the youth unemployment challenge that has diverted attention from the primary developmental goals of an economy.

To address the issues of unemployment and poverty, a more complex, and holistic approach must be adopted. The goal should not be to simply increase the number of white-collar jobs that are available. Instead, the education system should incorporate and promote the development of an entrepreneurial culture that will inspire and empower youth to develop and pursue their own entrepreneurial opportunities beyond wage employment. Also, incorporating entrepreneurial education into the system will promote economic development through creativity, self-sufficiency, and innovative problem solving, as well as unemployment reduction. For Babatunde, El-Gohary, and Edwards (2021), the incorporation of entrepreneurial education into the curriculum is a paradigm shift in addressing the unemployment and poverty conundrum.

7. The Possibilities of Entrepreneurship Education

For Nigerian youths, entrepreneurship education has the capacity to empower social change through self-sufficiency, job creation, and self-employment.

The following are some productive prospects of entrepreneurship education:

- i. **Job Creation and Economic Empowerment:** Entrepreneurship education can result in creating new jobs, which is one of its most immediate benefits. Individuals start creating jobs for themselves and for others when they acquire skills and knowledge for establishing their own enterprises. This cascade effect can bring down unemployment and enhance economic confidence (Adebakin & Ayanlowo, 2023).
- ii. **Fostering Self-Reliance:** Entrepreneurship education helps reduce reliance on others and promotes self-sufficiency. It empowers the youth to think beyond the conventional employment options and open up their businesses. This option is more advantageous, especially during recession periods when the employment opportunities are limited. By concentrating on developing and nurturing feasible business concepts, entrepreneurship education helps the youth to economically be self-reliant and reduce their dependency on government posts and support (Adenike, 2021).
- iii. **Reduction of Social Vices:** Increased youth unemployment is often a cause of social vices. Prisons and slums become home to a large number of unemployed youths. Lack of prospects put a great number of jobless youths on a one-way street. It is a great challenge when the younger generation becomes criminal. Entrepreneurship education mitigates this challenge by equipping youth with the knowledge and skills to become self-employed. Empowering youth

to establish businesses through entrepreneurial education can combat social vices by providing socially constructive options to illegal and socially destructive behavior (Adebakin & Ayanlowo, 2023).

iv. Reducing Rural-Urban Migration: Nigerian youth are increasingly migrating to cities to obtain better economic prospects. However, this phenomenon of ‘mass migration’ causes urban centers to become overpopulated and puts a strain on insufficient urban resources. A potential solution to this problem is entrepreneurship education, which can inspire youth to create businesses that stimulate economic activity and support development in underserved and economically stagnant rural areas (Virk et al., 2023).

v. Facilitating the Development of New Skills: One of the most critical aspects of entrepreneurship education is the development of new skills. Instruction in areas such as business management, marketing, and financial planning is integral to ensuring students’ preparedness for the rigors of business ownership. This training also increases their capacity for active participation in self-employment, as well as providing valuable skills for the development of the country as a whole (Babatunde et al., 2021).

8. The Difficulties of Entrepreneurs and Entrepreneurial Education in Nigeria

8.1 The Difficulties Entrepreneurs Encounter in Nigeria

The numerous impediments to the establishment of small and medium scale enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria continue to limit the country's exceptional entrepreneurial prospects. These include:

i. Unreliable Electricity Supply: Nigerian entrepreneurs continue to be severely constrained by the country’s inconsistent electricity supply. Businesses are forced to depend on expensive backup generators to power their operations. This increases their operating expenses, reducing cost competitiveness on the international market. Furthermore, the absence of dependable electricity supply has adverse effects on electricity-dependent production activities, and continues to limit international investments in Nigeria.

ii. Inadequate Infrastructure and Poor Road Networks: The insufficiency of operational infrastructure, particularly the road networks, increases Nigeria’s cost of doing businesses. The lack of logistical support and access delays the movement of goods and increases transport-related expenditures. These persistent challenges of operational business infrastructure also discourage international investments in Nigeria.

iii. Insecurity: Nigeria's violence, crime, and political instability create uncertainty for entrepreneurs and constrain business development. This persistent business-related violence also discourages the commitment of foreign and local investors to medium and long term initiatives.

iv. Government Policy and Regulatory Challenges: Changes in government policies, especially concerning taxation and business regulation, create uncertainty for entrepreneurs. This makes it especially difficult for business to make accurate predictions and discourages commitment to long-term investments.

v. Access to Financing: Nigerian entrepreneurs often face challenges in obtaining funding. Due to the banks' high interest rates and strict collateral requirements, many borrowers are unable to secure loans. Additionally, the government has not currently offered enough financial aid or low-interest loans to entrepreneurs, jeopardizing the ability of many startups to access the funding necessary to expand.

8.2. Challenges Facing Entrepreneurship Education in Nigerian Tertiary Institutions

Despite the possible advantages of entrepreneurship education, Nigerian tertiary institutions face a number of challenges which detract from its overall potential.

1. Inadequate Funding: Insufficient funding has been singled out as one of the key impediments to the success of entrepreneurship education in Nigerian universities. Educational institutions that lack adequate financial resources are unable to build the basic infrastructures and support services that are required for productive learning (Adebakin & Ayanlowo, 2023).

2. Limited Practical Exposure: In many Nigerian universities, entrepreneurship programs are predominantly built around theory, with little attention given to the development of practical skills. The absence of practical learning opportunities acts as a barrier to graduates correctly understanding the processes involved in starting and running a business (Babatunde et al., 2021).

3. Insufficient Qualified Instructors: The lack of experienced and qualified instructors in entrepreneurship remains a significant challenge in education. The absence of such instructors means that curricula are not informed by real-world experiences and as a result, entrepreneurship education remains uninformed (Babatunde et al., 2021).

4. **Outdated Curriculum:** For example, in Nigeria, the curricula of the several tertiary institutions that offer entrepreneurship education are not tailored towards the current realities of the business world. It is necessary to update curricula to include contemporary priorities and skills that are practice-oriented in entrepreneurship (Adenike, 2021).

9. Conclusion and Recommendations

Nigeria has experienced chronic unemployment for over four decades, which is worsened by the rapidly growing population, a rise in the unemployment rate, and a decrease in available white-collar jobs. This situation has resulted in a frustrated youth due to the lack of opportunities for graduates which further exacerbates the risk of social vices (e.g. armed robbery, kidnapping, drug trafficking, etc.). There are three principal issues: (a) unemployment, (b) failing education systems, (c) lack of an enabling framework. In this vein, entrepreneurial education leads to the possibility of addressing the problem, creating a road towards sustainable development.

Therefore, the Nigerian government needs to invest in entrepreneurial education, allocating funds and building comprehensive programs to train the youth in skills and competencies to achieve self-reliance. Moreover, entrepreneurial education creates employment opportunities, enhances economic development, and increases the standard of living by alleviating poverty.

Although entrepreneurs' education has been incorporated into the curriculum of some Nigerian Tertiary Institutions, it remains underdeveloped. The primary reason is insufficient funding, resulting in a lack of training materials and practical experience for students. For Nigeria to advance in entrepreneurship, it must equip and staff its entrepreneurship programs. This investment is vital, not just to reduce unemployment, but to help prepare Nigeria's future entrepreneurs.

In order to construct an effective and sustainable entrepreneurship education system, considerable efforts must be undertaken. The following recommendations aim to build up the system and help unleash the potential of entrepreneurship education as a means of generating employment and reg driving the economy:

1. **Enhanced Financing of Teaching Aids:** The government, NGOs and philanthropists should pool their resources to provide enough funds to purchase teaching aids to help universities teach students by engaging them in practical activities.

2. Regular Certification of educators: Entrepreneurship educators will require further certifications to modernize their skills. This requires a partnership between the government and education agencies.
3. Youth Targeted Loan Subsidies: The government should provide a loose and affordable loan scheme to assist young people who want to start their businesses. The removal of financial accessibility barriers will encourage young entrepreneurs to start their own businesses.
4. More Emphasis on Entrepreneurship within the NYSC: The first four months of the NYSC (National Youth Service Corps) should be dedicated to Skill Acquisition & Entrepreneurship Development (SAED). This will ensure that the corps members acquire practical skills that are tailored towards the needs of specific industries. The last four months should be dedicated to the utilization of the skills acquired at the Place of Primary Assignment (PPA). This will ensure that the youth service is meaningful and productive to the country.
5. Entrepreneurship and Vocational Studies Centers' (CENVOS) should be established: Each of the Nigerian Tertiary Institution should establish a Centre for Entrepreneurship and Vocational Studies. This will enable the provision of dedicated spaces for the teaching of entrepreneurship and will ensure that students have access to coaching, networking, and other essential resources for the attainment of their business goals.
6. Make Completion of a Vocational Course a Graduation Requirement: Incorporating a vocational course as a requirement for graduation is one of the ways to ensure that universities take entrepreneurship education seriously. This method cultivates the critical entrepreneurial abilities that all graduates will possess, irrespective of their major.
7. Enhanced Practical Exposure in Entrepreneurship Courses: Entrepreneurship courses must emphasize more practice than theory. Students ought to spend more of their course time on practical assignments, real business projects, internships, and other applications of business theory. This change will improve their entrepreneurial readiness.
8. Implementing Entrepreneurship in Primary and Secondary School Education: Educators in primary and secondary schools should begin teaching entrepreneurship in order to instill an entrepreneurial culture in children, so that when students begin tertiary education, they already possess a fundamental knowledge of business and an inclination towards entrepreneurship.

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