INDIGENOUS NIGERIAN LANGUAGES AND SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: THE TIV EXAMPLE

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Abstract
This research faults the negligence of Nigerian indigenous languages as depriving Nigerian learners the right to functional type of education that could attract development to them. To demonstrate the resourcefulness of the languages in development, the work studies the contributions of Nigerian indigenous languages, especially Tiv language, to sustainable national development through evaluation of Tiv utterances that are poised to developing traits which can facilitate national development in a sustained manner. Such traits include: value attachment, resource management, unity of purpose, hard-work and good governance. To achieve this purpose, the study explores specific Tiv expressions, including proverbs, wise sayings, and adages that encourage the development of the traits mentioned above as being key to national development. Such expressions are collected from all the five major components of Tiv society through interactive sessions with elderly speakers of the language, after which, the researchers select and translate the relevant ones, as well as analyse them in relation to how they contribute to national development. The study finds out that national development is not a reserve of the social sciences to investigate, but an area that is well considered in the scope of linguistics, through Nigerian indigenous languages, especially Tiv language in pursuance of its attainment.

Key Words: Nigerian, Languages, National, Development, Tiv, Example.

Introduction

Language is essentially seen as a natural means of communication among human beings universally. Regardless of the form, language primarily serves communication. The relationship between language and communication is often seen as a fusion of the concepts. It becomes imperative to some people that once communication is said to have taken place, they first think of the language through which the said communication had taken place. It is in cognisance of the interrelatedness of the duo that (Chukwu, 2013, p.183) maintains that "language and communication are so closely related that at times they are used interchangeably by some scholars". This role of providing a medium for communication projects language as an indispensible quality of human existence. Such opinion about language is owed to the fact that all facets of humanity, be they social, economic, cultural, religious, educational, and otherwise are all carried out through language.

Given the functional roles of language to humanity as stated above, it is worth reiterating the obvious that nations of the world have peculiar languages they use in interacting with one another, either as individuals or groups. Such languages are indigenous to the particular speech communities that use them, to the point they become part of their history and identity. This belief underscores the opinion by (Hongor, 2009, p.41) that "…the more we learn about an individual's language or rather the language of a given speech community the more we know about their psychology". It is pertinent at this point to stress that the Nigerian indigenous languages should be accorded a privileged position in the education of their speakers, in recognition of the assertion by (Iorshal, 2013, p.162) that "indigenous languages play some significant roles in national development especially in countries whose indigenous languages are used as medium of instruction in schools". However, it is regrettable that these languages suffer neglience in the country's academic circles, a menace considered as the major problem to this paper.

This study aims at encouraging the teaching and learning of indigenous languages, especially Tiv language in schools within the speech community, bringing to the fore its importance in national development. It particularly hopes to achieve the following objectives: to explain the concept of sustainable national development, to identify essential traits that pave the way for sustainable national development, to identify specific Tiv expressions that encourage the development of such traits, and to establish the resourcefulness of Tiv language in the quest for sustainable national development. In other to achieve these objectives, the paper relies on a methodology designed specifically to guide its development.

Methodology

This study covers the five major segments of Tiv society within Benue State. These include: Jechira, Jemgbagh, Kwande, MINDA, and Sankera. The local government areas under these major components are: Konshisha and Vandeikya Local Governments for Jeichira; Buruku, Gboko, and Tarka Local Governments for Jemgbagh; Kwande and Ushongo Local Government areas for Kwande; Gwer, Gwer West, Guma , and Makurdi Local Government Areas for MINDA; while Katsina-Ala, Logo and Ukum Local Government Areas go with Sankera. The researchers have visited two local governments from every one of the five axis of the Tiv society and collected proverbs, wise sayings and adages. The researchers used the random sampling strategy to engage two elderly members in every local government they visited, consciously directing their conversation towards collecting proverbs that potentially encourage development. A total of forty utterances were collected from twenty elders that were randomly selected.

After the collection, the utterances were reviewed, and those found to be repetitive were dropped, leaving ten which were considered most relevant and linguistically endowed to instill the virtues that can empower learners to develop qualities that stimulate sustainable national development as data for the research. In the final selection of the proverbs, locations of their

collection were not prioritised since there were glaring similarities across the areas visited. The chosen utterances were translated into English language, using the communicational theory of translation, which according to (Ejembi, 2015, p.53) "focuses on producing on readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original texts". This translation theory was chosen with the motif acquaint leaders with expressions as close to the original thought of the native speakers as possible. Such translated utterances were analysed, bringing to the fore their tenets to foster sustainable national development. The analysis was done in view of the rhetorical theory of criticism, which according to (Iorwakwagh, 2014, p.5) "is an intellectual practice with Aristotle and Plato as its earliest proponents… emphasising how persuasively one's argument was". The basis for considering this theory is the view to convincing the readers to appreciate the potentials of Tiv language in accelerating sustainable national development.

The Tiv People of Nigeria
The Tiv people, who are the central concern of the study, are an ethnic group with distinct socio-cultural idiosyncrasies that distinguish them from other groups of people within Nigeria, Africa, and the world at large. According to (Yina, 2011, p.35) "Tiv is one of the minority ethnic groups that occupies part of the rolling Savannah region popularly known as Middle Belt of Nigeria`'". Though, the scholar identifies the Tiv as a minority ethnic group, it is worth acknowledging that such classification is only based on the obsession that Nigeria is made up of three major groups of Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, otherwise the Tiv constitute a significant group in the country's population, which (Gande, 2015, p.67) says "… have been estimated to be over six million people by the 2006 National Population Census". Yina himself acknowledges that the geographical spread of Tiv "extends from Benue…to the neighbouring states of Nassarawa, Plateau, Taraba, Adamawa… and out to the Republic of Cameroon and Enugu and Cross River State". (Yina, 2011, p.35). Despite the geographical

spread, the people consider Gboko town, where the seat of their paramount ruler; the Tor Tiv is located as the administrative headquarters of the Tiv nation. Thus, wherever they are found, they owe allegiance to the paramount ruler; thereby, fostering a sense of oneness among them, irrespective of diversities in locations.

The Tiv people are generally homogenous in culture and language. Such homogeneity is believed to be as a result of their common descent which is traceable to the great patriarch (Tiv), who allegedly gave birth to two sons: Ipusu and Ichongo, whose descendants are grouped into five major blocs of : Jechira, Kwande, Ichongo, Jemgbagh, and MINDA. These have spread over to the areas mentioned earlier, and identified with the patriarch grandfather (Tiv). With all these being said, it is pertinent to highlight that majority of the Tiv are found in Benue State where the research focuses. They form the majority of all the other tribes that co-habit in Benue, including: Idoma, Igede, Etulo, and the rest.

Considering its linguistic aspect, (Akaan, 2014, p. 4) states that "Tiv language belongs to the Bantu group of languages". The interesting fact to note about the Tiv language is that it is rich in aesthetics; mostly proverbs, wise-sayings, idioms, and adages. Proverbs are particularly seen as key to Tiv language. This explains why (Adeiyongo, 2017, p.1) asserts that "in Tiv traditional society, proverbs were revered. Even today whenever there is a serious discussion people listen with keen interest more to someone who speaks figuratively than to a banal discussant".

The Concept of Sustainable National Development
Development generally implies the growth of something so that it becomes stronger. However, it is used in this study as a concept mostly applied in the social sciences. As an aspect of study that attracts attention, many scholars have expounded on it. (Rodney, 1972, p.1-2) avers that:

> Development in human society is a
> many-sided process. At the level of
> the individual, it implies increased

skill and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being…At the level of social groups, therefore, development implies an increasing capacity to regulate both internal and external relationships.

Featuring prominently in Rodney's definition of development are "well-being" and "increasing capacity", both emphasisng improvements, since only improved conditions can guarantee well-being and increasing capacity. (Tumbo, 2019, p.126) defines it as a "decrease in the rate of poverty, unemployment, and inequality" Inferring from the definition, development could be considered as being synonymous with enhanced wellbeing of individual citizens of given societies. This study agrees with Tumbo's definition; since it observes that human beings world over strive to attain development, which is indicative that the essence of their struggles is to improve on their living standard. In his views, (Omenka, 2022, p.12-13) defines national development as involving "all the activities which a nation engages in to achieve a good standard of living for her citizens." Omenka's explication sees national development as an exclusive responsibility of a nation for her citizens. In spite of the emphasis on enhanced living standard of the citizens, this study does not align with the summation that the search for national development is to be wholly undertaken by the nation; with the citizens as passive beneficiaries. It is the conviction that both individuals and groups have active roles to play in attracting development that this work seeks to study how the Tiv language prepares its speakers to develop qualities that guarantee sustainable national development.

In the bid to examine role of language education in national development, (Iorshal, 2013, p.163) emphasises that "through language technological advancement can be enhance [sic] for National Development as we have language engineering". Though Iorshal considers the attainment of national development through the study of science and technology in the indigenous languages, this research work considers it in the perspective of learning the languages as a source of understanding the rudiments of development (human qualities that pave the way for development), and practicing them to optimise the desired development. Attainment of national development has been considered possible only with education. This explains why (Akume, 2022, p.4) maintains that "there is a positive correlation between national development and education". This study agrees with the opinion, but adds that the type of education which brings national development is always a functional education system; a system that is pragmatic like the study of the Tiv language with linguistic prowess to instill the virtues that potentially result to national development as studied in the research work.

Talking of sustainable national development, the study implies a kind of development that is designed to stand a test of time. In highlighting on sustainable development, (Ochim, Okpo and Agada, 2022, p.22) say "it is concerned with the creation and sustenance of the conditions for current and future generations to live well on this planet". This opinion authenticates the current study's explanation of the concept (sustainable national development). On their part, (Chollom and Ada, 2018, p.5) maintain that the popular definition of sustainable national development is "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Having considered the views of the above scholars, it amounts to stating the obvious that sustainable national development implies the development a nation acquires for the benefit of both the present generation and the ones to come. It is worth noting that this is the type of development which studies in Nigerian indigenous languages, especially the Tiv language, guarantee.

The Tiv Language and its Impact on Sustainable National Development

Development in the sense of improved well-being cannot take place in a spontaneous manner. Human beings deliberately explore measures of

attracting it to themselves and their communities. It is this conscientious effort in searching for sustainable national development that this study investigates the possible contribution of Tiv language in attainment of the goal. It is worth noting that the Tiv language comprises structures (proverbs, wise sayings and adages) which are poised to inculcating the values that manifest in traits of development. Such structures are analysed under their respective sub-heads in this segment of the research, as they constitute good indices of development. The sub-heads include: value attachment, resource management, unity of purpose, determination, and good governance. Two Tiv utterances are used to illustrate every one of the mentioned traits for development.

Value Attachment
This entails the virtue of appreciating everything one has, and attaching appropriate value so as to optimise the benefits derivable from it. This principle emphasises that nothing is less in value, and should not be ignored or abandoned to waste. The implication her is that every individual or asset, when put to proper use, contributes to the society's development. On the contrary, where some aspects are neglected as being inconsequential, their proportional values are lost, culminating in loss of a percentage in the aggregate earnings that could guarantee enhanced well-being. To express this thought, Tiv language accommodates utterances like:

Ishange la mwem- ishange la mwem
Every seed of grains produces flour

As a people that farming is cultural to them, the Tiv people appreciate the value of every grain they produce as contributing to their yield. The statement is typical of the idea that no bit of an object or collection is too minor to be overlooked. Ordinarily, someone with much grain would be inconsiderate of the little that falls off. However, the adage serves as a reminder that whatever amount of flour that is realised from grains comes from the sum total of individual seeds; hence, continuous negligence of the quantity one considers little leads to a decrease in the final yield of the product.

Mshiki kpa ka ijôv
The *mshiki*, too, is some mushroom

The Tiv as majorly famers, are familiar with vegetation, using most of the plants and or vegetables as delicacies, which the mushroom in its various varieties is one of such. *Mshiki* is the variety of mushroom that is very small in size. Given its nature of not spreading wide, it deserves no attention if not for its flavour in soup. This proverb serves the purpose of not undermining things because of their minute sizes. The analogy of the *mshiki* mushroom explains that every unit counts in contributing to developmental stride of the society irrespective of sizes; thereby, encouraging people to harness every component of their resources for they contain values in themselves.

These samples testify to the belief in inclusive contribution of every iota of parts that constitute a whole in the process of development. Thus, where every aspect or component is appreciated and pulled together for progress, the result is bound to be a more resounding one than where some aspects are neglected. The end result of the latter situation is that the society must suffer some loses; hence, a reduction in per head contribution to development which may affect the quest for a sustainable national development negatively.

Resource Management
Emphasis here is mostly placed on human resources. For meaningful development to take place, the human resources need to be properly managed. To inculcate this value for the sake of development, the Tiv language has structures such as these:

Ukpen mnyim ate un a lugh ikyundu
When you are too conscious of smoke, your hut would be without warmth

As a people whose major source of energy is firewood, the Tiv are used to smoke (*mnyim*) and its irritating nature. As used in the structure smoke is a symbol of possible irritations people in position of authority face from subordinates. In spite of such shortcomings, the troubling members should be handled in a manner that their

contributions to development would be harnessed, rather than being ignored.

> *Wan ka nan a nyiau sha nam kpa u gberen kera ga*
> One does not cut off his thigh because a child defecates on it

The Tiv as naturally peasants are predominantly deprived of modern luxuries like diapers, as they nurse their younger ones with pieces of cloths. Sometimes the pieces are not even sizable enough to cover the children as they defecate on people's laps. Such affected parts of the body are not cut off, but cleaned. The import of this proverb is that for development to take place in a nation, leaders should not discard their subjects together with their mess (errors). Such errors should always be corrected and the culprits be given more chances to live as citizens and contribute to development.

Unity of Purpose

Unity is universally identified with success and development. This underscores the popular adage "united we stand, but divided we fall". The Tiv people have known this from time immemorial. In order to imbue this virtue in the psyche of their generation, the following adages suffice:

> *Atse ka a lu atar i jiidi ruam ye*
> There are always three stones to accommodate the pot

In the typical Tiv setting where luxuries of cooking stoves, gas cylinders, and ovum, among other appliances are not popular, cooking is done in a simple method of setting three stones in strategic positions to prepare fire and place the cooking pot to facilitate cooking. This illustrates that when people cooperate, with different ideas, development is fast-tracked.

> *Ka ave ahar ka a wua iji ye*
> It is usually two hands that kill a fly

It is common knowledge that when two palms close together against a fly, it is easier to get it killed than when one tries to kill it with only one palm. The proverb stresses that a nation whose citizens keeps away sentiments and unite, they proffer solutions to their developmental problems and make their development more sustainable.

These two Tiv expressions are classics in teaching the people that unity is sacrosanct in the quest for sustainable national development.

Hard Work and Determination

It amounts to stating the obvious that hard work breeds success. It is also imperative to consider determination as the bedrock of hard work. Where people are determined to achieve greatness, they work assiduously towards it. On the contrary, where there is no hard work, the quest for development becomes mere desire without the required determination to succeed. In realisation of this reality, the Tiv use their language to admonish laziness and encourage industry as a fundamental trait to attainment of both individual and group success which paves the way for sustainable national development. Two proverbs to substantiate this view are as follows:

> *Mnjirim ma yangen tom ga*
> Horseflies do not prevent one from working

This proverb portends that only the undetermined are deterred from pursuing their goals by hardship. Linguistic resources of languages are largely observed to be influenced by several factors, which cultural environment is one of them. Owing to this fact, peasant farmers in areas where horseflies abound stand better chances to appreciate this proverb. The insects are always irritating as they strive to enter the eyes, the ears, and at times even the nostrils of farmers while they work in the fields. Their turbulence often becomes a test of determination since the undetermined people easily leave their farm land in avoidance of such turbulent situations. However, the hard working and determined farmers, always undaunted by the irritant nature of the insects end up victoriously as they harvest bountiful of their yields. With the analogy of the horseflies, the Tiv inculcate the spirit of hard work and dedication as key factors in success, implying that where people imbibe these virtues, they are bound to succeed in fast tracking sustainable national development, in spite of whichever form of pains or obstacles that stand on their way.

> *Udam ka ve a lamen kpa mba yemen je*

> The Udam people keep moving as they talk

The Tiv consider Udam people as a tribe that engage in endless discussions, irrespective of whatever they do. This particular proverb is mostly popular among the Jechira and Kwande axis of Tiv, due to their proximity with the Udam of Cross River State. As border societies that interact across their boundaries, the Tiv observe that while on routes (to and fro) markets, the Udam people are incessantly engaged in discussions. Still, irrespective of the seeming heat in their conversations their movement continues. This, too, becomes a lesson to the Tiv to instill hard work in their people that they should not allow distractions to deter them while pursuing their goals. The implication of this cautionary measure is that national development could be sustained only where actors are not derailed from their targets by side attractions. In spite of every distraction, people should treat them without losing focus on their quest for development.

Good Governance

Good governance is predicated by a number of indices. Among such indices is integrative leadership. By this, the study implies a style of administration where leaders are attentive to opinions of their subordinates. Listening to constructive advice is a prerequisite to success. Arrogant leaders who ignore counsel are often prone to failure even as individuals, as the case with William Shakespeare's Julius Ceasar. Such failures can even lead to the collective failure of the society which might be ecumenical to national development. In view of this, the Tiv have utterances to forestall such hubris in leaders and prepare them to pay heed to counsel as a condition to accelerating national development as examined below:

> *Uwagh sen tswen hule*
> A stream flowing alone has bends

According the Tiv perception, a crooked shape connotes deformity. So, for the stream to flow lonely means it has nobody to watch its position and advise it to adjust; thereby, leaving it deformed. This remark is relevant in the bid for sustainable national development since humble leaders who have listening ears to good pieces of advice are better disposed to bringing development to the people.

> *Fa bee doon tar ga*
> Claiming monopoly of knowledge does not augur well for the society

This adage serves to complement the proverb above. Where leaders claim monopoly of knowledge and ignore pieces of advice, national development becomes elusive, since ideas from visionary members of the society which might contribute positively are abhorred. This presupposes that inclusive leadership should be prioritised for the sake of sustainable national development, at the expense of the 'know all' syndrome which pulls back development.
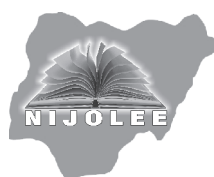
Conclusion

This research work has studied the contributions of Nigerian indigenous languages, especially Tiv language, to sustainable national development. The study has established that the language, through its proverbs encourages its speakers to develop traits like: value attachment, resource management, unity, hard-work and determination, as well as good governance, which are imperative for attainment of national development in a sustained manner. This study has observed that negligence of the indigenous languages deprives Nigerian learners, particularly the Tiv, of the functional type of education that could attract development to them. Following such observation, the work has considered it necessary to recommend that stakeholders in education should reconsider their posture towards the indigenous languages, particularly the Tiv language. Foremost, curriculum planners should accord importance to the languages as subjects of eminence in national development. Secondly, school administrators should ensure maximum utilisation of the aspects on indigenous languages in the curricula. Thirdly, governments at all levels should monitor the implementation of the National Policy on Education to ensure that studies in the indigenous languages are efficiently carried out, knowing

that such is a right move in fostering sustainable national development. Also, the study encourages other researchers on Tiv language to investigate more proverbs that stimulate sustainable national development in order to attract more development to their domain. Finally, the study suggests that scholars of other Nigerian indigenous languages should explore them to unveil their linguistic potentials to complement the Tiv's quest for sustainable national development.

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COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE AND NON- LITERATURE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN ESSAY WRITING IN MAKURDI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BENUE STATE

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Abstract
This study investigated differences in essay writing performance between Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students in senior secondary schools in Makurdi Local Government Area, Benue State, Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the research. A cross-sectional design was adopted. The population comprised 9,758 Senior Secondary Two (SS II) students (4,132 males and 5,626 females) in 135 public schools during the 2024/2025 academic session. A sample of 150 SS II students (75 Literature-in-English and 75 Non-Literature-in-English) was selected from six schools using purposive sampling. Data were collected using. Students' Expository Essay Writing Test (SEEWT), adapted from WAEC past questions and validated by three experts. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while independent samples t-test and two-way ANOVA tested the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. Findings revealed a statistically significant difference in essay writing performance, with Literature-in-English students outperforming Non-Literature-in-English students ($t(148) = 5.12$, $p < 0.05$, $d = 0.77$). Gender, however, did not significantly influence essay writing performance across groups $f(1,46=2.07, P>0.05)$. The study concluded that exposure to Literature-in-English positively impacts students' essay writing skills and recommended, among other things, the integration of literature-based strategies into English language instruction for all students.

Key words: Essay writing, academic performance, Literature-in-English, gender

Introduction

Essay writing is one of the core skills in English language learning and assessment at the secondary school level in Nigeria. The West African Examinations Council (WAEC) English language paper places considerable emphasis on essay writing, requiring students to demonstrate competence in narrative, descriptive, and expository essay types (WAEC, 2023). Mastery of essay writing is not only vital for passing school examinations but also for success in higher education and workplace communication. Despite its importance, consistent reports indicate that Nigerian students perform poorly in essay writing due to challenges such as limited vocabulary, grammatical errors, incoherent organisation, and weak content development (WAEC Chief Examiners' Report, 2022). These weaknesses suggest the need for effective pedagogical interventions to improve essay writing skills.

One area believed to influence essay writing performance is exposure to Literature-in-English. Literature-in-English involves the study of prose, poetry, and drama, encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and appreciation of language aesthetics. The major provisions of the Literature-in-English syllabus for Nigerian secondary schools (especially at the Senior Secondary level: SS1–SS3) are structured to guide both teaching and assessment. These provisions cut across aims, content areas, skills development, and examination structure

The general objectives of the syllabus is designed to enable students to develop awareness and appreciation of literature as an art form, acquire knowledge of literary terms, techniques, and conventions, cultivate critical and analytical skills in reading and interpreting texts, understand how literature mirrors, critiques, and shapes society, enhance language proficiency, creative imagination, and self-expression and prepare for higher education and external examinations such as WAEC, NECO, JAMB, NABTEB.

The content coverage of the syllabus is built around the three main genres, prose, drama and poetry. Prose covers elements, such as plot, theme, setting, characterisation, point of view, style and its types include novel, short story, novella, fable and allegory. The recommended text cut across African and non-African prose as well as unseen prose passages meant for appreciation. Drama on the other hand covers elements like action, character, conflict, dialogue and stage directions and its types are tragedy, comedy, tragicomedy, satire, melodrama and one-act play. African and non-African dramatic texts are also recommended for the students. Poetry also covers elements such as theme, tone, mood, persona, imagery, rhythm and rhyme and its types include lyric, epic, sonnet, ode, ballad, narrative poem and dramatic monologue. It also has African and non-African poetry as well as unseen poems meant for appreciation.

The Literary Appreciation part of the syllabus is designed to test the students' ability to read, interpret, and evaluate both prescribed and unseen texts. It also aims at recognising literary devices (metaphor, irony, satire and symbolism) and creating an awareness of cultural, moral, political, and social contexts of literature.

The examination structure gives the general patterns of the entire Literature-in-English examination. WAEC, NECO and NABTEB examinations are often divided into Paper 1 (Objective/Multiple Choice, literary terms, figures of speech, unseen passages (prose & poetry), context questions), Paper 2 (Essay on Prose - African and non-African novels/short stories) and

Paper 3 (Essay on Drama & Poetry African & non-African plays and poems).

The skills development structure of the syllabus emphasises that students should demonstrate critical reading, analysis, and comparative judgment, relate literature to real-life experiences and societal issues, improve vocabulary, communication, and creative writing skills and develop aesthetic and moral sensitivity.

There is a strong relationship between Literature-in-English Syllabus Provisions and essay writing. The Literature-in-English syllabus for Nigerian senior secondary schools emphasises prose, drama, poetry, literary appreciation, and

examination techniques. These provisions are not isolated; they directly foster the development of essay writing competence, which is a core skill expected of senior secondary students.

The prose component of the syllabus trains students to analyse plot, setting, characterisation, point of view, and style. These elements parallel the requirements of narrative and descriptive essays, where coherence, logical sequencing, and vivid description are central. By studying novels and short stories, students see how ideas are organised into paragraphs and how narratives are sustained. This exposure enhances their ability to construct their own essays with unity, progression, and style (Ogunyemi & Adepoju, 2020). Drama requires students to understand dialogue, conflict, and resolution. These provisions sharpen students' ability to present different sides of an issue, just as in argumentative essays, where points and counterpoints must be logically presented. According to Abraham and Oladejo (2023), analysing dramatic dialogue improves students' persuasive strategies, logical reasoning, and clarity of expression, which are essential in expository and argumentative writing. Poetry in the syllabus also emphasises imagery, symbolism, tone, and diction. This provision nurtures students' appreciation of how language can be used effectively and economically. Exposure to poetry improves students' figurative expression, creativity, and emotional appeal in essay writing. Eze and Mama (2021) argue that poetry equips students with a heightened sensitivity to word choice, rhythm, and imagery, which enriches reflective and creative essays.

The requirement to analyse unseen texts develops critical reading and interpretation. This provision is directly related to analytical and critical essays, where students must dissect issues, evaluate perspectives, and present informed arguments. As noted by Ibrahim (2022), literary appreciation fosters higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, which are the backbone of strong essay writing.

The examination provision (objective, essay-type questions, and unseen texts) trains students in essay planning, organisation, and time-bound

writing. Essay-based sections of WAEC and NECO require students to compose coherent arguments on literature texts, a task that strengthens their general composition skills (Adebayo & Chukwu, 2019). Thus, the examination structure itself reinforces essay-writing competence by demanding clarity, organisation, and evidence-based reasoning.

Across prose, drama, and poetry, the syllabus provisions implicitly emphasise language mastery, which underpins all forms of essay writing. Through exposure to diverse styles and registers, students expand their vocabulary and refine their grammar. This aligns with Ashaolu (2021), who found that consistent engagement with literature texts improves students' essay fluency, cohesion, and accuracy.

It must be emphasised here that one of the syllabus aims is to help students relate literature to societal issues. This provision enriches students' essay content by providing themes, ideas, and moral reflections that can be applied in expository, argumentative, and reflective essays. As Okeke (2023) observes, literature supplies students with cultural capital and topical examples that enhance the depth of their essay writing. The provisions of the Literature-in-English syllabus are integrally connected to essay writing skills. Prose studies strengthen narrative and descriptive essays; drama sharpens argumentative skills; poetry enriches creativity and diction; literary appreciation enhances analytical writing; and the examination structure consolidates organisational and time management skills. In effect, the syllabus not only prepares students for external examinations but also equips them with lifelong writing abilities that are crucial for academic success and societal participation.

Exposure to literary texts is thought to enhance reading comprehension, expand vocabulary, and improve students' ability to generate and organise ideas in writing (Ugwu, 2022). Students who offer Literature-in-English may therefore have an advantage in essay writing compared to those who do not. However, empirical evidence supporting this assumption

remains limited, particularly in Benue State, where no major study has directly compared the essay writing performance of Literature and Non-Literature students.

Another variable of interest is gender. Research findings on gender differences in essay writing performance are inconsistent. Some studies report that female students tend to outperform males in essay writing tasks due to better language development and greater attention to detail (Chigbu, Emelogu, Nwakoby & Anyanwu, 2023), while others find no significant gender-based differences (Eze & Nwaneri, 2022). In the Nigerian context, sociocultural expectations, learning environments, and access to reading materials may influence how male and female students engage with both Literature-in-English and essay writing tasks. Understanding whether gender moderates the relationship between Literature exposure and essay writing performance is therefore essential for curriculum planning and teaching strategies.

Given these gaps, there is the need for an empirical study to examine whether students offering Literature-in-English perform better in essay writing than those who do not and whether gender plays a significant role in this difference. This study addresses these gaps using a comparative analysis of Literature and Non-Literature students' essay writing performance in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

Essay writing remains one of the most challenging aspects of English language learning in Nigerian secondary schools, as reflected in persistent reports of poor performance in public examinations (WAEC Chief Examiners' Report, 2022). While students offering Literature-in-English are believed to have an advantage due to their exposure to a wide range of literary texts and creative writing exercises, there is insufficient empirical evidence to substantiate this claim, particularly in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State.

Furthermore, existing studies have not adequately addressed how gender differences may influence essay writing performance among Literature and Non-Literature students. Without clear evidence, schools, parents, and policymakers lack reliable data to guide curriculum planning, instructional strategies, and targeted interventions that can improve essay writing skills for all learners regardless of their subject combination or gender. This study therefore seeks to fill this gap by providing a comparative analysis of Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students' essay writing performance, with gender as a moderating variable.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to conduct a comparative analysis of Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students' performance in essay writing in Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine whether there is a significant difference in essay writing performance between Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students.
2. Examine the extent to which gender influences the essay writing performance of Literature and Non-Literature students.

Research Questions

1. What is the difference between the essay writing performance of Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students?
2. To what extent does gender influence the essay writing performance of Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students?

Research Hypotheses

H0 : There is no significant difference in essay writing performance between Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students.

H0 : Gender does not significantly influence the essay writing performance of Literature and Non-Literature students.

Theoretical Framework

This study was anchored on Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory (1978), which explains how exposure to literary texts influences essay writing performance. Vygotsky (1978) emphasises the role of social interaction and cultural tools in learning. Literature-in-English classes often involve discussions, interpretations, and collaborative learning, which create a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) where students refine language and writing skills through teacher and peer scaffolding (Vygotsky, 1978). The theory is relevant to this study in that Literature-in-English classes promote interaction and critical thinking, which help students develop advanced writing strategies. Non-Literature students may lack such collaborative literary experiences, limiting opportunities to expand essay writing proficiency.

Literature Review

Essay writing is a key component of English language assessment and pedagogy at the secondary school level in Nigeria. It requires the ability to generate, organise, and present ideas coherently while observing linguistic and mechanical accuracy (WAEC, 2022). Essay writing competence involves cognitive processes such as planning, drafting, revising, and editing (Hyland, 2019). According to Nwana and Agbo (2023), effective essay writing depends on vocabulary knowledge, grammatical accuracy, and familiarity with different essay types such as narrative, descriptive, expository, and argumentative.

Despite its importance, essay writing remains a persistent challenge. WAEC Chief Examiners' Reports consistently highlight poor content development, weak paragraphing, limited vocabulary, and inappropriate register as common weaknesses (WAEC, 2022). Factors responsible include inadequate teaching methodologies, lack of practice opportunities, insufficient reading culture, and the influence of mother tongue interference (Ugwu, 2022).

Recent studies (Adebayo & Bello, 2023; Chigbu et al., 2023) have also shown that digital distractions and limited exposure to reading materials reduce students' ability to generate ideas and construct coherent essays. Literature-in-English as a subject exposes students to prose, poetry, and drama, encouraging critical thinking, creativity, and appreciation of language aesthetics (Ali & Mohammed, 2023). The reading of diverse literary texts enriches vocabulary, improves comprehension, and enhances students' ability to construct coherent arguments in writing (Krashen, 1985).

In the words of Ugwu (2022), Literature students engage in intensive reading, analysis, and interpretation, which increase their exposure to different writing styles and rhetorical techniques. Such exposure is believed to enhance essay performance compared to non-Literature students, who may not have similar literary experiences.

Several empirical studies have linked Literature-in-English exposure to improved writing skills. Tarkighir (2020) conducted a comparative study in Katsina-Ala Local Government Area of Benue State, and found that Literature students outperformed their non-Literature peers in English writing tasks. Similarly, Chigbu et al. (2023) observed that integrating literary texts with digital graphic organizers significantly improved students' expository essay scores.

Conversely, Eze and Nwaneri (2022) reported no significant difference in essay performance when teaching methods were ineffective, suggesting that instructional strategies mediate the relationship between literature exposure and writing performance. While prior research has shown a relationship between literature exposure and writing competence, few studies have focused specifically on Makurdi Local Government Area. Additionally, limited research has explored how gender moderates this relationship, hence the need for this comparative study.

Research Method

This study adopted a cross-sectional research design to compare the essay writing performance

of Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students.

The population comprised 9,758 Senior Secondary Two (SS II) students (4,132 males and 5,626 females) in 135 public schools in Makurdi Local Government Area, Benue State during the 2024/2025 academic session. A sample of 150 students (75 Literature and 75 Non-Literature students) was drawn using purposive sampling to include six schools (three urban and three rural) while ensuring gender balance. The instrument for data collection was Students' Expository Essay Writing Test (SEEWT) adapted from WAEC past questions. It required students to write a 450–500-word essay and was scored with a WAEC marking scheme emphasising content, organisation, expression, and mechanical accuracy (maximum score = 60 marks). Face and content validity were ensured by three experts in English education, and a pilot test established reliability at r = 0.90. Data were collected in examination-like conditions, with students given 50 minutes to complete the essay task. Scripts were anonymised and scored by two trained English teachers to ensure consistency. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) and inferential statistics (independent samples t-test and two-way ANOVA) using SPSS version 26 at a 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1:

What is the difference between essay writing performance of Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Essay Writing Scores by Student Group

Group	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Literature-in-English	75	42.30	8.70
Non-Literature-in-English	75	35.10	9.40

Table 1 shows the mean and standard deviation of essay writing scores for Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students. The table shows that Literature-in-English students (M=42.30, SD = 8.70) scored higher in essay writing than their Non-Literature-in-English counterparts (M = 35.10, SD = 9.40).

Research Question 2:

To what extent does gender influence the essay writing performance of Literature and Non-Literature students?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Essay Writing Scores by Gender

Group	Gender	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Literature-in-English	Male	38	41.60	8.40
	Female	37	43.00	9.10
Non-literature in English	Male	40	34.90	9.20
	Female	35	35.30	9.70

Table 2 shows the mean essay scores by gender across both groups. From the table, female students scored slightly higher than male students in literature in English (M = 41.60, F = 43.00) and Non-literature in English (M = 34.90, F = 35.30). This implies that gender is not a strong factor in

essay writing performance.

Hypothesis One:
There is no significant difference in essay writing performance between Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students.

Table 3: Independent Samples t-Test on Essay Writing Performance of Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English Students

Group comparison	t(148)	P-Value	Effect Size (d)	Decision
Literature Vs Non-Literature	5.12	0.00	0.77	Rejected

Table 3 shows the independent samples t-test result of students' performance in the two groups. The table reveals a statistically significant difference in students' performance, t(148) = 5.12, P< 0.05, with a moderately large effect size (Cohen's d= 0.77). This means that literature in English students outperformed their Non-Literature-in-English counterparts in essay writing.

Hypothesis Two:
Gender does not significantly influence essay writing performance between Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students.

Table 4: Two-Way ANOVA on the Influence of Gender and Student Group on Essay Writing Performance

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-Value	Decision
Group	1,854.20	1	1,854.20	26.20	0.00	Significant
Gender	146.10	1	146.10	2.07	0.152	Not significant
Group x Gender Interaction	86.10	1	87.10	1.23	0.269	Not significant
Error	10,386.70	146	70.79			
Total	12,424.10	149				

Table 4 shows the relationship between gender and students performance. The table shows no significant difference in essay writing performance between male and female students (F(1,146) = 2.07, P > 0.05) implying that gender has no significant main effect on essay writing performance. It also shows that gender did not moderate the relationship between literature exposure and essay writing performance (F (1,146) = 1.23, P > 0.05) meaning that the effect of literature exposure was similar for both males and females.

Discussion of Findings
Findings of this study demonstrate that Literature-in-English students significantly outperform Non-Literature-in-English students in essay writing tasks. This aligns with previous research (Tarkighir, 2020; Chigbu et al., 2023), which attributed such differences to the richer exposure Literature-in-English students have to diverse texts, creative writing tasks, and critical literary analysis. These activities likely enhance their vocabulary development, idea organisation, and creative expression, which are critical skills in essay writing (Ugwu, 2022).

Interestingly, gender did not significantly influence essay writing performance, suggesting that both male and female students benefit equally from Literature exposure and general essay writing instruction. This supports the findings of Eze and Nwaneri (2022), who also observed no significant gender-based differences in English essay performance when instructional quality was

consistent across groups. The absence of gender influence may reflect changing educational dynamics in Makurdi Local Government Area, where both male and female students have comparable access to reading materials and learning support. However, it contradicts some studies (Chigbu et al., 2023) that reported female students often outperform males in language-related tasks due to higher motivation and reading engagement. These inconsistencies suggest that gender effects on writing performance may be context-specific and mediated by factors such as teacher quality, school resources, and learner attitudes.

On a whole, the results highlight the potential benefits of incorporating literature-based strategies across all student groups. Even Non-Literature students may improve their essay writing skills if given opportunities to engage with creative texts and structured writing activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study examined differences in essay writing performance between Literature-in-English and Non-Literature-in-English students in Makurdi Local Government Area, with gender as a moderating variable. Findings revealed that Literature-in-English students significantly outperformed their Non-Literature counterparts in essay writing tasks, indicating that exposure to literary texts and related activities enhances students' writing competence. However, gender was not found to significantly influence essay writing performance among either group, suggesting that both male and female students benefit equally from effective essay writing instruction.

These findings underscore the importance of literature exposure in developing students' language skills and demonstrate that improving writing competence requires more than general English instruction—it benefits from integrating creative and analytical activities inherent in Literature-in-English.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Integration of Literature-Based Strategies: Schools should incorporate literary texts and activities into the English language curriculum for all students, not just those offering Literature-in-English, to enhance essay writing skills.

2. Essay Writing Workshops: School administrators should organise regular essay writing workshops or clinics focusing on vocabulary development, content organisation, and creative expression.

3. Teacher Capacity Building: English and Literature teachers should receive periodic training on innovative writing instruction and literature-based pedagogy.

4. Provision of Learning Resources: Governments and school owners should supply relevant literature texts, writing guides, and reading materials to support sustained essay writing practice for all learners.

5. Further Research: Future studies should investigate other potential moderating variables such as socio-economic background and reading habits, using larger samples and longitudinal designs to establish long-term effects of literature exposure on writing performance.

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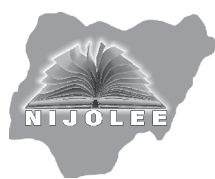
COMPARATIVE EFFECTS OF PEER TUTORING AND INDIVIDUALIZED INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES ON SENIOR SCHOOL STUDENTS' ACHIEVEMENT IN READING COMPREHENSION IN LOKOJA, KOGI STATE

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Abstract
The research study investigated the comparative effects of peer tutoring and individualized instructional strategies on senior school students' achievement in reading comprehension in Lokoja, Kogi State. The sample for the study consisted of 160 SSS2 students from two co-educational schools in Lokoja education zone. Two research questions and two null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance, guiding the study. The population for the study comprised 14,582 (6,459 males and 8,123 females) senior secondary two (SS2) students for the 2023/2024 academic session. The sample size consisted of 78 experimental group consisted of male and female students, while the control group consisted of 82 male and female students. The research adopted a quasi-experimental design. The students were divided into two groups: one receiving peer tutoring and the other with individualized instruction. Pre-tests and post-tests were administered to measure the students' reading comprehension before and after the intervention. The instrument for data collection was the English Reading Achievement Test (ERAT), which was marked by over fifty. The data collected were analyzed using ANCOVA to determine the effectiveness of each instructional strategy. From the results obtained, it was found that students in the experimental group(peer-tutoring) had significantly higher achievement scores in English reading comprehension than their counterparts who were in the control group (individualized strategy). Also, gender had a significant effect on students' achievement in English reading comprehension. Based on the findings, it was recommended that English language teachers should adopt a peer tutoring strategy in teaching English reading comprehension.

Keywords: *English language, reading comprehension, peer tutoring, individualized instructional strategy, academic achievement, gender in language learning*

Introduction

The importance of the English language as a medium of communication cannot be overstated, particularly in a multilingual country like Nigeria, where it serves as a unifying factor among people of diverse ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. As the official language of the nation and the primary language of instruction in schools, English occupies a central role in the educational system and in national life as a whole. It is not only the language of governance, media, law, and commerce but also the bridge that connects Nigerians to global communities.

The teaching of the English language is geared towards mastering the four basic language skills, namely listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these four language skills, reading is considered the most important skill in learning a second language, especially the English language (Menakaya, Muazu, & Mbegbu, 2022). This means that reading should be taught to English language learners in schools. According to Anidi and Obumneke-Okeke (2020), reading is a complex conscious and unconscious mental process in which the reader uses a variety of strategies to reconstruct the meaning that the author is assumed to have intended, based on data from text and from the reader's prior knowledge. This implies that reading activates the cognitive process of decoding printed symbols for meaning to be obtained. In other words, reading can be described as a receptive skill that involves the understanding of written language by finding out what the author has in mind through different strategies such as thinking, predicting, questioning, accessing, evaluating, and refining the author's message. Reading is a multifaceted skill set that a reader must develop to effectively acquire knowledge from printed texts. Olaitan, (2017) emphasized that reading is a reasoning process that requires the meaningful interpretation of words, phrases, and sentences. This process involves various types of thinking, including critical, analytical, creative, imaginative, evaluative, judgmental, and problem-solving skills. To read effectively, Al Azis, and Toyyibah, (2023) argue that readers must develop specific reading skill, such as the ability to recognize speech sounds, decode unfamiliar words, read fluently, and possess sufficient background knowledge and vocabulary to enhance comprehension. This emphasis on skill acquisition highlights the necessity for readers to cultivate these abilities to process and derive meaning from printed materials.

The reading comprehension syllabus in senior secondary school typically consists of several key components designed to build students' ability to understand and interpret texts. These include vocabulary development, which equips learners with the word knowledge necessary for meaning-making; literal comprehension, which focuses on recalling facts and details; inferential comprehension, which trains students to read between the lines and deduce implied meanings; and critical comprehension, which helps them evaluate ideas, opinions, and arguments in a text. Additionally, the syllabus often emphasizes study skills such as skimming, scanning, summarizing, and identifying main ideas to prepare students for both academic tasks and real-life reading situations. Together, these components aim to enhance learners' proficiency in processing written material while fostering analytical and reflective thinking (Ummu & Selma, 2021).

An aspect of reading skills that is taught to English language readers is reading comprehension. Reading comprehension involves the ability to grasp and interpret information presented in a text. It is an active process aimed at understanding the message conveyed by a given text. (Olaitan, 2017). This process is dynamic, involving the exploration of connections between various elements within the text. At its core, reading comprehension entails an interactive exchange of meaning between the reader and the author, facilitated by mental engagement and prior knowledge. Thus, reading comprehension is an intentional cognitive activity that enables young readers to bridge their understanding with the textual content, drawing upon their knowledge, expectations, and reading purposes. Reading comprehension is the intricate

process by which individuals simultaneously extract and construct meaning through dynamic interaction and active engagement with written language (Al Azis, & Toyyibah, 2023). It entails more than mere perception; it involves delving into the layers of a written text to unravel its context, nuances, and underlying messages. The ultimate aim of this cognitive endeavour is to achieve understanding, a comprehensive grasp of the material that transcends the mere decoding of words. Reading comprehension encompasses various types, each delineated by the reader's distinct purpose and the specific strategies employed in the reading process. These types encompass a spectrum of approaches, ranging from literal comprehension aimed at extracting surface-level information to inferential comprehension, which involves synthesizing implicit meanings and drawing conclusions beyond what is explicitly stated. Additionally, evaluative comprehension requires critical analysis and judgment, while reflective comprehension prompts introspection and personal interpretation (Khusniyah,2021). Each type of comprehension serves as a lens through which readers navigate the textual landscape, enriching their understanding and broadening their perspectives.

The relevance of reading comprehension instruction is to help students develop the knowledge, skills, and experiences, and the ability to understand the ideas in a text which makes them become competent and enthusiastic readers. In other words, the teaching of reading comprehension improves the academic performance and achievement of learners (Abamba,2021). Also, Akabogu and Ajiwoju (2018) agree that students' achievement depends on their ability to read and comprehend information coded in text. This means that there is a positive relationship between reading comprehension and students' achievement and that students who do not comprehend what they read will not perform well in school.

It is, therefore, important to teach reading comprehension in a manner that will improve students' achievement, especially those in

secondary schools. According to Ummu and Selma (2021), students' achievement in reading is directly linked to a child's success with five fundamental literacy skills which include phonemic awareness, alphabetic principle, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. when these literacy skills are understood and nurtured, it can encourage successful reading achievement among students. To measure students' achievement in reading comprehension, teacher-made tests, and standardized tests are mostly used to determine students' strengths and weaknesses in reading comprehension instruction. According to Egbe (2015), the level of achievement or success is measured with an achievement test and the scores obtained from it are the indices of the level of achievement. Achievement is a mechanism through which learners can learn about their abilities and competencies. According to Afolabi and Elegbede (2022), academic achievement is the overall academic performance of a student in secondary school and it can be assessed by the use of the use of tests and examinations. This means the extent to which a learner is profiting from instructions in a given area of learning, that is, achievement is reflected by the extent the knowledge or skill has been imparted to a learner. Hence, achievement is an important predictor of the performance of students, especially those in secondary schools.

Considering the importance of reading comprehension, one would expect students to perform better in this aspect of the English language. Unfortunately, students' academic performance in reading comprehension is highly poor, thereby jeopardizing their overall performance in the English language. The low achievement and general weaknesses of secondary school students in English reading comprehension can be traceable to gender and teachers' methods of teaching (The West African Examinations Council Chief Examiner's Report, 2022). Given this, Assidiq, (2022) asserts that the teaching method used by English language teachers can predict students' achievement in reading comprehension. This entails that the teaching method is identified as one of the

predictors of students' academic achievement.

Individualized instruction, while beneficial in catering to diverse learning needs, presents several challenges. One major disadvantage is the increased demand for teacher time and resources, as educators must design and monitor personalized learning plans for each student, which can be overwhelming (Tomlinson, 2014). It may limit peer interaction and collaborative learning, essential for developing social and communication skills (Slavin, 2019). Moreover, student self-regulation and motivation disparities can lead to inconsistent learning outcomes, as some learners may struggle with autonomy and require more guidance (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Finally, implementing individualized instruction often requires advanced technological and material resources, which may not be feasible in underfunded educational settings (Reiser & Dempsey, 2017). These factors highlight the limitations of individualized instruction despite its potential benefits. One such method is the comparative effects of peer tutoring and individualized strategies on senior school students' achievement in reading comprehension in Lokoja education zone.

Peer tutoring and individualized strategies are two examples of the methods of instruction that involve students teaching other students. Fakeye (2021) described peer tutoring as an instructional strategy that permits students to assist one another learn materials, reinforce skills, or practice a learned task. This strategy often results in social, emotional, mental, and academic gains for participating students. Abimbola (2019) stated that peers are more sensitive, active, and responsive to picking up integrated science concepts and other non-verbal cues. In a well-designed peer tutoring class, each of the participating students gets more attention from the tutor and is freer to speak, interact, and contribute to topical issues within and outside the purview of the contents of the instruction. Hence, enhancing their active knowledge construction. Similarly, through a structured, planned, and monitored programme under the control of trained, efficient, and effective teachers, peer

tutoring has all it takes to assist learners receive maximum learning.

Apart from the teaching technique, research has implicated the close connection between gender and achievement. Gender stresses the roles and responsibilities of males and females. Gender refers to one's subjective feelings of maleness or femaleness irrespective of one's sex (Abdullahi & Bichi, 2015). The authors further stated that gender is classified into masculine or feminine and is concerned with the attitudes that describe males and females in the socio-cultural context. The issue of gender in the reading achievement of pupils has become an area of interest to researchers. Research studies show evidence of girls' superiority over boys in reading (Akabogu, & Ajiwoju, 2018). Some studies, however, reported that boys achieved better (Bamidele & Ali, 2023). Following this argument, it is pertinent to resolve this research finding controversy on gender, as it affects reading comprehension achievement.

In Lokoja education zone, most secondary school students find it difficult to read and understand reading comprehension both in internal and external examinations respectively and so it has become worrisome that parents often employ the services of home tutors to review what has been taught in school; perhaps the students might assimilate reading skills on a second teaching attempt. However, this does not appear to always solve the problem in which these students find themselves. It is thus expedient to try other methods that give the learner a more active role in the learning process, such as peer tutoring. This is more so because of students' involvement in lesson preparation and the self-confidence that emanates from the feeling of integration and recognition. The reciprocal interaction in peer tutoring can help learners meet one of the objectives of secondary education in Nigeria. It becomes necessary to examine the effect of this mode of instruction (Peer tutoring) on the reading achievement of students using comprehension passages in the English Language.

The Theoretical Basis for the Study

The study hinges on Constructivist theory, proposed by Jean Piaget in 1964, emphasizes that learners actively construct their own knowledge by connecting new information to their prior experiences and understanding. In the context of reading comprehension, this theory suggests that students do not simply absorb meaning from texts but rather build meaning through interaction with the material. Teachers can apply this by encouraging learners to activate background knowledge before reading, make predictions, ask questions, and discuss interpretations with peers. Such activities allow students to engage deeply with texts, link ideas to their existing knowledge, and develop higher-order thinking skills, making comprehension more meaningful and long-lasting.

Literature Review

Peer tutoring has continued to gain attention as an instructional strategy that enhances collaborative learning and improves student outcomes. Recent meta-analyses demonstrate its effectiveness across subjects, with Amba (2021) reporting significant positive impacts of tutoring programs—including peer-led models—on student achievement. Similarly, Bamidele and Ali (2023) found that well-structured peer tutoring routines can produce meaningful gains, particularly when integrated into regular classroom instruction. Ajiwou and Akabogu (2018) further showed that peer tutoring in vocabulary learning strengthens conceptual understanding and promotes active engagement among learners. In language learning, Ummu and Selma (2021) highlighted that peer tutoring significantly improves second language writing performance, as students benefit from feedback, modeling, and collaborative meaning-making. Moreover, Abimola (2019) revealed that peer tutoring enhances reading comprehension in primary education when combined with metacognitive strategies. Collectively, these studies affirm that peer tutoring is a versatile and impactful pedagogical tool that supports both academic achievement and the development of critical thinking and communication skills.

Meanwhile, individualized learning has been widely explored in recent years, with studies consistently showing that tailoring instruction to learners' needs enhances academic outcomes. For instance, Fakeye (2017) conducted a large meta-analysis and found that individualized approaches such as tutoring significantly improve student achievement, particularly for struggling learners. Similarly, Assidiq. (2019) reported that well-designed personalized programs, especially those integrated into classroom routines, produce meaningful learning gains. In higher education, Anidi and Obumneke-Okeke (2020) demonstrated that adaptive learning platforms improved engagement and performance, though challenges such as workload and resource allocation remained. Ummu and Selma (2021) further identified effective design patterns for individualized technology-enhanced learning, including adaptive sequencing and timely feedback, which strongly predicted student success. At the classroom level, Amba (2021) highlighted that differentiated instruction—a form of individualized learning—positively impacts learner motivation and achievement when supported by teacher training. Collectively, these studies affirm that individualized learning is a powerful strategy, but its effectiveness depends heavily on thoughtful design, teacher involvement, and consistent implementation.

Statement of the Problem

Reading comprehension is a critical skill for academic success, particularly at the senior school level where students are expected to engage with complex texts across various subjects. Despite its importance, many students in Lokoja struggle with reading comprehension, which hampers their overall academic performance. Individualized strategies. have not been entirely effective in addressing this issue, leading to a need for alternative strategies that can better support students in developing these essential skills.

Peer tutoring is a technique that has shown promise in enhancing students' reading

comprehension abilities (Bamidele & Ali, 2023). However, there is a lack of empirical evidence comparing the effectiveness of these two methods in the context of senior school students in Lokoja. This gap in knowledge poses a challenge for educators and policymakers who are seeking the most effective strategies to improve students' reading comprehension and, consequently, their academic achievement. Therefore, this study seeks to address this problem by investigating and comparing the effects of peer tutoring on the reading comprehension achievement of senior school students in Lokoja.

Peer tutoring involves students working in pairs or small groups to support each other's learning. Research has shown that peer tutoring can be an effective instructional strategy for improving reading comprehension. For example, a study by Topping et al (1998) found that peer tutoring significantly improved students' reading comprehension achievement. Similarly, a study by Amba (2021) found that peer tutoring was effective in improving students' reading comprehension, especially for students who were struggling with reading.

Individualized instructional strategies involve tailoring instruction to meet the unique needs and abilities of each student. Research has shown that individualized instructional strategies can be an effective way to improve reading comprehension. For example, a study by Slavin (2019) found that individualized instruction was effective in improving students' reading comprehension achievement. Similarly, a study by Pressley (2006) found that individualized instruction was effective in improving students' reading comprehension, especially for students who were struggling with reading.

Few studies have compared the effectiveness of peer tutoring and individualized instructional strategies in improving reading comprehension. However, a study by Bamidele and Ali . (2023) found that both peer tutoring and individualized instruction were effective in improving students' reading comprehension achievement, with no significant difference between the two groups.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that both peer tutoring and individualized instructional strategies can be effective in improving reading comprehension. However, there is a need for further research to compare the effectiveness of these two instructional strategies.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study was to find out the effects of peer tutoring on the reading comprehension achievement of senior school students in Lokoja. Specifically, the study objectives were to:

i. find out the mean scores of senior school students in the experimental group who received peer tutoring and the control group who received individualized strategies. in reading comprehension;

ii. determine the difference in the mean scores of male and female senior school students in the experimental group who received peer tutoring and the control group who received individualized strategies. in reading comprehension.

Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

i. What is the mean achievement score of students taught reading comprehension in the English language using peer tutoring and individualized strategies.?

ii. What is the mean score achievement of male and female secondary school students in the experimental group who received peer tutoring and the control group who received individualized strategies. in reading comprehension?

Research Hypotheses

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

i. There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught reading comprehension using peer tutoring and individualized strategies.

ii. There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female

students in reading comprehension.

Methodology

The researcher adopted a quasi-experimental design, which is a non-randomized, control group, pre-test, and post-test design. This design was adopted because the students that were used for the experiment were intact classes. Randomization would disrupt the existing structure of the school, thus posing some administrative problems. The population of the study consisted of all the 6, 459 (Male) and 8, 123 (Female) Senior School students in public secondary schools in Lokoja, Kogi State in the 2023/2024 academic session. (Education Resource Centre, Lokoja, Kogi State). Senior students were used for the study because they have finished their Junior Secondary School and are in the penultimate years of their secondary school. The sample consisted of 160 SSII students from two co-educational upper Senior Secondary Schools in Lokoja, Kogi State in the 2023/2024 academic session. Two intact classes were drawn from each of the schools (One experimental and one control group respectively). The sample size that was used for the experimental and control groups was the number of students in the intact classes. The experimental group (peer tutoring) was made up of eighty-four (84) students while the control group (individualized instruction) was made up of seventy-six (76) students. Multiple-stage sampling technique was used in drawing the respondents. One instrument was used to collect data for the study: the English Reading Achievement Test (ERAT).

The instrument used for data collection was the English Reading Achievement Test (ERAT). The English Reading Achievement Test was made up of two sections. Section A was used to get the demographic information from the respondents while section B contained the test of comprehension comprising two pretest passages and two equivalent posttest passages for both experimental and control groups. To ensure the validity of ERAT, it was subjected to face and content validation by experts from the Federal University Lokoja, Kogi State. Two of the experts were in area of English language Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation. To determine the reliability of ERAT, it was trial-tested on 25 SS II students randomly selected from Ajaokuta Local Government, This area was chosen because it has similar students with the same characteristics as those used for the study. After the trial test, data was collated and analyzed using Cronbach's Alpha Statistics. An internal consistency reliability index of 0.75 was obtained. The researcher trained the regular English language teachers in the experimental group on the use of Peer tutoring in teaching reading comprehension as indicated in the lesson plan, they used. For the control group, the teachers were asked to use the individualized methods. When the researcher made sure that the essential competencies had been acquired by the research assistants, the actual treatment was conducted in both experimental and control groups.

The ERAT was administered to the subjects as a pretest before treatment commenced. Students' scores in the first test served as the pretest scores for the study. After the pretest, the treatment commenced and it lasted for four weeks. During the treatment, the experimental group was taught using Peer tutoring while the control group was taught using the individualized instruction. At the expiration of the treatment, ERAT was also administered as a posttest. Scores from the pretest and posttest formed the data for this study. Data were analyzed using mean scores and Standard deviation to answer the research questions while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA).

Results

The results are presented in the tables according to the research questions and hypotheses that guided the study.

Research question One: What is the mean achievement score of students taught reading comprehension in the English language using peer tutoring and individualized strategy?

Table 1: Mean analysis of the achievement scores of students in English reading comprehension before and after exposure to PTIS and CM

Techniques	N	Pre-test $\overline{x}$	SD	Post-test $\overline{x}$	SD	Mean gain
Peer Tutoring (PT)	84	3.08	1.11	5.88	1.44	2.80
Individualized Strategy	76	3.84	.49	4.45	.89	.61

Table 1 shows that the students who were exposed to peer tutoring and individualized had a pre-test mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 3.08$, $SD = 1.11$) in the English reading comprehension, while those exposed to the individualized strategy had a pre-test mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 3.84$, $SD = .49$) in the English reading comprehension. This indicates a slight difference in the pre-test scores of the students exposed to Peer Tutoring and those exposed to individualized strategy. However, at the post-test, students who were exposed to peer tutoring (PT) had a mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 5.88$, $SD = 9.67$) in the English reading comprehension, while those exposed to the individualized strategy (IS) had a mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 4.45$, $SD = .89$) in the English reading comprehension. Mean gain scores of 2.80 and .61 for the students exposed to Peer Tutoring and those exposed to individualized strategy respectively, indicate that the Peer Tutoring group had higher post-test mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension than the individualized strategy group. However, the post-test standard deviations of 1.44 and .89 for the students exposed to Peer Tutoring and those exposed to individualized strategy respectively, indicate that the individual scores of the students exposed to Peer Tutoring differed more from their mean achievement score in English reading comprehension than those of the students exposed to individualized strategy.

Research Question Two: What is the mean score achievement of male and female secondary school students in the experimental group who received Peer Tutoring and the control group, who received individualized strategy in reading comprehension?

Table 2: Mean analysis of the achievement scores of male and female students exposed to Peer Tutoring and those exposed to Individualized Strategy in the English reading comprehension Table 2 shows that

Treatment	Gender	N	Pre-test Mean	Std. Deviation	Post-test Mean	Std. Deviation
Peer Tutoring (PT)	Male	29	3.07	.96	6.10	1.57
	Female	55	3.09	1.19	5.76	1.37
Individualized Strategy	Male	35	3.66	.68	4.26	.85
	Female	41	4.00	.00	4.61	.89

male students who were exposed to Peer Tutoring had pre-test mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 3.07$, $SD = .96$) and a post-test mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 6.10$, $SD = 1.57$) in the English reading comprehension, while the male students who were exposed to Individualized Strategy had a pre-test mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 3.66$, $SD = .69$) and post-test mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 4.26$, $SD = .85$) in the English reading comprehension. On the other hand, the female students who were exposed to Peer Tutoring had a pre-test mean achievement score of ($\overline{x} = 3.09$, SD

= 1.19) and a post-test mean achievement score of ($\bar{x}$ = 5.76, SD = 1.37) in the English reading comprehension, while the female students who were exposed to Individualized Strategy had a pre-test mean achievement score of ($\bar{x}$ = 4.00, SD = .00) and post-test mean achievement score of ($\bar{x}$ = 4.61, SD = .89) in the English reading comprehension. This means that the male students of the Peer Tutoring group had higher post-test mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension than the female students of the Peer Tutoring group and the female students of the Individualized Strategy group had higher post-test mean achievement scores in English reading comprehension than the male students of the Individualized Strategy group.

Testing of Hypotheses
The null hypotheses were tested using the t-test and ANCOVA statistics. All tests were conducted at a $P > 0.05$ level of significance.

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of students taught reading comprehension using peer tutoring and an individualized strategy.

Table 3: Analysis of covariance of the effect of peer tutoring and individualized strategy on students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	86.314[a]	2	43.157	29.811	.000	.275
Intercept	320.206	1	320.206	221.185	.000	.585
Pre-English reading compr	4.313	1	4.313	2.979	.086	.019
Treatment	55.773	1	55.773	38.525	.000	.197
Error	227.286	157	1.448			
Total	4640.000	160				
Corrected Total	313.600	159				

a. R Squared = .275 (Adjusted R Squared = .266)

Table 3 revealed that there is a significant difference in the gain scores of secondary school students in the experimental group who received peer tutoring and (PT) and the control group, individualized strategies, in the English reading comprehension in favour of those exposed to PT, $F(1, 157) = 38.525$, $p = .000$. This implies that the null hypothesis is rejected since the associated probability value of .000 is less than the .05 level of significance. Thus, the inference drawn is that PT more effective in enhancing students' performance in English reading comprehension` than the individualized strategies(IS).

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the mean achievement scores of male and female students in reading comprehension.

Table 4: Analysis of covariance of the difference in the mean gain scores of male and female secondary school students in the experimental group who received PT and the control group who received individualized strategies in English reading comprehension.

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Corrected Model	91.799[a]	4	22.950	16.038	.000	.293
Intercept	325.200	1	325.200	227.258	.000	.595
Pre English reading compre.	5.258	1	5.258	3.674	.057	.023
Treatment	57.849	1	57.849	40.426	.000	.207
Gender	.075	1	.075	.053	.819	.000
Treatment * Gender	5.425	1	5.425	3.791	.053	.024
Error	221.801	155	1.431			
Total	4640.000	160				
Corrected Total	313.600	159				

a. R Squared = .293 (Adjusted R Squared = .274)

Table 4 revealed that there is no significant difference in the mean gain scores of male and female secondary school students in the experimental group who received peer review and the control group, who received individualized strategy in English reading comprehension, $F(1, 155) = 3.791$, $p = .053$. This implies that the null hypothesis is not rejected since the associated probability value of .053 is greater than the .05 level of significance. Thus, students' performance in English reading comprehension as a result of their exposure to peer tutoring and individualized strategy is not dependent on their gender.

Discussions

The findings of this study showed that students taught with peer tutoring achieved higher in reading comprehension than those taught with the individualized strategy. This is obvious because the elements of peer tutoring made students work together and ensured that every student engaged in learning activities designed to improve their independence in accomplishing a task. Peer tutoring has continued to gain attention as an instructional strategy that enhances collaborative learning and improves student outcomes. Recent meta-analyses demonstrate its effectiveness across subjects, with Amba (2021) reporting significant positive impacts of tutoring programs—including peer-led models—on student achievement. Similarly, Bamidele and Ali (2023) found that well-structured peer tutoring routines can produce meaningful gains, particularly when integrated into regular classroom instruction. Ajiwou and Akabogu (2018) further showed that peer tutoring in vocabulary learning strengthens conceptual understanding and promotes active engagement among learners. In language learning, Ummu and Selma (2021) highlighted that peer tutoring significantly improves second language writing performance, as students benefit from feedback, modeling, and collaborative meaning-making. Moreover, Abimola (2019) revealed that peer tutoring enhances reading comprehension in primary education when combined with metacognitive strategies. Collectively, these studies affirm that peer tutoring is a versatile and impactful pedagogical tool that supports both academic achievement and the development of critical thinking and communication skills. However, the study by Fakeye (2017),Assidiq

(2019) and Amba (2021) conducted a large meta-analysis and found that individualized approaches such as tutoring significantly improve student achievement, particularly for struggling learners, but not like peer tutoring.

The result in table 2 showed that gender had a significant effect on students' achievement in English reading comprehension. The findings of this study regarding the achievement of male and female students taught English reading comprehension using peer tutoring and the Individualized instructional strategy showed that the mean achievement score of 6.10 in English reading comprehension was recorded by male students. These findings agreed with the findings of Akabogu and Ajiwoju (2018), and Bamidele, Ali, and Agbo(2023) which indicated that gender was a significant factor in students' achievement in English essay writing.

Results, as stated in Table 3 reveal that there is a significant difference between the mean achievement scores of students taught English reading comprehension using peer tutoring and individualized strategies. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected. The findings of the study collaborated with Fakeye (2021) who indicated that students' achievement will be improved when the method of presenting learning activities to students is improved. This means that involving students in learning activities improves their academic achievement in the learning process of reading.

The result of this study has shown that gender had a significant effect on students' achievement in English reading comprehension. The findings of this study regarding the achievement of male and female students taught English reading comprehension using peer tutoring and the individualized instructional strategy showed that the mean achievement score of 6.10 in English reading comprehension was recorded by male students. These findings agreed with the findings of Bamidele, Ali, and Agbo (2023), Akabogu, and Ajiwoju (2018) which indicated that gender was a significant factor in students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

Conclusion

The result of the study showed that students taught reading comprehension with peer tutoring achieved better than those students taught individualized strategies. The implication of this finding to the students is that if they are made to take part in their learning, they could have more confidence in their ability, and could help them perform better in reading comprehension. with increased academic achievement in reading comprehension, they can perform better in internal and external English language examinations conducted by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC).

In the same vein, most teachers believe that peer tutoring improve students' achievement. Therefore, English language teachers are encouraged to use peer tutoring as an alternative to individualized strategies. to teach reading comprehension with satisfactory student achievement at the secondary school level.

The study showed that gender had a significant influence on students' achievement in reading comprehension. Male students had higher achievement than their female counterparts in reading comprehension.

Recommendations

In line with the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

i. English language teachers should adopt peer tutoring as an alternative to the individualized strategies. in teaching reading comprehension in secondary schools; since the results of the study have proven the effectiveness of peer tutoring on students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

ii. Students should be sensitized to the use of peer tutoring and be taught English reading comprehension, especially at the foundational levels, and should be given more interesting English reading comprehension activities for practice. This would surely help in improving students' achievement in English reading comprehension.

iii. English language teachers should be exposed to workshops, seminars, and conferences where they will be enlightened and trained on how to use peer tutoring in the teaching of the English language, especially in reading comprehension.

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THEMATIC AND STYLISTIC STUDY OF TIV DIRGES

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Abstract
This paper studies the thematic and stylistic features of selected Tiv dirges using theoretical insights from Structuralism and Functonalist stylistics. Both fieldwork and documented literary knowledge are used to collect, transcribe, translate and structure the selected dirges which are analysed in this paper. The paper finds that Tiv dirges contain instances of creative use of language which reflect the topic of discourse and the intentionality of the song performers. Some of the commonest themes in the dirges studied in this paper include the mortality man, the inevitability of death, the high death toll in the society, partying and carousing at funerals nowadays, loss and deprivation caused by death, connivance by evil individuals to kill innocent members of the community, among others, and the need to change the status quo. A study of the choice of language in the dirges selected for this study, therefore, affords a better appreciation of the dirges in terms of their thematic concerns and Tiv eschatological worldview.

Key Words: Tiv dirges, Structuralism, Functional stylistics, communal property, loss and deprivation

Introduction

It is not an overstatement that a number of Tiv oral art forms have not received scholarly attention at all. This may be due to the biased attitude of Western scholars who doubted the status of verbal art forms as a form of literature or at best, associated them with primitive people. This mentality made many scholars to ignore oral art forms as not being well developed. Consequently, new contributions and reference materials in this area have remained scarce, hence, the art of the traditional folk as well as their intelligence and contributions to the world of literature remain largely unappreciated. This has been the fate of a number of African oral art forms over time, including Tiv dirges.

Tiv dirges are a body of songs rendered by an individual or a group of people to mourn the death of loved ones, friends or other members of the community. Dirges are sober songs expressing mourning or grief, especially during funerals. According to Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul Na 'Alla (1994:67-90), dirges are funeral poetry. Gande Simon in his study refers to them as elegiac poetry (11-14). Unfortunately, it hardly occurs to the minds of many that, dirges have salient poetic qualities worthy of serious scholarly attention. This oversight amounts to injustice to the verbal art in particular and literature in general. The foregoing makes it pertinent to beam scholarly search light on Tiv dirges to better appreciate their potentials for social harmony and cultural preservation, while also highlighting their thematic pre-occupations and stylistic qualities, among other benefits. This effort may also inspire other researchers to go into other relatively virgin areas and endangered oral art forms such as lullabies, nuptial songs, occupational songs and war songs among others, to enrich the study of literature.

Literature Review

Many Tiv scholars have worked on other Tiv oral art forms. Prominent among such works include Toryima Jenkwe's *Yanmoel Yashi: A study of Tiv oral poetry,* Akosu Adeyongo's *Aspects of Tiv oral poetry,* Nyitse Mbaiver's *Form and content of Tiv songs,* Nave Shirga's The Lament Motif in Obadia Okor's songs, among many others. However, other sub-genres of Tiv oral art forms remain unexplored and relatively virgin such as nuptial songs, work songs, lullabies and Tiv dirges, among others.

In their contribution on the study of dirges, some scholars often view them from different perspectives as funeral or elegiac poetry. For instance, Bayo Ogunjimi and Abdul Na 'Alla (1994:67-90) call them funeral poetry. This study does not disagree completely with the above scholars' submissions, though they are obviously deficient because dirges have salient qualities that negate strict categorisation. However, it needs to be noted that, placing dirges under the general term of funeral poetry is too broad and unsatisfactory. This study contends that dirges have peculiar features worthy of note as it can be seen in the analytical section.

Gande Simon also in his study, refers to dirges as elegiac poetry (11-14). This submission is also too narrow to be satisfactory. This is because dirges do have elegiac features but that is not their major preoccupation. Gande further posits that "Tiv elegiac poetry is a body of songs rendered by men or women-song makers, the latter mourn the death of ordinary people and children, the former mourn the death of their patrons (11)." However, this study contends that, the disparity Gande pointed out in his study is not prominent in the performance of dirges. Death in Tiv society is usually an instance that calls for solemnity. Once death occurs in Tiv society, mourners perform dirges, irrespective of the deceased' status, age or sex. Gande's position on the elegiac poetry creates the impression that, at the funeral of prominent personalities in Tiv land, it is only the renowned singers whom the deceased people patronised during their life time who perform to mourn them. This claim is not true of Tiv dirges. Mourners, mostly women equally perform dirges when prominent people pass on.

Another contribution on the subject matter of dirges is from Tsenongu Moses. While shedding light on the differences between dirges and elegies, Tsenongu states that dirges are shorter

than elegies. Again, the subject matter of dirges is usually diversified. The emphasis here is to philosophise over death, thereby reflecting on various issues such as attacks by death, its inevitability, the helpless nature of man in the hands of death, among other issues. On the other hand, the latter (elegies) mainly eulogise the dead man's virtues. Also, dirges are only performed at wake keep nights and during the laying in state of the deceased whereas elegies are performed even after burial. Lastly, dirges have no known composers while elegies have identifiable authors (P.1-3). This study aligns with Tsenongu's position highlighted above. However, Tsenongu's position that dirges are only performed by women (2001:2) is unsatisfactory. The fact that women are predominant performers of dirges does not restrain men from participating in their rendition. Men also join the women to sing dirges at funerals and at times act as the lead singers.

Dirges and Elegies

Scholars often use dirges and elegies interchangeably in error. This study contends that the two terms mean different things in the context of oral poetry. The differences are noticeably in the areas of length, subject matter, occasion and authorship. According to Tsenongu, dirges are shorter than elegies. Again, the subject matter of dirges is usually diversified. The emphasis here is to philosophise over death. Dirges reflect various issues such as attacks by death, its inevitability, the helpless nature of man in the hands of death, among other issues. On the other hand, the latter (elegies) mainly eulogise the dead man's virtues. Also, dirges are only performed at wake keep nights and during the laying in state of the deceased whereas elegies are performed even after burials. Lastly, dirges have no known composers while elegies have identifiable authors (P.1-3).

The above views are shared in this paper as one hardly finds a Tiv poet who does not have one or two elegies among his compositions. For example, the late Oliver Aye, one of the renowned oral poets in Tiv land who hailed from Ukum Local Government of Benue state, Nigeria,

composed some elegies to mourn his friend Saakuma. Iyoughur Ute Nyaguma from Vandeikya Local Government also composed elegies to mourn late J.S Tarkaa and Faasema Zungwe, among others. Late Obadiah Kehemen Orkor also composed many elegies to mourn and lament the death of his late sister, Yavihi. Dirges and elegies are, therefore, not the same thing and must not be treated as such.

This study, therefore, analyses dirges to add to the existing literature on verbal art of the Tiv thereby bringing into limelight their salient features for better literary appreciation and by extension, Tiv oral literature generally. This effort may also stimulate other researchers to study other Tiv oral art forms that have remained unappreciated over time.

Theoretical Framework

This study is premised on dual theoretical insights. On the one hand is the theory of Structuralism. This theory is associated with Ferdinard de Saussure as its founder and was later developed by a French anthropologist, Claude Levi Strauss in his study of myths. This theory holds that phenomena of human life are not intelligible except through their interrelations. In this light therefore, no work of art operates in isolation, the culture of the artist or author determines in most cases what is in the text; when the text is broken down into units, meaning is arrived at.

The relevance of this theory to this study is that, it offers insights into a people's way and perception of life and can be applied the study of the thematic and stylistic qualities of the songs in question.

On the other hand, another theory adapted for this study is Functional stylistics which is an offshoot of Michael Alexander Kirkwood Halliday's Functional Linguistics. The theory posits that, language choices are informed by the pragmatic intent of the language user. In other words, the language choices the language user exercises are goal oriented, reflecting the ideational, the textual and the interpersonal functions known as the metafunctions of

language. According to Patricia Canning, Functional Stylitics emphasises the pragmatic import of the formal properties of language alongside the context of a speech event, as well as the situational knowledge shared by both the speaker or the writer and the listener or the reader. She reveals further that, language is not used in a vacuum, as it does not do or mean everything in and for itself (46). Based on the foregoing insights, this study examines the choice of language in selected Tiv dirges which are performed to mourn the deceased while also philosophising over the inevitability of death, among others.

Methodology
This study uses fieldwork and library research methods. The twelve dirges studied in this paper are obtained from live performances with the aid of recording technology before being transcribed and translated in English using free translation to capture the meaning as expressed in the source language as much as possible. The choice of the songs is informed by their thematic content and stylistic features. This number of Tiv dirges is adjudged to offer sufficient textual evidence about the thematic concerns and choice of language in Tiv dirges generally.

Tiv songs hardly have titles, therefore, the first lines of each song are used as its title for ease of reference. Lineation is done based on perceived sense blocks in the songs. Also, the lines of the songs are numbered for ease of analytical reference. Documented literary knowledge covering figures of speech, their artistic effects and other rudiments of grammar is used for analyses of the stylistic features and thematic content of the songs.

To avoid excessive bulk of text, only relevant song extracts are cited intext. The ultimate goal of analysis is to enhance a better appreciation of the literary and functional import of Tiv dirges to the society.

Thematic Appreciation of Selected Tiv Dirges
It is worthy of note that, Tiv dirges generally revolve around the people's worldview and their social life. The Tiv worldview religiously rests on the potency of "Tsav" (witchcraft) and Mbatsav's (witches and wizards) overwhelming power. The elders are considered wise both in natural and supernatural ways. This explains why every death is laid on their doorstep. It is for the same reason that the dirges have themes such as the universal nature of death, the helplessness of man in the hands of death, among other, which are analysed in the subheadings below.

The Universal Nature of Death
One of the themes that is conspicuous in Tiv dirges is that, death is universal and inevitable. In one of the dirges titled "Aondo noo ku gbe kuan bee…" (rain of death is flowing), death is likened to a deluge as it is captured in the following extract:

Tiv	English
Mnder: Aondo noo ku gbe kuan…	**Solo**: The rain of death has fallen and is flowing
Mrumun: Bee ….	**Chorus**: Bee...(Torrentially!)
Mnder: Wura noo ku gbe kuan	**Solo**: The rain of death has fallen and is flowing
Mrumun: Bee…	**Chorus**: Bee...!
Or a za ikaa Mbakine wanngom	Someone should inform Mbakine my
	kinsman
ior ne ar ve	This people have come
Ngom, Aondo va wura noo	My mother rain has fallen and is flowing
ngu gbe kuan bee…	bee...!

The idea of the universality of death is metaphorically captured in the above song. The high scourge of death is likened to a torrential rainfall that causes flooding which consequently brings destruction to the whole environment. The effect of this song on the bereaved person(s) is

that, they are made to understand that death spares no one; everyone must bow to it when it comes calling, hence, their case is not a peculiar one.

Similarly, the idea of the universality of death is also captured in a song extract titled "Cheke ken iyou yough" (Examine your mind) as follows:

Tiv	English
Mnder: Me gba yemen ku wam	Solo: As I attend funerals
Ior mbalamen mba lamen	Gossipers keep gossiping me
Mbadun zenden ikyu yum	Mbadum keeps attending funerals
A zenden ikyu yum	She keeps attending funerals
Yo sule ngu ken tiev	Farm work is unattended to
M yila or wan ga	I haven't invited anybody's child
mngu a yila or kwase ga…	I haven't invited anybody's wife
Mrumun: Cheke ken iyou oo…	Chorus: Examine your conscience ooo!
Cheke ken iyou youghooo	Examine your conscience ooo!
Ia dio yo u lam	If you are free you can talk
Ia dio ga oo	If you are not free ooo!
We kpa cheken shin shima	Keep examining your conscience
Mnder; Me gba yemen tso ooo!	Let me just go ooo!
Man Adule zende yo sule ngu ken ityev	Adule keeps moving about leaving the farmwork unattended to
Kpa ngu a yila or wan ga	But he has not invited anybody's child
Ngu a yila or kwase ga	He has not invited somebody's wife
Mrumun: Cheke ken iyou oo…	Chorus: Examine your conscience ooo!
Cheke ken iyou youghooo	Examine your conscience ooo!
Ia dio yo u lam	If you are free you can talk
Ia dio ga oo	If you are not free ooo!
We kpa cheken shin shima	Have a second thought

In the above song extract, performers lament their ordeals as burial ceremonies take all their time even at the expense of their farm work due to the high incidents of deaths in the society. Consequently, they have become the subject of ridicule to gossipers. It is in response to this situation that the performers warn that all are affected by the scourge of death; no one should laugh at another person. Examining one's conscience as captured in the response draws attention to the universality of death, hence, the bereaved person(s) should take solace in the fact that death spares no one.

In another dirge titled "Chigh ki ga' (No medication), performers also decry the inevitable nature of death. The following extract illustrates this:

Tiv	English
Mnder: Ka han shi me za?	Solo: Where else shall I go?
Mrumun: Chigh ki ga	Chorus: No medication!
Mnder: Kyemisi je kpa mza	Solo: I have been to the chemist
Mrumun: Chigh ki ga Mbatyev wamaa..	Chorus: No medication my dear Mbatyav!
Mnder: Makurdi kpa mza	Solo: I have been to Makurdi
Mrumun: Chigh ki ga	Chorus: No medication!

Mnder: Sha Donga kpa mza
Mrumun: Chigh ki ga Mbatyev wamaa

Solo: I have been to Donga
Chorus: No medication my dear Mbatyav!

In the above song, the inevitable nature of death is highlighted in the poet persona who rhetorically asks where there is cure for death? The chorus answers the question posed by the poet persona through inference that there is no medicine for death. The fact that death has no medicine is, as such, stressed. No matter the number of places one goes looking for medication, death is inevitable as seen in the call where mention is made of the several places being visited in search of medication to no avail. The above dirge is a short song comprising only eight (8) lines but it has a slow and steady rhythm which makes it easy for the audience and even the bereaved persons to memorise. This goes a long way in consoling them that death is an inevitable end for everyone. This, Chirzendan attests to when he says "you only treat sickness and not death'(39).

Another dirge which bemoans the onslaught of death is a song titled "Ku Mir Msorum" (death has thrown a festivity).

Tiv	English
Mnder: Ku mir msorum m ngu lohon (2X)	**Solo**: Death has thrown a party (2x)
Mrumun: Hanma or a kende yongu sha	**Chorus**:All should raise their cups
Mder: I too popo	**Solo**: Fill the cups to the brim
Mrumun: I na mba ken uya kpa ve ma.	**Chorus**: Give even the unborn to take
Ahee!	Ahee! (A distress call)
Ityo yam Mbakine,	My kinsmen of Mbakine
Ka anti u tseghe?	Who does it spare?
U loho caca o	It has invited all
Hanma or a ma keng keng.	All must drink

In the above song, the universal and the inevitable nature of death is metaphorically likened to a drinking festivity hosted by death. Invitation to this festivity cuts across all manner of people irrespective of their ages. That is why the response asserts that, even the unborn children are to partake in the drinking spree.

It is interesting to note here that, Tiv dirges are inundated with powerful use of personifications which gives life to this art form. For instance, in the expression "death has thrown a festivity," death" is given the human ability to throw a festivity where attendance is by compulsion; all humans must attend, eat and drink. The choruses assert the inevitability of death to humans as it spares no one. Everyone must partake of this "drink" and feast. The motif of the inevitability and universality of death runs through all the songs as it affects everybody irrespective of one's age, sex or status.

The supremacy of God
The Tiv people believe in and revere God as the most powerful being who is the creator of heaven and earth. Similarly, death is considered second only to God. In other words, apart from God, death is the greatest. The above is the subject matter in the following song extract titled **'Aondohemba'** (God is supreme):

Tiv	English
Mnder: Oo a o a yoo	Solo: Oo a oo ayooo!
Or hembe ku yo ngu hana?	Who is above death?
Aondo hemba inja, cir oo	God is the greatest, followed by the soil
Mnder: Oo a o a yoo	Solo: Oo a oo ayooo!
Or hembe ku yo ngu hana?	Who is immortal?

	Aondo hemba inja, cir oo		God is supreme, followed by the ground
Mnder:	Va nan azenga a kuugh	Solo:	Give me the straws of death
	Aondo sen kende se jinga I kuugh ve!		God has given us the straw of death
Mrumun:	Ayo oo… ku yo u hemba	Chorus:	Ayoo! death is mighty
	Aondo hemba sha won ve!		But God is the almighty
	E ku u wua Mbadim		Death has taken Mbadim
	Wan Kera ngu zeoo…		The daughter is no more
	Aondo hemba nya icir oo…		God is supreme, followed by the ground

In the song above, God is believed to be supreme. It is God who created death, that all men must die. The Tiv people's philosophy about death is seen as a relay race where the first athlete passes the baton to the next person at a point and the person given continues till all the athletes participate in the race with each person taking his or her turn. It is against this background that the call in lines 7 and 8 metaphorically refers to the incidents of death as the "straw of death." When death, like the Supreme God, is personified as taking Mbadim's child, the bereaved person(s) can only ask in the rhetoric "what can one do?" which by implication is an acknowledgement of the supremacy of God.

Premonition

The Tiv people's belief in 'tsav' affects their psyche to the extent that sight of strange animals is seen as an omen. This notion is known as "bi" (omen or premonition). An omen is a sign that evil is about to happen to a person or family members. This happens through various means like the hooting of the owl at night, mysterious loose of money, nocturnal animals or creatures seen at odd times and a host of other things. These mystical creatures can be animals like the chameleon crossing one's path, a toad crossing one's path in the day time, a squirrel crossing one's path as well as a crab crossing one's path at day time. East reports of the Tiv that "the thing they fear most is the chameleon, anyone who finds one of these in his path will certainly turn back" (136). It is against this background that the song titled "Avungu Hine Shin Akongo" (hooting owls at the backyard) takes its source from. It is captured thus:

Tiv	**English**
Mnder: Avungu hine shin akongo	**Solo**: The awls hoot at the backyard
Mrumun: Ikpu kpu kpu eee ……….	**Chorus**: Ikpu-kpu -kpu eee
Mnder: Avungu hine shin akongo	**Solo**: The awls hoot at the backyard
Mrumun: Ikpu kpu kpu eee ……….	**Chorus**: Ikpu-kpu -kpu eee
Nga a eren nahan yo	When they behave lie this
Onov Mbakine songo or kende	Mbakine kinsmen have slaughtered somebody
Ka u nana mough ga ooo	That person will not survive ooo
Yange la yo or a kpe keng keng	That day somebody must die

The Tiv believe that nocturnal animals/birds such as the owl have mystical links with witches/wizards. As such, when an owl is heard hooting at one's backyard, it assumes a serious meaning that death is imminent, hence, fear grips people once the hooting sounds are heard.

The same message is found in another song titled "**Mza Lobi**" (I went to Lobi). It is captured below:

Tiv	**English**
Mnder: Mza Lobi mgbe hidyen oo(4x)	**Solo**:On my way back from Lobi (4x)

M ungwa kwagh uva tsegha tsegha tsegha	I heard something moving tsegha! tsegha! tsegha!
Tso m tile dong	As I stood still
Mtamber too yo	I waited for a while
M ungwa Mela tehe hough gbuku!	I heard Mela coughing "gbuku!"
Ggbuku la inja na yo kpolum kyua	"Gbuku" means draw nearer
A kporun yo a wua or tsembelee …	As I drew nearer he has killed somebody

Mrumun: Mza Lobi mgbe hidyen oo(4x)	Chorus: On my way back from Lobi (4x)
M ungwa kwagh uva tsegha tsegha tsegha	I heard something moving tsegha! tsegha! tsegha!
Tso m tile dong	As I stood still
Mtamber too yo	I waited for a while
M ungwa Mela tehe hough gbuku!	I heard Mela coughing "gbuku!"
Gbuku la inja na yo kpolum kyua	"Gbuku" means draw nearer
A kporun yo a wua or tsembelee …	As I drew nearer he has killed somebody

Here again, the belief that witches/wizards lay in wait for their target victim is made known. In this song the mourners through the use of the idiophone "Tsegha" "Tsegha" and "gbuku gbuku" which are onomatopoeic in nature capture the movement of the wizard as well as his coughing as he steps on dry leaves, supposedly in a forested area while on an eerie mission. The poet persona tells us that she was coming back from Lobi market when she discovered that, Mela, (a supposed wizard and elder in the family) had laid in wait for an intended victim. She heard the noise and stood still for a while and the cough indicated that someone should come closer. Before then, he (Mela) had already killed somebody. This, to them shows that anytime they hear such a cough or noise, it is a premonition of death.

Human vices: Mbatsav's motivational cause for killing

The Tiv people believe also that, in human existence, people are believed to harbour within them vices such as envy, covetousness, hatred, jealousy and mischief among other vices. It is believed that when "ormbatsv" harbours these vices against an individual, such an individual becomes a target to be killed. The song below titled "**Ior mban mba zanden Imongo**" (These people walk together) illustrates this as it can be seen in the extract below:

Tiv:	**English**
Mnder: Ior mban zua mba zenden imongo	**Solo**: These persons are friends (2x)
Mrumun: Ior ne zua mba zenden aguve aguve	Chorus: These friends move about like Eagles
Mnder: Ior mban zua mba zenden imongo	**Solo**: These persons are friends (2x)
Mrumun: Ior ne zua mba zenden aguve aguve	Chorus: These friends move about like eagles
Mnder: Ior mban zua mba zenden imongo	**Solo**: These people are friends
Mrumun: Ihom zanden vea ifer man anger	Chorus: Enmity is friends with wickedness gossips

Man iyuhwe Kua mzaiyol mba zenden imongo (2x)	Jealousy and mischief are friends
Ior mban zua mba zenden aguve aguve	This people move together like eagles

In the above song extract, mourners decry the collaborative manner with which people who harbor these vices can attack their victims. These vices are further personified as they walk together (as friends would), committing atrocities together as it is captured in these words "enmity walks with mischief slander and envy including troubles" the idea being emphasized here is that, the thought of killing another person can only come to fruition if and when the collaborators are mischievous, slanderous and envious. When the target victim is killed, the perpetrators now walk about boastfully that they have "done it".

In other instances, dirges express the hardheartedness of the "Mbatsav" who kill and still have the courage to boast of their wicked exploits. The following extract from the song titled "**Ingin Kule ve**" (This is over) reveals this:

Tiv	English
Mnder: Asema oooo	**Solo:** Asema ooo!
Ingin kure ve	This is over
Ior mba asema a yen ve la	To those ill-wishers
Wan nyor ver ian ve	He has gone given room for you
Mrumun: Asema oooo	**Solo:** Asema ooo!
Ingin kure ve	This is over
Ior mba asema a yen ve la	To those ill-wishers
Wan nyor ver ian ve	He has gone given room for you
Or a yam mato ga yô	If one can't buy a car
Mase shin ican inan	It is one's share ineptitude

Here again, people who have evil minds, that is, those that harbour vices such as anxiety, envy, jealousy and hatred among other vices to the extent of killing others believe that, once their target victim is no more, they would be at rest. The lead singer informs the collaborators (the witches and wizards) who have killed the deceased that, those of them whose hearts are full of envy and covetousness, the deceased is no more but it is only a matter of time; they will also follow suit. In other words, this is to tell them that even though they have succeeded in killing the deceased, death is no respecter of persons, one day they too will enter the grave. The response agrees that, this has come to an end, the perpetrators who, out of jealousy, envy or covetousness as a result of the deceased's progress/should have a rest of mind now; if they are not able to acquire much now that he is no more, then shame on them.

Tiv	English
Mnder: Ate u vingir oo	**Solo**: For a reception hut oo!
Me vaa (2xs)	I cry (2x)
Mbayuhwev se ge ge oo	The jealous people are joyful
Mrumun: Ate u vingir orti va wura ga tso a noo	**Chorus**:The reception hut, no signs of rain but it has fallen
Ayough gba mbakwav ve	The houses of the age mates have collapsed
Onov mba yuhwev tema mbera sen la oo (2x)	The children of the jealous are there laughing (2x)

From the above, one can deduce that it's the same motivational reason for killing someone that is captured here as well.

Death as a merry making event in Tiv society
One of the impacts of western civilization on Tiv culture is that, burial ceremonies have now become occasions for merry-making. Gone are the days when the death loved ones were periods of mourning, abstinence and starvation. Currently, the occurrence of death usually calls for celebration where people go, not to mourn with the bereaved but to eat and drink. Other people even before they pass on, instruct their children to give people a lot of food to eat. This theme is common in a number of dirges. One of the dirges titled **'Ayange me kpe'** (when I die) is an instance:

Tiv :	English:
Mnder: Ayange me kpe	**Solo:** When I die!
Mrumun: Ior I saa ica	**Chorus:** People should stay away
Mnder: Me ayange me kpe	**Solo**: I said when I die
Mrumun: Or a de ve ga	**Chorus**: Nobody should come
Mngu a kwagh u yan ga	I have no food (2x)
Mder Ka or a kpe yoo	**Solo**: When someone dies...
Mrumun: Ior I zaan ayemee…	**Chorus:** People rush there
Mba a za songo ivo	To go and slaughter goats
Or u nan woo ivo ga	He who did not slaughter a goat
Ku unan u gba kwagh ga!	Holds a miserable burial ceremony

Here, the poet persona through sarcasm says that when she dies, people should stay away because she has no food to give them. The implication of this is that once death occurs, people are more concerned with the food and meat that will be served particularly if the deceased person has people who will provide this, but not really to commiserate with the bereaved persons. On the contrary, any deceased person whose relations lack the means to provide food at his persons funeral, people will not attend such funerals in numbers. It is on this note that the women singers through the use of sarcasm lampoon the Tiv society of today for this act. The aim for all this is to make people see reason and bring back that communal living of yesteryears where people truly shared in one another's grief.

In another dirge titled "Na iwer" (Bring food), performers of dirges ridicule the people who attend burials only to pester the bereaved to offer them food, as it can be seen in the following extract:

Tiv:	English:
Mnder: ka or a kpe i yila nan oo (2x)	**Solo:** When someone dies he is called upon(2x)
Mrumun: Via wam na iwer	**Chorus:** Via bring food!
Mder: Ne tim ior ne bee ve!	**Solo:** You have finished destroying all the people
Mrumun: na iwer	**Chorus:** Bring food!
Mnder: ne tim ior ne bee ve	**Solo**: You have finished destroying all the people
Mrumun: Na iwer	**Chorus:** Bring food!
Or kpen due gema na iwer	The deceased has brought food
Songo iyongo kua igo I tamen	The fat sheep and pig have been slaughtered
Kongoso ityo na na bua	The kinsmen are offered a cow

The above song extract lampoons the Tiv society of today which is so gluttonous that when someone dies, they still call on such a person to give food. The song continues that a dead man gives food, slaughters a sheep, a pig and finally gives his kinsmen a cow. The essence of the song

is to ridicule the Tiv society against their overdependence on celebration at burials and calls for a change of attitude.

Stylistic Features of Some Tiv Dirges
    Tiv dirges have salient stylistic features.

Tiv	English
Mnder: Aondo noo ku gbe kuan…	**Solo**: The rain of death has fallen and is flowing
Mrumun: Bee ….	**Chorus**: Bee...(Torrentially!)
Mnder: Wura noo ku gbe kuan	**Solo**: The rain of death has fallen and is flowing
Mrumun: Bee…	**Chorus**: Bee...!

In the above extract, death which is an abstract noun is personified as having the ability to flow like water. This, coupled with the ideophonic expression "bee" (torrentially) creates a virtual picture of a deluge or flood which is unstoppable and spears nothing in its way. This choice of language effectively paints the picture of the inevitability of death, no matter one's status.

    Additionally, the belief in the inevitability of death is emphasised and re-emphasised through repetition. The solo lines "Aondo noo.../ Wura noo" are both structurally similar and semantically synonymous and declarative of a

In one of the songs titled "Aondo noo ku gbe kuan bee…" (The rain of death is flowing), the sense of a deluge is created in the choice of language used as it can be seen in the following extract:

universal truth. The repetition of the open-mouthed expression "Bee" as the choral lines, apart from emphasising the inevitability of death, additionally establishes the communal nature of dirges by encouraging communal participation through its simplicity and ease of performance. The metrical effect of the choral expression further heightens the musicality the song. This much is the artistic value of the choice of language in the song in question.

    In another song titled "Na Iwer" (Bring Food), the choice of language used is also worthy of note as it can be seen in the following extract:

Tiv:	English:
Mnder: ka or a kpe i yila nan oo (2x)	**Solo:** When someone dies he is called upon(2x)
Mrumun: Via wam na iwer	**Chorus:** Via bring food!
Mder: Ne tim ior ne bee ve!	**Solo:** You have finished destroying all the people
Mrumun: na iwer	**Chorus:** Bring food!

In the above extract, as the song performers ridicule the situation where funeral ceremonies have become avenues of festivity, the choice of language consciously reflects this. The first solo line:" ka or a kpe i yila nan oo / When someone dies he is called upon" is a passivised expression indicative of a widespread disposition in the society which cannot be tied to a particular person, group or even an institution. In other words, the choice of this depersonalised expression implies that everybody is culpable. This is deliberately repeated for emphasis to call attention to a vice that needs to be condemned. The choral lines in the above extract are also

structurally similar and semantically synonymous. In the first instance, a null subject "via" is used. The choice of this contemplative term in the subject's position stylistically suggests open-endedness and can refer to anybody accordingly. This is similarly conveyed in the subjectless second choral line where any proper name can fit in. The overall stylistic effect of this choice of language is to expose for satiric purpose the social anomaly in the society with a view to reverting to the good old days when death of a loved one or neighbour called for deep mourning and empathy with the bereaved.

    A similar situation can be seen in the

following extract from a song titled "Or hembe ku yo ngu hana" (Who is greater than death?):

Tiv	English
Mnder: Oo a o a yoo	Solo: Oo a oo ayooo!
Or hembe ku yo ngu hana?	Who is immortal?
Aondo hemba inja, cir oo	God is the greatest, followed by the ground
Mnder: Oo a o a yoo	Solo: Oo a oo ayooo!
Or hembe ku yo ngu hana?	Who is immortal?
Aondo hemba inya, cir oo	God is supreme, followed by the ground

The first solo line in the above extract is a guttural expression which is usually used to express despondency and helplessness when death takes a toll. The second line in the solo rhetorically calls attention to the inevitability of death. "Death" in line 2 and "the ground" in line 3 are synonyms which are second only to God. The effect of this choice of language is that, death is inevitable as everybody will eventually die and be buried in the ground which never gets filled up as long as death is never tired of taking people. The same choice of words is repeated in the chorus for emphasis. Repetition in this context also makes the song easy enough for general participation.

In another dirge titled "Iorban Zua Mbazenden Imongu" (These Persons are Friends), the choice of language is equally worthy of note as the following extract reveals:

Tiv	English
Mnder: Ior mban zua mba zenden imongo	**Solo**: These people are friends
Mrumun: Ihom zanden vea ifer man anger gossips	Chorus: Enmity is friends with wickedness
Man iyuhwe Kua mzaiyol mba zenden imongo (2x)	Jealousy and mischief are friends
Ior mban zua mba zenden aguve aguve eagles	This people move together like

In the above extract, the dominant literary technique is the use of personification. Human vices such as enmity "ihom," wickedness "ifer" and angee "backbiting" are addressed as "ior" (persons) who are mutual friends in a triadic relationship. This presupposes that, the presence of one implies the presence of others as they are mutually interdependent. Similarly, the duo of envy "iyuhe" and problems "mzeiyol" are also mutually interdependent. This choice of language has a virtual appeal on the listeners and makes the message a graphic reality. Their movement is later described using the ideophonic coinage "aguve-aguve" which is suggestive of swiftness and lack of restraint in the manner the eagle soars in the sky. This choice of language enables the audience to perceive these personalities moving together in connivance to take a soul as a concrete reality.

Furthermore, in another song titled "Avungu Hine Shin Akongu" (The owls Hoot at the Backyard), the choice of language used is quite distinctive as the above extract illustrates:

Tiv	English
Mnder: Avungu hine shin akongo	**Solo**: The awls hoot at the backyard
Mrumun: Ikpu kpu kpu eee ……….	**Chorus**: Ikpu-kpu -kpu eee
Mnder: Avungu hine shin akongo	**Solo**: The awls hoot at the backyard
Mrumun: Ikpu kpu kpu eee ……….	**Chorus**: Ikpu-kpu -kpu eee
Nga a eren nahan yo	When they behave lie this
Onov Mbakine songo or kende	Mbakine kinsmen have slaughtered somebody

Ka u nana mough ga ooo	That person will not survive ooo

"Ikpu kpu kpu eee "found in the choral lines in the above extract are onomatopoeic expressions which are suggestive of the sounds the owls make. This sound is frightening as it is believed to be the premonition of evil. Those meaning suggestive expressions are repeated to emphasise the presence of the sinister forces of darkness with the sole aim of destroying human lives. The performers see through all this which eventually culminates in slaughtering a neighbour. This choice of language has a strong appeal on the human sense of hearing as well as sight, the effect of which is to satirise the people of Mbakine for taking sides with witches and wizards to kill people in the community. The motive behind this choice of language is, therefore, to sue for change.

Findings of the Study

A study of the thematic concerns and stylistic features of the dirges studied in this paper reveals that, dirges have functional import to the society and this is achieved through the choice of language used. This suggests that, the choice of language is not incidental but reflects the thematic concerns and the oral performers intentionality. Satiric choice of language is used to call attention to the prevalence of partying and carousing at burial ceremonies, the general decline in the spirit of communal ethos and the unguarded activities of witches and wizards. Also, bereavement and loss of the sense of empathy, among others, are equally reflected in the choice of language thereby revealing the functional nature of the dirges for condolence and social commentary.

Additionally, this study reveals that dirges are usually crafted in simple language that is suitable for communal participation. The antiphonal structure of the dirges further suggests that they are communal property and the inevitable medium through which the people express their beliefs and eschatological worldview.
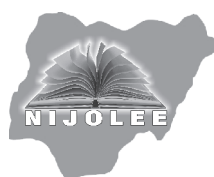
Conclusion

Tiv dirges contain instances of creative use of language. The linguistic choices often reflect the topic of discourse and the intentionality of the song performers. Some of the commonest themes in the dirges studied in this paper include the mortality man, the inevitability of death, the high death toll in the society, partying and carousing at funerals nowadays, loss and deprivation caused by death, connivance by evil individuals to kill innocent members of the community, among others. A study of the choice of language in the dirges selected for this study, therefore, affords a better appreciation of the dirges in terms of their thematic and stylistic potentials.

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EFFECT OF CONTEXT CLUE INSTRUCTION ON INTEREST IN VOCABULARY OF SS ONE STUDENTS IN KWANDE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, BENUE STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated effect of context clue instruction on interest in vocabulary of Senior School One (SS1) students in Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State. The study used quasi experimental research design. Three research questions were answered and three hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study was anchored on Ludwig Wittgenstein use theory of meaning. The population of the study comprised all the SS 1 students in the 2022/2023 academic session. A sample size of 182 students from four schools was selected from a population of 5000 students for the study through non-equivalent samples. Four intact classes were used. The data collected were analysed using mean and standard deviation and the null hypotheses were tested using Analysis of Covariance at 0.05 level of significance. Exposure to context clue instruction significantly increased students' interest in vocabulary lessons and enhanced students' vocabulary acquisition. Students in the experimental group had higher interest ratings than students in the control group. Male students had more interest in context clue instruction than female students. Students in public school do not have interest in vocabulary lessons as compared to students in private school. Findings from the hypotheses revealed that hypotheses 1 and 2 were significant and thus rejected; there was statistical significant difference in the interest of students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary. Hypothesis 3 was not significant and thus not rejected; there was statistically significant difference in the mean interest ratings of public and private school students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary. It was recommended that English language teachers should strictly acknowledge students' interest when teaching English language.

Keywords: *vocabulary, context clues, interest, context clue instruction*

Introduction

Vocabulary is the total number of words in a speech community or the total number of words in the speech repertoire of a student. Meutia Sahardin and Putra (2023) put it that vocabulary is the use of words in context depending on the speaker's intention. Vocabulary transcends the ordinary meaning or definition of a word to the usage of such a word in different situations. Castro-García (2020) explains that vocabulary refers to the student's knowledge of the meanings of words encountered in reading. It is strongly related to comprehension. A students' ability to pronounce a word depends on the students' understanding of the meaning of such a word. More importantly, when a student does not know the meaning of certain words, the student's comprehension of the material being read diminishes.

Meutia Sahardin and Putra (2023) opine that the teaching of vocabulary is not a simple matter. It involves just more than looking up words in a dictionary and using the words in sentences as has been the practice in our secondary schools. Vocabulary knowledge is something that expands and deepens over the course of lifetime. Meutia Sahardin and Putra (2023), Oktapianti (2019) and Suharto and Husin (2017) mention that words come in at least two forms: oral and print. Oral vocabulary is the set of words for which we know the meanings when we speak or read. Print vocabulary consists of those words for which the meaning is known when we write or read. Knowledge of words also come in at least two forms: they include: receptive and productive vocabulary. Muodumogu and Ajegena, (2011) explain that receptive vocabulary is the vocabulary which a student can understand or recognise. Productive vocabulary is the set of words that an individual can assign meanings when listening or reading. Productive vocabulary is often less well known to students and less frequent in use (Oktapianti, 2019).

Oktapianti (2019); Diego, (2010) and Thornburry (2007) further opine that the success of a student in English Language is known by the students' mastery of vocabulary such a student possesses. Vocabulary is the bedrock in the mastery of a Language. The mastery of vocabulary is significant to improving students' general language skills. Williams (2004), Diego, (2010), Arifian, (2013); Oktapianti (2019) explain that vocabulary is the very first skill to master and to express a person's ideas or to communicate with other persons in a second language (L2). People will not be able to communicate with others in a language if they do not have enough vocabulary to express their ideas (Arifian, 2013). Thornburry (2007), Muodomogu (2003), Diego (2010), Fudha, Solusia and Oktoviandy (2019) found that teachers' use of instructional strategy and students' interest are phenomenal in effective and efficient tools for developing the vocabulary of students.

In spite of the efficacy of vocabulary in English language, students' achievement and teachers' instructional strategy in the language is worrisome especially in Benue State and Nigeria at large. Some students find it very difficult to provide synonyms and antonyms of words. Some students find it challenging to interpret idioms and use registers appropriately for particular disciplines. The students' knowledge of words substitution during comprehension lessons is inadequate. West African Examination Chief Examiner's report of 2018, 2019 and 2020 indicate that students' performance in word substitution fall below average (Chief Examiners' Report, 2020). Teacher's methodology in vocabulary instruction needs improvement for effective vocabulary instruction. To overcome inadequate vocabulary skills among students, linguists and language teachers had attempted looking at the best methods of vocabulary instruction. Ali, Mukundan, Ayub Baki (2011); Innaci and Sam (2017) explain that there are numerous strategies used by language teachers to teach vocabulary namely: context clues, dictionary strategy, gamification, word list and so on.

Context Clue Instruction (CCI) is a vocabulary instructional strategy that the teacher of English Language assists students in deriving the meaning of unfamiliar words using the

environment surrounding such a word. Existing literature has not shown who first used context clue instruction, neither has it shown when it began. However, many an author explained and used context clues in vocabulary instruction. Innaci and Sam (2012) explain that context clues are hints that the author gives intentionally or incidentally in the text to help learners understand a difficult or an unfamiliar word. Most importantly, learners not only understand the meaning of the words but they also understand the contextual use of the words. Context clues provide information about how a word fits in a sentence and with the ideas discussed in it. Innaci and Sam (2012) further explain that contextualization helps learners to understand and effectively use the target language. Many shades of meanings a word has can be used in particular context and can better be mastered if context clues are provided. Context clue instruction enables the Second Language (L2) learner to learn many words from context. Even dictionary meaning of certain words used in reading texts may differ from the contextual meaning of the words. In such situations, context clues help the students in making a logical guess of the meaning of the difficult word (s) (Innaci & Sam, 2012; Almunawaroh, 2018).

Interest is a feeling of love and eagerness in a thing or activity without force from anyone. Fitria, Ninu and Zainal (2019) see interest as a constant tendency to pay attention and do something. Activities that are of interest to students are given constant attention, accompanied by pleasure and then a sense of satisfaction is gained. A student that has interest in vocabulary development will choose study materials or texts that enhance vocabulary growth. To analyse difficult words in a text, the reader must have an interest in acquiring new vocabulary. Interest in vocabulary is an initial condition that must be met before reading and then analyzing. This interest in vocabulary is the basis for one's motivation for reading activities (Putri Maharani, Putu Arsana, & Putu Dian Sawitri, 2015).

Interest in vocabulary is an encouragement that can influence behaviour and actions which are then followed by feelings of pleasure and interest in vocabulary development. Interest in vocabulary is a feeling that accompanies or causes special attention to vocabulary. Ezike (2018) asserts that students would study vocabulary actively if they are interested in vocabulary. To achieve in vocabulary, the students must be ready to learn, because it can make them consider vocabulary development as a habitual activity for them. Ezike (2018) further opines that interest is very influential in the study of vocabulary.

Babalola (2018) opine that in recent times the rate at which private schools are springing up is rapid. This does not exclude any level: from nursery school to the university. The business seems booming and the glory seems rising. On the other side, public schools primarily owned by governments are fading away in glory. It seems as if only the indigent in the land sends their children to the government schools because of the cost. It is becoming a curse for the enlightened parents to send their children to the public schools. The structures of some old faith-based schools taken over by governments are collapsing. A visit to any of the public schools gives one the impression of a deserted compound especially in the interior. The reason for the decay may not be farfetched: nobody is really holding responsibility for the declined fortune. The reason above notwithstanding, some parents prefer sending their children to public schools. Nbina and Nwagbara, (2012) explain that public school students perform higher in external examination than their counterparts in private schools. While public schools have electricity, constant water supply, qualified teachers, more learning facilities and infrastructure, private schools virtually lack these facilities (Nwagbara, 2011). Since these facilities enhance learning, inadequacy of the facilities can result to less effective learning. In public schools, there are no sufficient resources for teachers in terms of literature/textbooks and instructional tools for vocabulary building (Jamil, Kamil & Khan, 2014). The conflicting views held by different scholars have shown the existing differences in language achievement of private

and public schools. The researcher therefore investigated effect of context clue instruction on interest in vocabulary of SS One Students in Kwande Local Government Area based on gender and school type due to the conflicting views in previous findings.

The Problem

If senior secondary school students are to improve their achievement in English language at Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE), there will be need for appropriate and adequate approach to be adopted by English language teachers. It is worrisome to note that majority of our senior school students particularly students in Kwande LGA lack a well-developed vocabulary. The West African Examination Council (WAEC) Chief Examiners' report for English 2018, 2019 and 2020 bear evidence that candidates display the problem of inappropriate word substitution in word substitution test. Students need interest to enhance their achievement. Students should not be left to acquire vocabulary by chance rather, students should be taught ways of arriving at meaning of words using contexts in which the word appears. The psychology of learning entails that without interest, meaningful learning outcome is impossible. Students need interest to enhance their achievement. Poor vocabulary knowledge has direct negative effect on English language usage. Poor vocabulary knowledge has posed a lot of problems to learners, specifically, senior secondary school students, a development largely blamed on the fact that teachers have neglected the use of Context Clue Instruction (CCI) in vocabulary instruction (Dankaro, 2010). The researcher, therefore investigated effect of context clue instruction on interest in vocabulary of SS One Students in Kwande Local Government Area.

Literature Review

A person's vocabulary is the set of words within a language that are familiar to that person. It is all the words known and used by a particular person (Zugu & Musa, 2019). Vocabulary in the senior secondary school is anchored on 'productive vocabulary' rather than 'receptive vocabulary'. So, vocabulary can be defined as words of a language, including single items and phrases or chunks of words which convey particular meanings. (Schmitt, 2010). Schmitt (2010) further opines that vocabulary does not embrace only teaching lexical words with specific meanings but also includes lexical phrases or chunks.

The Nigerian child may be grossly incompetent when it comes to the proficient use of English. This is traceable to insufficiency of vocabulary (Zugu & Musa, 2019). Zugu & Musa, (2019) further assert that Benue Students in the senior secondary schools across disciplines perform poorly in words categorisation-especially the aspects of synonyms and antonyms. This is due to poor reading culture in the educational system. Akabougu and Ajiwoju (2015) opine that the present situation in Nigerian schools is such that students are hardly engaged even when vocabulary lessons are presented. Most often, the teachers of English language use traditional method of teaching vocabulary where the teacher gives examples, explain the given examples of new vocabulary and walk out of the class. Teachers lay more emphasis on reading passages aloud to students while students respond in order to show they understand the passage at literal level of meaning (Fakeye, 2010). More importantly, English vocabulary lessons need to follow a well-structured manner of activities. The method used by teachers as outlined above has limited learners' ability to independently identify meaning of unfamiliar words. However, if English language teachers introduce the concept of context clues to learners and the various means of identifying meaning of unfamiliar words using contexts, learners would better be equipped with the tools for identifying meaning of words.

Arifian (2013) states that context clues are the words surrounding an unknown word which often provide hints to the meaning of the unknown word. Context clue approach allows learners to make intelligent, meaningful guesses. This will make the learning task much more active and

challenging than direct explanation of words. It also has a problem-solving characteristic that appeals to most people and challenge them to make use of their intelligence to an extent that is not always common in language classes. It helps readers develop a holistic approach toward reading. The context of a new word may be drawn from a group of sentences, a paragraph, or even the entire text, they learn to direct their attention to language units larger than the sentence while they are looking for context clues.

Interest is a feeling of love and eagerness in something or an activity. Interest means attention, pleasure and tendency. Nurhaidah and Musa (2016) state that individuals who have an interest in vocabulary will be encouraged to pay attention to vocabulary development. Interest in vocabulary is an encouragement that can influence behaviour and actions which are then followed by feelings of pleasure in learning vocabulary. Students' low interest in vocabulary lessons, leads to poor vocabulary. Vocabulary interest influences students' reading comprehension and it also influences students analyses of a passage (Rina Harsono, Fuady, & Saddhono, 2012). In the process of vocabulary development, interest is very necessary. Abbott, Mickail, Richards, Renninger, Hidi, Beers, Berninger (2017) note that students will have interest in vocabulary lessons once the teacher makes vocabulary lesson a topic of interest to the students. Interest in vocabulary will lead to adequate understanding of a discourse and a proper analysis of such discourse. Linguists have tried to identify the relationship between interest and gender in language development as well.

Gender is one of the most relevant factors used in second language acquisition research to distinguish interest of language learners. In the area of vocabulary acquisition, the role of gender occupies a significant position. Gender is, of course, likely to interact with other variables in determining L2 proficiency Hery and Abas (2024). Interest therefore, plays a significant role in determining second language mastery. Hery and Abas (2024) explain that men do better at tasks such as throwing things at a target due to

their interest in such activities. For instance, a game of darts or catching objects and ball games, while women have more interest in subtle motor activities such as performing movement sequences using fingers, like in weaving, knitting or sewing. Achievement in vocabulary differ based on gender interests.

Evidence from other researchers revealed that student's achievement in vocabulary differ across public and private schools based on interest. On the one hand, Gunjal (2012) asserts in Ben (2017) that students in government schools have more English vocabulary than students in private schools. The researcher attributes the striking differences to qualified teachers, adequate instructional methods and availability of instructional materials. Olasehinde and Olatoye (2014) on the other hand assert that students in private schools performed better in science vocabulary test than students in public schools. Olasehinde and Olatoye (2014) opine that private schools do engage students academically and enforced discipline consistently. It is based on the arguments in findings that the study investigated effect of context clue instruction on interest of students in English language vocabulary in Kwande Local Government Area based on gender and school type.

Theoretical Framework
Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889—1951) Use Theory of Meaning
Ludwig Wittgenstein proposed the use theory of meaning. He lived between (1889-1951). Ludwig Wittgenstein upholds that the meaning of anything is the use it is put to. The meaning of any word is a matter of what we do with the word, not something hidden inside anyone's mind or brain. Wittgenstein exemplifies his argument using the verb 'is' in a philosophical investigation. He states that 'is' is used with two different meanings. For instance, 'water is clean' illustrates the state of water and 'water is H_2O', explains the chemical composition of water, two sentences making one complex meaning but quite two distinct uses and meanings. When a person says something, what the person means depends on what is said in the

context in which it is said. The meaning of an expression therefore, is the effect or effects that it creates in a particular context in which the expression is used. The thesis of this theory is that the meaning of an expression can be characterized in terms of its use in the language. It is however, important to understand that the meaning of a word is not complete without usage, especially in sentence form. Wittgenstein's use theory of meaning is related to the present study in the sense that the meaning of a word depends on the usage and context in which it is used.

Objectives of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the effect of context clue instruction on interest in vocabulary of SS1 students in Kwande Local Government Area of Benue State. Specifically, the objectives were to:

1. Determine the difference between interest of students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary.
2. Examine the effect of context clue instruction interest of male and female students in English language vocabulary.
3. Investigate the effect of context clue instruction on public and private school students' interest in English language vocabulary.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the mean interest ratings of students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary?
2. What is the effect of context clue instruction on male and female students mean interest ratings towards English language vocabulary?
3. What is the effect of context clue instruction on public and private school mean interest ratings in English language vocabulary?

Hypotheses

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

1. there is no significant difference in the mean interest ratings of students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary.
2. there is no significant effect of context clue instruction on male and female students mean interest ratings towards English language vocabulary.
3. there is no significant effect of context clue instruction on public and private school mean interest ratings in English language vocabulary.

Methods

(a) **Design.** The non-randomized group, pre-test, post-test quasi experimental design was used for the study. The choice of this design was because the researcher used intact classes.

(b) *Participants*. After securing approval from school principals of participating schools and explaining the purpose of the study to research assistants, Interest in Vocabulary Inventory (IVI) was administered as pre-test to participating students to ascertain the homogeneity of the research respondents before the experimental and control classes began vocabulary instruction. After six lessons were taught to the two groups, IVI was again administered as a post-test to establish students' interest in vocabulary. The target population of the study comprised all the SS1students from 70 secondary schools in Kwande Local Government Area for the 2023/2024 academic session with 5000 students.

(c) *Sample.* The sample size comprised 182 Senior School One SS (1) students drawn from two public and two private secondary schools with four intact classes. The researcher used non-equivalent sample. The students were assigned to experimental and control groups through randomization. Experimental group, that is, students taught

vocabulary using context clues were taught with vocabulary items derived from sentences and the meaning of such vocabulary items explained using contexts in which the words appear in those sentences. Students from control group, that is students taught vocabulary using the dictionary were taught meaning of words by giving the students dictionary meaning of words.

(d) Instrument. Interest in Vocabulary Inventory (IVI) was the instrument used in eliciting data for the research. IVI had twenty questions marked by Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The students ticked as they wished based on their findings. SA was marked as four points, 'A' as three points, 'D' as 2 points and SD as a single point.

(d) *Data Analysis.* Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions. All the hypotheses were tested at $P<0.05$ significance using Analyses of Covariance (ANCOVA).

Results

Research question 1

What is the mean interest ratings of students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary?

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation interest ratings of students taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary

Group gain		Pre-interest	Post-interest	Mean
Experimental	Mean	1.58	2.63	1.06
	N	95	95	
	SD	48	1.03	
Control	Mean	1.64	2.00	0.36
	N	87	87	
	SD	.51	.71	0.7
Mean difference				

Table 1 indicates the pre-interest mean rating of students from experimental group was 1.58 with standard deviation of .48 while the control group had 1.64 with standard deviation as .51. At post-interest, students from experimental group had a mean rating of 2.63 with standard deviation of 1.03 while those from the control group had a mean rating of 2.00 with .71 shown as the standard deviation. The mean gain for the experimental group was 1.06 and 0.36 for the control group. The difference in the mean gain was 0.7 in favour of students taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction method. This means that context clue instruction stimulated the students to have more interest in English Language vocabulary

Research question 2

What is the effect of context clue instruction on male and female students mean interest ratings towards English language vocabulary?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation interest ratings of male and female students taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction

Gender Mean gain		Pre-interest	Post-interest
	Mean	1.57	2.73
1.16			
Male	N	52	52
	SD	.47	1.14
	Mean	1.49	2.51
1.02			
Female	N	43	43
	SD	.60	.90
Mean difference 0.14			

Table 2 shows that the pre-interest mean rating of male students was 1.57 with corresponding standard deviation of .47 while females had 1.49 with standard deviation as .60. At post-interest, male students mean rating was 2.73 with standard deviation of 1.14 while female students had a mean rating of 2.51 with .90 shown as the standard deviation. The mean gain for male students was 1.16 while female students gained 1.02. The difference in the mean gain of male and female students exposed to context clue instruction was 0.14 in favour of male students. This means that male students benefited from the treatment more than their female counterparts. Therefore, context clue instruction enhanced male students' interest towards English Language vocabulary better than their female students.

Research Question 3
What is the effect of context clue instruction on public and private school mean interest ratings in English language vocabulary?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation interest ratings for public and private students taught English Language vocabulary

School Type Mean gain		Pre-interest	Post-interest
	Mean	1.50	2.31
0.81			
	N	51	51
Public	SD	.51	.94
	Mean	1.57	3.00
1.43			
Private	N	44	44
	SD	.56	1.02
Mean difference 0.62			

Table 3 reveals that the pre-interest mean rating of students from public secondary was 1.50 with standard deviation of .51 while those from private school had 1.57 with standard deviation as .56. At post-interest, students from public school had a mean interest rating of 2.31 with standard

deviation of .94 while those from private school had a mean interest rating of 3.00 with 1.02 shown as the standard deviation. The mean gain for students from public school was 0.81 while those from private school gained 1.43. The difference in the mean gain of students from public and private schools taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction method was 0.62 in favour of students from private secondary school. It, therefore, means that context clue instruction had more effect on the interest of students from private secondary schools.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference in the mean interest ratings of students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary.

Table 4: ANCOVA on Mean interest ratings of students taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	21.927a	2	10.964	13.867	.000
Intercept	47.832	1	47.832	60.501	.000
Preinterest	4.063	1	4.063	5.139	.025
Strategy	19.857	1	19.857	25.116	.000
Error	140.727	179	.791		
Total	1148.906	182			
Corrected Total	162.654	181			

Table 4 shows a p-value of 0.00 which was less than the alpha value of 0.05. This implies that the test is significant, therefore, there was statistical significant difference in the interest ratings of students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant effect of context clue instruction on male and female students mean interest ratings towards English language vocabulary

Table 5 examines effect of context clue instruction on male and female students mean interest ratings towards English language vocabulary. The result as shown in the table below

Table 5: ANCOVA on mean interest ratings of male and female students taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	1.445a	2	.722	.665	.517
Intercept	61.086	1	61.086	56.214	.000
Preinterest	.344	1	.344	.317	.575
Gender	1.001	1	1.001	.922	.340
Error	99.973	92	1.087		
Total	760.123	95			
Corrected Total	101.418	94			

Table 5 reveals the probability associated with the F (.92) was 0.34. Since the probability value of 0.34 was greater than the 0.05. This shows that the test was not significant. Therefore, there was no statistical significant difference in the interest ratings of male and female students taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Hypothesis 3
There is no significant effect of context clue instruction on public and private school mean interest ratings in English language vocabulary.

Table 6 seeks to find out if students from private and public school had interest in vocabulary classes after context clue instruction. The result as shown in the table below

Table 6: ANCOVA on mean interest ratings of students from public and private schools taught English Language vocabulary using context clue instruction

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	11.662a	2	5.831	5.977	.004
Intercept	64.532	1	64.532	66.145	.000
Preinterest	.206	1	.206	.211	.647
Schooltype	11.218	1	11.218	11.499	.001
Error	89.756	92	.976		
Total	760.123	95			
Corrected Total	101.418	94			

Table 6 shows a p-value of 0.00 which was less than the alpha value of 0.05. This implies that the test is significant, therefore, there was statistically significant difference in the mean interest ratings of public and private school students taught English language vocabulary using context clue instruction and those taught using the dictionary, therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Discussion of Findings
The study examined effect of context clue instruction on interest in vocabulary of SS 1 students in Kwande Local Government Area. It also investigated influence of gender and school type on students' interest in vocabulary. The discussion of findings was based on the variables of the study which was guided by research questions and hypotheses.

The findings of this study revealed that context clue instruction has significant effect on students' interest rating in vocabulary. This is because context clue instruction provides the learner access to unknown words using the environment in which the unknown word is used. Arifian (2013) explains that context clue instruction provides hints to the meaning of un familiar word in a sentence. When a learner is given a background understanding of the context in which a word appears using context clue, it places the learner at higher advantage than if the learner was not taught context clues. The use of context clues in identifying the meaning of un familiar word places the learner at a vantage position than using the dictionary. Arifian (2013) further states that, the learner is more interested in vocabulary classes when instruction is based on context clue than with the use of the dictionary. Concepts are more easily grasped than when clues

are not provided. Sam and Innaci (2017) explain that contextualization helps learners to understand and effectively use the target language.

This research agrees with earlier researches which found that students' interest has significant influence on English Language in general and vocabulary to be specific (Udu and Gwang 2020; Abbott, Mickail, Richards, Renninger, Hidi, Beers & Berninger 2017). Nurhaidah and Musa (2016) state that individuals who have interest in vocabulary will be encouraged to pay attention to activities that would enhance their vocabulary acquisition.

The results of the study equally indicated that both male and female students have significant interest in vocabulary lessons when vocabulary lessons are taught using context clue instruction. However, there is an interest in vocabulary based on gender in favour of male students. Wan, Patterson and Long (2024) found that female students have more interest in foreign cultures, social activities and foreign languages more than male students which make female students have more interest in vocabulary topics than their male counterparts. On the contrary, Lin and Wu (2021) earlier observe that male students perform better in vocabulary because male students have more interest in computer than female students.

Findings further revealed that there is a mean difference in interest rating of public and private school in favour of private school students. The result further contradicts earlier findings from Gyuse, Otor and Fakolade (2018) which found out that public school students have interest in Biology vocabulary which make them perform better in external examinations than students of private school.

Conclusion

The study found that context clue instruction had significant effect on interest in vocabulary of both male and female students. The conclusion drawn was that the lack of interest and the perennial poor achievement in vocabulary among SS1 students would most likely be addressed if teachers adopt context clue instruction strategy in vocabulary

development.

Recommendations

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

1. English language teachers should adopt CCI as a strategy of teaching vocabulary in such a way that students would experience a boost in their vocabularies. This would result in high interest in vocabulary.
2. Students should be exposed to context clue instruction in order to make learning fun and enhance students' achievement as well.
3. Textbooks writers and curriculum planners should incorporate vocabulary materials that provide contexts to difficult words.

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A MORPHOLOGICAL STUDY OF COMPOUNDS IN ONLINE POSTS ON THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract
This study examined compound words found in online posts on the COVID-19 pandemic with the view to identifying and analyzing the compounds according to their word classes and structures. The methodology adopted was content analysis and the purposive sampling technique was used in generating data for the study. Through this sampling technique, the available compound words were identified and analysed. The findings revealed that in the formation of compounds related to the COVID-19 pandemic, two types of compounds, namely, noun compounds and verb compounds are used, with noun compounds being the most common. It was also observed that the process of compounding is unlimited and there was no structural limitation on the recursivity of compounds in English. The study maintained that the orthographic structure of compounds was inconsistent. It further noted that as COVID-19 remains in the human life, more compound lexemes continue to emerge through news articles published massively on the internet, especially in social network sites.

Keywords: Compound Words; COVID-19 Pandemic; Neologism; Word Formation

Introduction

This paper analyses compound words used in online posts on COVID-19 with the view to identifying, classifying; and analysing these compounds in terms of their components and their word class structures. The paper reviews the concepts of morphology and compounding and situates the classification of compounding as an aspect of concatenative morphology.

According to Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams (2011), morphology is the study of the internal structure of words, and of rules by which words are formed. It studies and analyses the linguistic elements known as morphemes of a given language. It serves as a bridge between the syntax of a language and its phonology (Brown and Miller 1960:161 in Ndimele, 1999:2). Booij (2007) contends that morphology deals with the internal constituent structure of words, he (2007) also argues that morphology does not only deal with the analysis of existing words into their constituent pieces. Language users can make new words or forms, and it is this form of creativity that is the focus of morphology. By this definition, morphology is basically concerned with the creative potential of language users to make new words in a language. However, morphology should not be limited to the word formation potential of language users. It also encompasses the analysis of grammatically conditioned variants of words in a language. That is, it studies the kind of variation that words exhibit on the basis of their grammatical context. Such variations include structural and semantic extension and conversion. Based on this, Booij (2007) classifies morphology into two types - compounding and affixation.

Compounding and affixation are the most widespread types of morphology since they create words with a high degree of transparency, that is, words whose formal morphological structure correlates systematically with their semantic interpretations. Booij (2007) further argues that affixation is used both in word formation and in inflection, and it is applied to a number of morphological operations. He posits that, for each morphological operation, one has to identify the set of base words to which it applies. His view shows that compounding and affixation are the prototypical cases of concatenative morphology, in which morphological constituents are concatenated in a linear fashion (for example, tear- teargas; boy-boys).

Compounding is viewed as the most frequently used way of making new lexemes (technically refers to forms of lexical item). He further states that the productivity of compounding in many languages is largely due to its semantic transparency and versatility. This is because when a new compound word is formed, the meaning of its constituent elements is already known, and the task is to find out the semantic relation between the compound elements. He also notes that the process of compounding can be applied recursively, and this is another cause of its productivity, for example: *Covid 19- Covid 19 Case – Covid 19 Case Management*. As it can be seen here, compounding process tends to be recursive in many instances.

Compounding and Compounds

Compounds are defined differently by different scholars. Booij (2007:75) observes that in many languages, compounding (also called composition) is the most frequently used way of making new lexemes. Its defining priority i that it consists of the combination of lexemes into large words. He also posits that compounding consists of a combination of two words, in which one modifies the meaning of the other. Booij's definition is supported by Hamawand (2011:201), as he postulates that it is a structure formed by interpreting two substructures (free morphemes). As a productive means of word formation in English, compounding is the process of putting together two free morphemes, be they nouns, adjectives or verbs, to make a compound word, a brand-new word (Hamawand, 2011:201). Matthews (1991:82) notes that compounding is a process by which a compound lexeme is derived from two or more simpler lexemes. Compounding is a lexical process: it derives lexeme from lexemes, (for example, black+ bird = blackbird).

Additionally, O'Grady, Archibald and

Katamba (2011:128) contend that compounding is the combination of two already existing words. Their definition is not inclusive, as compounding is much more than a combination of only two words. Akmajian et al. (2001:33) argue that compounding is not limited to two words. They support their argument with compound words that have more than two members, such as bathroom towel-rack, community finance centre committee, sailboat rigging, sailboat rigging design and sailboat rigging design institute. From these examples, it is clear that the definition put forward by O'Grady, Archibald and Katamba (2011) is deficient. Hacken (2017) views compounding as a word formation process based on the combination of lexical elements (words which refers to different forms of lexical item, or stems which is an unreducible form of word). In the same vein, Hacken (2017), Fabb (2001), and Haspelmath and Sims (2010:137) explain that a compound is a complex lexeme that can be thought of as consisting of two or more lexemes. To put it simply, a compound consists of two or more lexemes, (called compound members) that are joined together. It is important to note that English allows several types of combinations of different word classes (nouns, verbs or adjectives), but not all the combinations are possible in the formation of compounds.

Hamawand (2011) and Haspelmath and Sims (2010) note that the spelling of compounds has caused controversy in the literature. The controversy relates to the high degree of inconsistency in the spelling of compounds, as some compounds are often written as single words (e.g., lipstick), but in many other cases, especially with N+N compound, the constituents of a compound are separated by space, like syntactic phrases (for example sugar plantation, English club, and morpheme lexicon). Moreover, sometimes, the constituent elements of a compound are written in hyphenated form (e. g, bitter-sweet and book-keeper). Fabb (2001) argues that the meaning of a compound is usually to some extent compositional, though it is often not predictable. This unpredictable feature of compounds arises, usually, from their two

characteristics, namely:
I   compounds are subject to semantic drift, which can be metonymy. For example, a 'red head' is a person who has red hair.
ii- there are many possibilities of semantic relations between the constituents of a compound, as between those of a sentence, but unlike a sentence, in a compound, case, preposition and structural position are not available to clarify the semantic relation.

Studies have been conducted to describe compounds, particularly their types. Hamawand (2011:203) uses the semantic head parameter to identify three types of compounds: noun compounds, adjective compounds and verb compounds. However, Haspelmath and Sims (2010:137) note that English allows and makes it possible to have several types of combinations of different word-classes (N: noun, A: adjective and V: verb). Therefore, Hamawand (2011) identifies the following types of compounds:

i.   Noun Compounds:
According to Hamawand (2011), a noun compound is a structure that is made up of two free morphemes or lexical substructures. The compound structure is used to express a new idea. The left-hand substructure, which is the modifier (M), can belong to any word class, be it a noun, an adjective or a verb. The right-hand substructure, which is the profile determinant or head (H), is a noun. The resulting structure is a compound noun, describing a class of a time-head entity. The term 'entity' refers to something that has separate and distinct existence and objective conceptual reality. Examples of noun compounds are: gas stove, motor cycle, houseboat, wheat bread, union member, university senate, college staff, pickpocket, makeshift, scarecrow, highchair, strongman and madman.

ii.   Adjective Compounds
Hamawand (2011) posits that an adjective compound is a structure that is composed of two or more free morphemes or lexical substructures. The compound structure is used to describe a new situation or to change the modification of an entity. The left-hand substructure, which is the modifier (M), can belong to any word class. The

right-hand substructure, which is the profile determinant or head (H), is an adjective. The resulting structure is an adjective compound, denoting a feature. The term feature refers to a typical quality or an important aspect of something. Examples of adjective compounds are: ash-grey face, coal-black eyes, sky-blue blouse, cost-effective approach and profit-thirsty trader.

iii. Verb Compounds

Hamawand (2011) also posits that a verb compound is a structure that is made up of two free morphemes or lexical substructures. The compound structure is used to describe a new idea. The left-hand substructure, which is the modifier (M), can belong to any word class. The right-hand substructure, which is the head (H), is a verb. The resulting structure is a verb compound, describing a class of non-stable temporal events. The term event refers to something that happens at a given place and time together with the circumstances in which it takes place. For example, to spoon-feed a baby is to feed a baby with a spoon. More examples include bottle-feed, breastfeed, head-shake, tape-record, babysit, book-review, haircut, brainwash and blow-dry.

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is a respiratory illness caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, which was first identified in December 2019 in the city of Wuhan, China. In March 2020, the World Health Organisation declared COVID-19 a pandemic due to its wide global spread. With the coming of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world faces changes in almost all the fields of human endeavour, especially politics, economy, administration, business and sports. The area of language as a means of communication is also not left behind. Recently, there have beennew research works on the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to language. Researchers, such as Khalfan, Batool and Shezad (2020) investigated the social needs that motivate the creation of neologisms related to COVID-19 and how the neologisms affect the perceptions of their users on social media. They found that neologisms related to coronavirus are created to fill a social void. It also found that neologisms influence the perception of their users on social media by conveying certain perspectives and pushing certain narratives. Similarly, Bolotina (2020) investigated neologisms related to the coronavirus pandemic in social media posts. It described neologisms in modern English from the lexical-semantic point of view and distributed them by their structure. The findings indicated that neologisms related to the coronavirus pandemic reflect the current state of the social situation created by the pandemic. They also showed that the general morphological processes involved in creating these lexical elements include compounding, blending and lexical derivation.

Asif, Zhiyong, Iram and Nisar (2020) conducted a study to linguistically describe neologisms related to coronavirus (COVID-19). The researchers investigated word formation, borrowing and lexical deviation in the study. The findings showed that the majority of the people on social media and state briefings utilise word formation in the form of nouns, verbs and adjectives. The abbreviations and acronyms which are related to the current situation of COVID-19 are also used. It also found that neologisms are used to name various societies and cultures that were not in existence before the emergence of the virus.

Simatupang and Supri (2020) used a morpho-semantic approach to study compound words that had been used during the global pandemic. They obtained data from the official website of the World Health Organisation (WHO) in the "Your Questions Answered" section. The study found two types of compounds: compound nouns (67%) and compound verbs (33%). It also found three types of meanings: literal meaning (50%), semi-literal meaning (33%) and idiomatic meaning (17%). This means that the majority of the compound words are used to name new phenomena that are outside the language. As can be seen different aspects related to the present study have been investigated by different scholars, it is observed that most of the research works concentrate on aspects of language, such as semantics and neologisms. However, because

compound words have become popular in online posts on the COVID-19 pandemic, there is a need to investigate the structure of such words and how they deviate or conform to the standard way of compound formation. The research addresses this gap by providing a critical word-class analysis of the compound words found in online posts on the COVID-19 pandemic. The paper, specifically, attempts to investigate compound words related to the coronavirus pandemic in online posts on the coronavirus pandemic by obtaining data from *dictionary.com, merriam-webster.com, macmillandictionary.com* and *the Twitter (now X)handle of the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control* (NCDC). The rationale behind the selection of these sources is due to the fact that they frequently post updates on the COVID-19 situation. The data for the study are obtained from the posts of March 2020 to January 2021. The choice of this period is necessary because it was the period in which posts on COVID-19 dominated online media, especially during the lockdown.

Data Presentation and Analysis
Post 1
.. a second confirmed case of # **COVID-19** in Nigeria (NCDC, March 9, 2020).

The compound structure above is a nominal or noun compound because its semantic head is a noun. That is, the right-hand most substructure of the compound is a noun. It is an acronym for the coronavirus disease, which emerged in the year 2019. It is a complex compound structure which comprises four independent lexical substructures, namely: *corona, virus, disease* and *2019.* Therefore, it is formed through the combination of four lexical elements of the same grammatical class of noun; as such it is a new compound word which found its way into English during the coronavirus pandemic.

Posts 2
... providing care for **#COVID-19 cases**, (NCDC, June 8,2020).

From the data above, the compound word used is *COVID-19 case*. It is formed by the combination of *COVID-19* and *case,* which are

both within the grammatical class of nouns. COVID-19 is the modifier of the head (*case*), which is a kind of case. The second composite member (*case*) is the profile determiner of the entire compound structure.

Post 3
... DG@Chikwe_I wa asked to speak if he had seen the tweet & video about #**COVID-19 case management** in Nasarawa, (NCDC, June 8, 2020).

The compound structure (**COVID-19 case management)** above is a noun compound which comprises the acronym, *COVID-19, case* and *management* to form a nominal compound, 'COVID-19 case management'. The final compound member, management, is the semantic head of the compound structure and it determines the lexical class of the structure. It is a nominal compound because the head of the compound is a noun. All the other dependent elements modify the head, a kind of management.

Post 4
Today at the daily **Covid-19 press briefing**, DG@Chikwe_I... (NCDC, June 8, 2020).

The post above contains a noun compound which is used to name a new idea. It is formed by the combination of *COVID-19* (which is an acronym for the coronavirus disease 2019), *press* and *briefings*. It is important to note that all the compound substructures are of the same grammatical category (Noun class); as such, the resulting structure of the substructures is a noun compound, which describes an entity (something that has a separate and distinct existence and objective conceptual reality).

Post 5
In addition to the health risk of the **COVID-19 outbreak** in Nigeria, the country faces... (NCDC, March 15, 2020).

The post above is a compound structure denoting a nominal compound. This is because the right-handmost substructure of the compound structure is a noun. Morphologically, the compound structure is formed by the combination

of a noun (COVID-19), a preposition (*out*) and a noun (*break*). COVID-19 is, itself, a compound structure used as a substructure which narrows the meaning of the head, *outbreak*. It is used to describe a kind of outbreak.

Post 6

NCDC will continue to keep Nigerians updated as the **COVID-19 situation** evolves. (NCDC, March 15, 2020).

The post above is a lexical compound which denotes a noun compound because the head of the compound structure is a noun. It is formed by the combination of *COVID-19*, which is in the noun category and *situation*, which is also a noun. The meaning of the head is narrowed by the meaning of the modifier, the left-hand compound substructure, *COVID-19*. It describes a new idea, *COVID-19 situation.*

Post 7

Coronavirus (Macmillandictionary.com April, 2020)

It refers to one of a group of viruses that cause some forms of the common cold and serious illnesses, such as SARS and COVID-19 (Macmillandictionary.com April, 2020). Morphologically, *coronavirus* is a compound word representing the type of compound noun due to the combination of *corona* and *virus,* which are nouns. Haspelmath and Sims (2010) argue that the second compound member of a compound structure narrows the meaning of the first compound members. Because of this, *coronavirus* is a noun compound lexeme, since the second compound element is a noun.

Post 8

Coronavirus infection (Macmillandictionary.com)

The post above contains a compound structure which is formed by the combination of three formerly independent lexical elements, namely: *corona* (noun), *virus* (noun) and *infection* (noun). It is used to describe a new idea, the coronavirus infection. The meaning of the compound head, infection, is narrowed by the

meaning of the modifiers (*corona* and *virus*), a kind of infection. The compound structure is used to name a new idea. Therefore, it is a noun compound.

Post 9

... world learns from the **#COVID-19 Pandemic** is there's no option to multilateralism. (NCDC, September 8, 2020).

COVID-19 pandemic is a compound word representing a type of compound noun due to the combination of *COVID-19* (noun) and *pandemic* (noun). The compound structure is used to express a new idea or a phenomenon. The left-hand substructure of the compound structure, which is *COVID-19*, modifies the meaning of the right-hand substructure, while the head is *pandemic*. The resulting structure is a noun compound, *COVID-19 pandemic*, which is a kind of pandemic.

Post 10

... Nigerians to only used accredited private laboratories for travel related to **#COVID-19 Test**. (NCDC, March 25, 2020).

The data above is a compound structure which is composed of two independent lexical elements called compound members. It is formed by the combination of *COVID-19*, which is in the category of noun and *test*, which is also in the category of noun. The resulting structure is a compound noun, *COVID-19 test*. It describes a new idea, namely, the *COVID-19 test*. The meaning of the semantic head of the compound structure is narrowed by the meaning of the first compound member.

Post 11

Coronasceptic (Macmillandictionary.com, October, 2020)

This means believing that Covid-19 is not a real disease or does not represent a serious threat; someone who believes this (Macmillandictionary.com, October, 2020). Morphologically, *coronasceptic* is a lexical compound representing the type of compound noun. It is a compound noun because it combines

corona and *sceptic,* which are in the grammatical class of nouns. Haspelmath and Sims (2010) argue that the first compound member of a compound structure narrows the meaning of the second compound member. Because of this, coronasceptic is a noun compound because the second compound member (*sceptic*), which is the profile determiner, is a noun.

Post 12

Mask up (Macmillandictionary.com, June15, 2020)

This means to wear a mask or face covering (Macmillandictionary.com, June 15th, 2020). From the data, the compound word identified is *mask up*. The structure is a compound verb because it is formed by the combination of a *mask* (noun but converted to verb) and an adverb (up). This means that it consists of a verb and an adverb, and is in the grammatical class of verb compound. However, in this kind of compound, the right-hand substructure of the composite structure is not the profile determiner which determines the semantic property of the new structure. As such, it is an instance of left-hand headed. The meaning of the compound structure is derivable from the meaning of the two compound elements.

Findings

From their grammatical structure, two types of compounds are identified: noun and verb compounds, and the noun compounds dominate the compound words used in online posts on the Covid-19 pandemic. The orthographic structure of compounds is inconsistent because some of the compounds are hyphenated (as in post-COVID-19*),* some are written with a space in between as in the *coronavirus infection* and *mask up,* while others are written as one word, for example, *coronasceptic* and *coronavirus*. The study establishes that the compounds under study are recursively produced (for example, *COVID-19, COVID-19 case, COVID-19 case management).* Furthermore, it is also established from the study that there is no limit to the number of compound words that can be produced in English.

Discussion

From the twelve posts presented and analysed, two types of compounds are identified, namely: the noun compound and the verb compound. A noun compound is a morphological structure which is made up of two or more lexical substructures and it is used to express a new idea. It is a lexical structure which comprises two or more independent roots and has a noun at the right-hand most of the structure as the head. Katamba (1993:304) argues that generative morphologists, such as Williams (1981) and Selkirk (1982), use x-bar syntax to highlight the fact that just as phrases in syntax have heads, words also have heads. In the light of this, a compound noun is a structure that is composed of two or more substructures with a noun as the head word. The left-hand substructure, which is the modifier of the head, can belong to any word class. Hamawand (2011) also posits that the left-hand substructure serves as a modifier of the head, which is the right-hand member. In a compound noun, the right-hand substructure must be a noun. In light of this, eleven (11) out of the twelve (12) compound words analysed are noun compounds. This is to say that only *post 12* belongs to the lexical category of verb. This implies that almost all the compound lexemes identified and analysed are used to name new ideas related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the noun compounds identified and analysed include *COVID-19, coronavirus, coronavirus infection, COVID-19 test, COVID-19 pandemic, coronasceptic,* etc.

However, the second type of compound found is a verb compound. A verb compound is a morphological structure which is made up of two or more lexical substructures and is used to describe a new idea. Hamawand (2011) observes that a verb compound describes a new idea. It is a composite structure in which a verb serves as the right-hand substructure and determines the grammatical category of the composite structure. It is a compound structure in which the profile determiner, which is the head of the compound, is a verb. For instance, words like *book review, handshake, haircut spoon feed, breastfeed, and brainwash* are good examples of compound

verbs. It is a morphological structure in which the second compound member (in a two-word compound) is a verb. The right-hand element which is the head must be a verb. Meanwhile, from the 12 posts presented and analysed, only a lexeme (*mask up*) is identified and classified under verb compound. This means that only the final post belongs to the category of verb compounds. Therefore, *mask up* is a lexical compound which describes an action.

Conclusion

The main thrust of this study is to provide a morphological analysis of compound words found in online posts on the COVID-19 pandemic. It sets out to identify and analyse the available compound words and their classifications. The study indicates that noun compounds and verb compounds are the compound types used in the formation of compounds related to the COVID-19 pandemic in online posts, but noun compounds are the most common types. This implies that most of the compound words related to the COVID-19 pandemic are used to name new ideas. The orthographic structure of the compound is inconsistent. This is to say that the compound elements are hyphenated before they gain currency or performance and when they gain such currency, they are spelt as single words, as in *Covid-19, coronavirus, coronacut, coronababies* and *coronasceptic.* The study holds that the process of compounding is recursive, and there is no limit to the size of compound words that can be produced in English. Finally, the study also establishes that most of the compound words related to the COVID-19 pandemic are discoverable through news articles published massively on the internet, especially on social network sites.

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THE POTENTIAL OF NIGERIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN BUILDING AN INCORRUPTIBLE NIGERIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract
Nigeria is seen and referred to as one of the most corrupt nations of the world. This rating is a grave concern to many morally disposed and responsible citizens of the country. Hence, the solution to the problem of corruption becomes pertinent. Therefore, literature is a veritable instrument of social change, and because children are the hope and the leaders of any nation, children's literature is identified as a means to address the problem. This study, using some texts of Nigerian children's literature, carefully explored how the texts have vividly addressed the subject of corruption. The primary texts were used as sources of data, and the qualitative method was used to critically analyse the data. It was found that all the texts selected have the potential to address issues of corruption in various forms while condemning bribery and other immoral acts. The texts uphold morals such as dignity of labour, patriotism, obedience to elderly counsel, impartial judgement, sexual purity, and others. It was therefore recommended that Nigerian children's literature should be adopted as a powerful national instrument to build responsible and morally upright children for the future.

Keywords: Children's Literature, Corruption, Nigeria, Moral.

Introduction

Nigeria is a prominent member of the committee of nations. At the level of the United Nations, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Organization of African Union (OAU) and others, Nigeria's membership remains staunch and solid. Nigerian citizens are residents of many nations of the world where they are found prospering in many professions and excelling in diverse human endeavours. Many Nigerians have risen to prominence, acquiring laurels in international competitions. Despite the great feats by Nigerians in different areas of life, Nigeria is rated so high in the circle of corrupt nations of the world. The designation of Nigeria as a corrupt nation has not changed significantly the Corrupt Perception Index (CPI) results released by Transparency International for 2022. Since then, Nigeria has done nothing to change her status as a very corrupt nation (Nmah 120). Notwithstanding, Nmah's position, efforts have been made to tackle this problem of corruption that has threatened the very existence of this great nation. Successive regimes in the country have initiated programmes, legislations and other ways to tackle corruption.

Corruption is a betrayal of trust reposed in persons occupying public positions. The use of the influence of one's position for personal gains is corruption. (Myint 40). Collection of bribes, embezzlement, unexecuted contracts awarded, falsification of documents and accounts records, misappropriation of public funds, and many others are considered acts of corruption in any society (Nmah 123). Liu, Joseph (2) views corruption as the exploitation of public office for personal gain. Nye, Joseph on the other hand, considers it as a behaviour which deviates from the formal duties of a public role because of private-regarding (personal, close family, private clique) pecuniary of status gain. Contributing an opinion on the concept of corruption, Akindele, Samuel T. (105) defines it as the misuse of public power for private benefit. Nigeria has been grossly enmeshed in corrupt practices from individuals, groups, corporate organizations, public and private, religious and traditional, local and foreign. They maintain that corruption is an endemic and cancerous ailment in the body of Nigerian systems (Okolo and Akpokighe 35).

The effects of corruption are seriously devastating and unimaginably destructive to any human society. This has been evidently witnessed in the retrogressive and underdeveloped situation of the Nigerian nation. The outcome of a study conducted on corruption in Nigeria revealed that corruption in the public and private systems has led to the deplorable condition of the country's infrastructures and governance which has affected the entire citizenry (Ngwuchukwu 16).

It is noteworthy to state that efforts have been made to tackle this problem of corruption that has threatened the very existence of this great nation. Successive governments in the country have initiated programmes, legislations and other ways to tackle corruption. Starting from the military regime of Muhammadu Buhari between 1983 and 1985, the War Against Indiscipline (WAI) was launched but was truncated after the regime that put it in place due to some reasons such as the corruption inherent in the style of implementation and cases of highhandedness resulting to violation of human rights. Ibrahim Babangida's government modified WAI to (WAIC) War Against Indiscipline and Corruption. The civilian government of Olusegun Obasanjo also tried to confront this menace of corruption through the establishment of Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) and the Independent Corrupt Practices Commission and other Related Offences (ICPC). These two corruption fighting institutions have existed till date (Olufemi & Taiwo 1). Successive administrations have also been making use of these anti-graft agencies to fight corruption and other related crimes.

Corruption has continued unabated despite the above mentioned measures by governments to fight it in Nigeria. The reasons for this have been selective mode of operation as perceived enemies are being pursued, partial handling of cases, unpatriotic and corrupt officers of the anti-graft agencies, and many more. All these have resulted to a damaging culture of corruption, leading to disrespect by other nations on Nigerians. Sadly

enough, the lawmakers who make laws against evil are evil themselves. The brazen disregard for morals and societal values has culminated to a lawless society that Nigeria as a nation has become.

Though, for over sixty years of Nigerian independence, all hope is not lost. There is hope for repositioning, restructuring, transformation, revival and change. The foundation should be revisited. Therefore, this paper is premised on the notion of Nigerian children's literature as a veritable instrument for building a corrupt-free Nigerian society.

Children's Literature and Nigerian Society

Children's literature consists of every literary material that addresses issues relating to the life of children as they interact with the world around them to influence their life aspirations and conduct in order to be useful to themselves and society in general. Ngwuchukwu, et al describes children's literature as all written works about the interest of children, and for children (58). Children's literature is further seen as a body of literature with artistic value that is presented for the intellectual needs of children. Children's literature in Nigeria is part of the original life of Nigerians in the various indigenous cultures and tribes that make up the nation. In various ways and manners, children's literature has been used to mould the character of Nigerians positively. Through oral literature, Nigerian children are educated, enlightened, and entertained to position themselves as humans who are responsible to themselves, family and society. Oral literary forms such as folktales, folklores, stories, poetry in ballads, dirges, lyrics, epics, fairy tales, songs, etc are the forms of literature used to nurture the personality of an indigenous Nigerian child to a responsible adult with sound moral values (Nnyagu & Ngozi 84).

All forms of corrupt practices, anti-social and immoral behaviours are condemned in the indigenous Nigerian society entirely, there are severe consequences that accompany such immoral acts such as banishment, ostracisation, fines and others which are applied on recalcitrant members of the society. During festivals and other events, such people were satirized with songs that brought ridicule to them. Hence, every individual was mindful of what they did. Any ignoble act of a member of community was vehemently condemned. Those considered to have committed serious crimes such as murder, rape, burglary, theft and others were stigmatized to an extent that other neighbouring communities or villages warned their children from associating with children from such communities and decline marriage proposals from such clans which ran down to families and generations.

Background for the Study

The advent of colonialism and modernism has eroded the sanctity of indigenous practices that literature offers for good citizenry from the reservoir of wisdom. Morality which hinges on indigenous social values and virtues of honesty, loyalty, obedience, love, fear of God, unity, kindness, and more are no longer upheld as foreign cultures of ignominy, selfishness, disregard for communal lifestyle and social order as well as traditional authorities, etc become the order of the day (Festus 528). Modernisation has brought multiple problems that accompany social change in society. The situation becomes complex to handle as individuals have lost their sense of morality which brings dignity and social-cultural values and norms that originally sustain the society (Nmah 128). In order to redeem and transform the already corrupt Nigerian nation, it must be understood that children are hopes for the future of a people. Therefore, building them consciously through the instrumentality of literature would go a long way in salvaging the seemingly hopeless situation. This can be done by reviving the abandoned and neglected indigenous instrument of education and enlightenment that produces and nurtures morally upright and incorruptible citizens and leaders aiming and pursuing a socially, economically, politically stable nation.

In view of the present daunting corrupt situation of the country which defies solutions through all approaches employed so far, this paper

or study analyses the possible way children's literature can be used to eradicate corruption by inculcating morals and virtues for personal dignity, development and responsibility to self, others and society at large.

Theoretical Review

The study uses sociological theory to analyse, interpret and evaluate the primary texts. Sociological literary criticism is associated with a twentieth-century theorist known as Peter Burke. This perspective of criticism seeks to understand literature in its social context. It analyses social reality. Burke sees works of art, including literature, as strategic naming of situations that allow a reader to understand better and gain a sort of control over social happenings through the work of art (542). Literature is a living art, and the best literature never fails to make a profound effect on the society. This study examines the role of children's literature in building an incorruptible Nigerian society. The theory "is useful for the study in analyzing the settings and the characters' behaviour in response to societal expectations. Under the sociological theoretical perspective, children's literature is interpreted from its social function of storing, interpreting and transmitting the values of a given society.

It will also not be out of place to add that this study is evaluative with the survey of the contents of children's literary texts to gather data. It does a qualitative data analysis. Some texts for children's literature have been selected and analysed, bringing out salient points from their themes which are quite relevant to the subject of the focus of the study. These children's literature texts selected in order to justify the purpose of the study are: *The Drummer Boy* by Cyprian Ekwensi, *The Incorruptible Judge* by Olu Olagoke and *The Punishment* by Kayode Adeyemo.

Summary of the Texts
The Drummer Boy
The storybook written by Cyprian Ekwensi succinctly reflects the reality of a typical setting of society through the life and fate of the protagonist,

Akin who is a blind boy. The author uses him to disabuse the minds of people and society that being handicapped is not a curse or sentence to dependence to beggarly life. Akin is a drummer who does not beg for a living. In spite of his blindness, he becomes a source of joy to his community. The story also teaches love and compassion through the character of Madam Bisi who introduces Akin to the Boys' Forest Home where Akin could become self-sufficient rather than on charity through drumming. Criminality is also condemned in the story as a gang of boys who deceive Akin to be friends later rob him of his earnings but are later arrested and hanged when they attempt to steal tires from an army vehicle.

The Incorruptible Judge
The *Incorruptible Judge* by Olu Olagoke centres around a young school-leaver, Aja who seeks for a job with a pathetic physical appearance with his worn-out shoes due to the long distances he treks to get a job. He is determined to get a job to pay the debt or loan he took to sponsor himself in school. When eventually the hope of getting a clerical job becomes imminent, he is faced with the demand of a bribe of N5 by Mr. James Ade Agbalowomeri who heads the Government Development Department. With the encouragement of Femi, Ajala's schoolmate who already is a staff of the establishment through the influence of his father, Ajala decides not to succumb to giving the bribe. Instead, he involves the Police and Mr. Agbalowomeri becomes ensnared in his bribery game. Akin is given marked notes by the Police to offer as bribe to get his letter of appointment. Mr. Agbalowomeri is arrested in the process and sentenced to three years imprisonment. Justice Faderin whose father-in law is detailed to prevail on him to tamper justice with mercy and upturn justice has no sympathy for any element of criminality, and uncompromisingly dispenses judgement to serve as a deterrent to people of shady minds and character.

The Punishment
The Punishment by Kayode Adeyemo features Bode, the main character as a spoilt child who is

his mummy's pet and later becomes a defiant, truant, thief and a bad boy at school. The consequences of his immoral behaviour is five years confinement through a court order on the case of Dayo's death as a result of an abortion. Dayo is Bode's girlfriend whom he forces to abort a pregnancy by the influence of Richard, his ill-behaved friend. The two are known for flouting the principal's instructions and perpetrating bad behaviour in school. Dr. Ladi, a greedy medical professional who aids and abets the abortion of Dayo's pregnancy bags seven years imprisonment as a consequence for the heinous crime.

Critical Analysis of the Three Texts

The primary texts summarized above are very useful in building morality in the lives of Nigerian children. In *The Drummer Boy,* though Akin is stone blind, yet, he makes a living by using the skills of drumming that are inherent in him to eke a living. This can disabuse or is capable of disabusing Nigerian children's minds from the social degradation of begging. He does not constitute himself as a social miscreant, stealing and constituting a nuisance around as some helpless and neglected children do all around the country. The eventual execution of the bad boys who deceived and joined him as a music band after they were identified as thieves teach a lesson to Nigerian children that criminality leads to destruction. The text also teaches that though there is a limitation in being handicapped physically, yet, there is the opportunity for transformation and improvement through training and rehabilitation as it is in the Boys Forest Home to which Madam Bisi introduces Akin.

Therefore, *The Drummer Boy* is capable of building morals in the minds of Nigerian children as a good foundation for their later life. From the text, children can learn self-reliance, love for even people with disability, consequences for criminality, empowering of the disabled through training and rehabilitation, and cautiousness in relating with people for friendship and partnership.

The Incorruptible Judge emphasizes that life's challenges are instrumental to resilience and determination to aspire for dignity. Ajala struggles to be educated through loans due to his parents' poverty. His refusal to give bribes for the desperately needed job is a great lesson for Nigerian children that poverty and lack of material needs are not justifiable reasons to commit crimes, indulge in criminal acts or succumb to social vices. It also stresses the benefits of practicing the knowledge and teachings acquired in school. Femi is able to remind Ajala about the teaching of their principal at school that they should not be involved in bribery. It builds confidence in Nigerian children to face and resist evil in society everywhere they find themselves. Ajala is emboldened by Femi's encouragement and involves the Police whom Sergeant Okoro represents. The arrest and eventual imprisonment of Mr. Agbalowomeri is a great lesson that no matter anybody's position or influence in society, the law is above them if caught in evil act. Also, the refusal of justice Faderin to collect bribes through his father-in-law further strengthens the courage and resolve of Nigerian children to do the right thing and condemn what is criminal, immoral and evil in society.

The *Incorruptible Judge* is a fictional play that displays young Ajala and Femi's loyalty to the nation, obedience and loyalty. They are portrayed as dividends of true education by reminding themselves of the virtues and morals instilled in them while in school. The collaboration and cooperation of Ajala, Femi and Sergeant Okoro to arrest the corrupt Mr. Agbalowomeri, a government employee is an encouragement to Nigerian children to learn contentment and shun any act of immorality and corrupt practices. Impartiality and truthfulness as displayed by Justice Faderin is another great lesson for Nigerian children to imbibe.

The Punishment portrays and teaches that indulgence in pampering of children by parents does not end in joy when the consequences manifest. The case of Bode is a good moral lesson to Nigerian children. His pampered life encourages him to defy the instruction of the

principal. Dayo becomes pregnant and undergoes an abortion which results to death. This teaches Nigerian children that they should keep away from fornication which is perversion and immorality. In pre-literate traditional society, it attracted disgrace and condemnation. Dayo gets unwanted pregnancy and dies prematurely. This could happen to any disobedient female child who indulges in it. So, female Nigerian children should learn to run away from the immoral acts. Dr. Ladi's imprisonment also is another lesson that such acts can lead to disagree and severe punishment by the law, and that nobody is above the law. So in *The Punishment*, Nigerian children learn obedience and good conduct, abstinence from sexual immorality, avoidance of unnecessary indulgence in pampering of children by parents, and greediness.

Conclusion

It can be seen and understood from the analysis and discussion of the texts that Nigerian children's literature is capable of building a Nigerian nation whose citizens are morally upright. It is possible to sanitise the government establishments of corrupt practices and dispense justice without fear or favour in the judiciary. It is possible to refuse to be influenced by criminals and corrupt people. It is possible to expose corrupt and bad people in society. Every antisocial and immoral act is punishable. It is then hoped that if virtues and morals are imbibed by every citizen from the cradle, at home, school, and the entire society, they will not be corruptible as it will become the principle and philosophy of their life. Therefore, as rightly captured by (Ogbu 1), the themes of children's literature decry vices such as graft, greed, avarice and so many others that aim at positively influencing the youth towards acquiring morals.

Recommendations

In view of the above analysis which points to the fact that the issues of Nigerian children's literature should be taken as a serious business of building the mind and character of Nigerian children, the following recommendations are hereby put forward.

- ✓ Nigerian children's literature materials should be made available in homes, schools, and other relevant public places such as libraries and clubs for easy access at all times.
- ✓ Themes of Nigerian children's literature to be produced should deliberately address social problems leading to corruption and other immoral acts in Nigeria.
- ✓ Nigerian children's literature content should be made in print, electronic and information and communication variants.
- ✓ For the benefit of all citizens, and to allow inclusion at all levels, Nigerian children's literature materials should be produced in different ethnic languages for maximum realization of this goal.
- ✓ Relevant faculties and departments in Nigerian tertiary institutions should encourage lecturers, graduates and students to produce literary materials for this purpose.
- ✓ In Nigerian schools, proper monitoring of the effects of Nigerian children's literature on Nigerian children should be encouraged while the general society must be conscious of this responsibility as the children belong to them.

The progressive effects of these decisions will be seen by the Nigerian nation if wisely adopted and aggressively implemented.

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LIBRARIES AS CATALYSTS FOR PROMOTING PEACE AND NATIONAL SECURITY FOR SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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TETFUND SPONSORED RESEARCH

Abstract

Peace and national security in Nigeria have been disrupted severally as a result of political crises, youth restiveness, kidnapping, oil bunkering, agitation for resource control, Boko Haram, insurgency, banditry among others. The attendant effect is the destruction of lives and national resources. To a larger extent, it has brought serious setback to economic, social, political and technological development in the country. Libraries and librarians as custodial of information management and dissemination can contribute effectively toward attaining peace and national security for sustainable economic development .Using conceptual approach this paper examines the role of libraries and librarians in promoting peace and national security to create a level ground for economic activities to thrive in Nigeria, It discusses further how information dissemination, peace education and digital engagement can foster stability and economic growth. The objectives of the paper is to show that libraries and librarians can contribute effectively in the fight against terrorism through propaganda; to stress the need for rightful information provision as crucial tool in promoting peace and security in the country; to x-ray security challenges and its implication on sustainable economic development. It concludes by recommending appropriate measures to curb the menace of insecurity in the country.

Keywords: Librarians, Libraries, National Security, Peace, Sustainable Economic Development.

Introduction

There is no country of the world which can achieve greatness and development in an atmosphere of rancor and social stability. For Nigeria as a nation to develop economically, it calls for a holistic approach to address the issue of peaceful disruption and insecurity. Disruption of peace and insecurity in Nigeria emanate from individual, families, communities, tribes, religious groups giving birth to political crises, kidnapping, oil theft and several others.

In the presence of the above challenges, no meaningful development can take place. However, a country which is characterized by relative peace where individual groups or co-operate bodies and government at large can pursue their daily duties without fear, danger and disturbance is said to be secure and peaceful. Since security and peaceful living are rights of citizens, the fight to achieve this should be all encompassing. Unfortunately the government of the day is not proactive in fighting insecurity in the country. The implication is that people cannot go about their legitimate duties and on the long run, it will affect the economic, political and educational activities in the country. Ogwola and Odoba (2022) in their study of fulani herdsmen and farmers' conflict in Agatu, Benue State are of the opinion that the escalation of armed invasion in Agatu by Fulani Militia is a cause to worry about as it has posed grave implications for peace, good governance, economic and educational development. Government institutions such as libraries should be involved in this struggle in order for the country to attain relative peace.

Libraries are integral and key contributors to national development due to the position they occupy in the society. It is an important intellectual resource of the nation which helps to promote information dissemination, studies and research development. Njoku and Ken-Agbiriogu (2020), state that libraries provide the instructional materials to keep users to solve the problems of their information needs in cultural, political, educational, social and economic development. Libraries are information centers which concern with information gathering that borders on the issues of that environment and disseminates same to influence the thinking behaviour and attitude of the citizens of the environment.

Objectives of this Paper

The objectives of the study are:
i. To emphasize that libraries and librarians as custodians of information have role to play in promoting peace and national security in Nigeria.
ii. To stress the need for information provision as a crucial tool in promoting peace and security in the country.
iii. To charge librarians, information professionals that the fight for peace and national security should not be left alone in the hands of the military and other security agencies in the country.
iv To emphasize that the fight for insurgency should not only be left in the hands of security agency alone

Conceptual Discourse on Peace

Peace is a dynamic process in which justice, equity and respect for basic human rights are maximized. Onyemachi (2016) sees peace as not just freedom from war or violence, but calm atmosphere that emanates from argument or serious disagreements that should have resulted to violent activities. Peace is a condition where people living in a particular environment operate harmoniously within themselves and with their next door neighbours. Peace is a basic right and necessity which every citizen is expected to enjoy. In their submission, Oben, Ada and Abeng (2019) brought in some schools of thought about peace in the following order:

Firstly, the functionalist school of thought considers peace as a product of function of other social structures and institutions. In their thinking, peace has the function of social integration and order.

Secondly, socialist views peace as a condition in which there is no social conflict in which individual and groups are to meet their needs and expectations.

Thirdly, the philosopher sees peace as a natural and original God given state of human existence.

In any forms of argument, peace is a model of harmonious relationship based on cooperation and social integration among groups, devoid of crises which create enabling environment for every citizen to enjoy his or her fundamental human right. In a situation where there is no crises, war, violent and conflict within nation and between nation's sovereignty, such atmosphere should be considered as peace. By extension, peace is the total aggregate of calm in the absence of crises and the calmness that may result from settling crises.

An Overview of National Security in Nigeria

Security issues have been discussed in several fora within and outside the country with various solutions proffered by individuals or groups, but no lasting solutions have been identified. National security is the total aggregate of protection of human lives, communities, resources and the sovereignty of the state. It is, according to Omede (2012), a dynamic condition which involves the relative ability of the state to counter threats to its core values and interests. National security is gradually moving from a narrow focus on a defense against international threats and is now dwelling on domestic threats. Egah (2015), when discussing National security in Nigeria quotes McGrew (1998) and states that national security holds two important pillars which are:

i. The maintenance and protection of the social-economic order in the face of internal and external threat, and

ii. The promotion of international order which minimizes the threats to core values and interest as well as to the domestic order.

It implies that National Security has a core mandate of protecting the economic, political and social order of populace against the internal and external attack.

In Nigeria, the 1999 constitution as amended, chapter II section 14, sub-section 2(b) states that, "the security and the welfare of the people shall be the primary purpose of the government". Federal Government of Nigeria is empowered by the constitution without discrimination to protect the lives of human beings and their resources from local and international attack. National Security borders on the preservation of human existence, the hard earned economic resources, social activities, political, government activities and the sovereign state in relation to international order.

Let us consider a highlight of major incidences of security disruptions from 2011-2025.. On the 26th of August 2011, United Nations building was bombed in Abuja. The Christmas day bomb blast at St. Theresa Catholic Church, Madalla Niger State was on the 25th of December, 2011.The Nigeria Army Divisional Headquarters in Kaduna was attacked on the 20th of January, 2012. In February, 2014, the Agip gas pipeline was blown off by Niger Delta militants in River state.. In February, 2016, armed Fulani herdsmen had a gruesome attack on Agatu Local Government Area of Benue State in which 700 people were chased away from six villages, over 200 persons were killed and houses were razed. There was another attack on the Uzo Uwani Local Government Area of Enugu State on the 25th of April, 2016. Southern Kaduna in Kaduna State experienced the worst form of attack which was described as genocide in which 808 lives were lost, 53 injured, 1,422 houses, 16 churches, 19 shops and one primary school were burnt down as reported by Owan and Ebebe in (2019). In Jos, Plateau State, on the 24th and 25th of June, 2018 as reported by Idegu (2018), 86 persons were killed by gunmen, 8 persons were hospitalized and 50 houses were razed. The most recent breach of insecurity was the youth protest which started from the 1st – 10th of August, 2024 tagged, "#End Bad Governance" as a result of bad economy and hunger in the land. Economic activities were completed shut down for 10 days where federal and state high ways were blocked, government structures, business premises and individual houses were burnt down. These are few reported cases by the press. There were several security breaches that were not documented either by the print or electronic media.

Causes of Security Challenges in Nigeria

Insecurity is the state of not being protected from internal and external attack. There are several factors which are responsible for insecurity in the country. Some of them are considered below:

Ethno-multilingualism:

This is one of the dominant and pervasive problems when it comes to issues of security in Nigeria. The country is made up of heterogeneous cultures and different languages which the last is a potent vehicle of transmitting values, norms and beliefs from generation to generation. Because of this diversity in language and culture, cohesion is a very big problem. Ushie (2019) observes that, for national development to thrive there must be language acceptability and cohesion in running of the state affairs. Nigeria with over 450 languages, operating in the same context is seen as a plural society which Oluwabamide (2019) believes that plural societies are often characterized with high rate of conflicts.

Political Crises:

This may arise from god fathers in politics, election fraud, imposition of candidates and breach of zonal arrangement among others. Political god fathers are big time politicians such as state governors, senators and even the sitting and former presidents that influenced the elections of their preferred candidates. Once their political sons refuse to follow their instruction in sharing political appointments, sharing of money or other national services, it results into serious crises that involved both the led and the followers. Electoral fraud is characterized with ballot box snatching, rigging of election, vote buying and many others which are inimical to the smooth conduct of election. The outcome of political crises is the killing of people, burning of houses and destruction of hard earned economic resources which by implication causes insecurity in the country.

Unemployment:

Unemployment, either composite or structural has caused a lot of security challenges in the country. Composite unemployment has to do with graduate of various levels without gainful employment while structural unemployment results in talents not being used where they are available. The causes of youth restiveness are as a result of unemployment and idleness in the land. When youth take to streets to register their grievances as a result of unsatisfactory state of affairs, the effect is waste of lives and economic resources as it was experienced in the recent #End bad governance staged from the 1st - 10th August, 2024 in the country.

Marginalization

In Nigeria, some sections of the country feel that the national government marginalized them in sharing of national cake which borders on appointments into public offices, infrastructural development or citing of government projects. The argument is that federal character should be followed in the allocation of resources and appointments. The dissatisfaction that arises from non compliance by the government, results in the call for resource control. The people of the south-south zone complained that the oil which is the main stay of Nigerian economy is extracted from their region, yet they are being marginalized. Chukwuemeka (2011) opines that, dissatisfaction of the people of south-south, especially, the youths on the low level of attention given to the development of their region and the damages to their ecology of oil spillage are the major causes of insecurity.

Ethnic and Religious Conflict

Ethnic conflict may arise from differences between different tribes that shares common boarder or citing of development projects by government on a disputed land and named it after a particular community. In a related development, unequal socio-economy of different ethnic groups may lead to inter-ethnic and intra-ethnic conflicts. Religious crisis as a result of one's faith causes security threat in Nigeria. In Nigeria, the dominant religions are Christianity and Islam. Most of the crises in the Northern Nigeria are perpetrated by Christians and Muslims. Their

activities are characterized by the burning of churches, mosques, residential buildings, business premises and killing of people.

Boko Haram Islamic Sect
In 2011, Boko Haram sect initiated a campaign of suicide bombing, burning of houses, churches, educational institutions and kidnapping of school children, an act which took place in Nigeria, particularly North East for the first time. Their slogan is, western education is evil. Since then, the activities of Boko Haram have been going on unabated. This escalation of insurgency between 2012, 2013 and 2014 led to the declaration of states of emergency by the federal government on three Northern States of Bornu, Yobe and Adamawa Agada (2016). This is one of the security challenges that until now, no lasting solution have been identified by the federal government. The overall implication is the unprecedented security risk in the region and the entire nation, impediment to trades and investments which lead to economic lost. Peaceful co-existence, economic stability, sustainable livelihood and development have been affected.

In addition to those itemized above is the leadership deficit at all levels of governance in the country. Dambazau (2014) agrees that, there may be several factors which have contributed to Nigeria security challenges, but there is no doubt, that poor governance and lack of effective leadership at all levels of governance is central in attempting to explain the problem with Nigeria.

Sustainable Economic Development
Economic sustainability requires balancing environmental, societal and economical considerations in the pursuit of development and an improved quality of life. It is, according to Shaapera (2017), the intergenerational equity, just and peaceful societies, social tolerance, environmental preservation and restoration as well as poverty alleviation and economic natural resource conservation. Sustainable economic development is a total aggregate of all economic indices in relation to socio-political, cultural, technological process which focuses on improving the quality of lives of the entire population on the basis of active and meaningful participation in the economic environment.

For economy to be sustained, the economic activities of the country will have the capacity to raise the standard of living of its residents by providing individuals with basic livelihood requirements (food, shelter, clothes, education, health, good roads, adequate power supply, good and sufficient water supply, employment etc). Anyim (2021) is of the opinion that economic development is the process of judicious use and conservation of natural resources for overall improvement in the quality of life for present and future generations on a long term basis.

In order for Nigeria as a nation to develop economically, there must be an increase in productive activities in the industry, mining, agriculture, metallurgy sub-sector, human capital development etc, in order to promote exports. Anunobi (2013) opines that before the economy will be developed and sustained, challenges such as severe poverty, hunger, insecurity, disease control, climate change and ecosystem vulnerability are to be taken care.

The place of libraries in National Security Information Dissemination
Libraries are undoubtedly an information center saddled with the responsibilities of information generation, storage, repackage and dissemination. The primary focus of library is to ensure peaceful co-existence, fairness, justice, national unity and international co-operation. This implies that libraries play a crucial role on the issue of national security and integration. Libraries and librarians as information custodians and managers, decide what information materials people should read, see and hear. Information provision is a crucial factor in handling national security, so once the relevant information is not circulated at the right time to the right people it may eventually leads to breakdown of law and order. Abdulsalam J.A. et al, (2023) in his study, curbing insecurity in Nigeria: The role of libraries in North Central Nigeria shows that libraries,

through their core information management and dissemination can significantly contribute to reducing Nigeria's protracted insecurity. Ossai-Ugbah (2013), confirms this, when the author opines that, information is crucial to national security and the line between security and insecurity lies in the information given and information withheld. It is therefore becomes imperative that libraries disseminate relevant information at the right time in order to curb the activities of insecurity for peace to thrive.

Community Engagement

Libraries and Librarians adopt sensitization campaign and mobilization by bringing the activities of libraries to the doorsteps of the citizens and educate them on the ills of insecurity. Under this propaganda mechanism, a library week will be created with various outreach programmes. The Outline programmes may include but not limited to mounting of bill boards, a walk through the streets and market places with handbills, placards advocating for peace using mega phones to sensitize the public about government programmes and discouraging the populace not to be induced into joining activities that will brew insecurity. Librarians should go outside the wall of libraries to organize seminars and symposia where experts will be drawn from different sectors to deliberate on the issue of insecurity and proffer solutions which will bring relative peace and create enabling environment for economic activities to grow.

Media Propaganda

In this digital era, electronic media is one of the most effective means of mass mobilization. Libraries and Librarians through radio, television and on-line (social-media) programmes can create awareness and educate people on the negative aspect of terrorism and insurgents. Once these programmes are design where relevant and timely information is circulated to the right people through sensitization, the populace will be informed and be liberated from misconception, lies which leads to social unrest and economic stagnation. Librarians can leverage on the use of social-media and create library websites, use of face book and other on-line platforms and freely disseminate right information in order to nip the circulation of wrong information in favour of insecurity.

Peace Education

Libraries can promote peace and reconciliation through the knowledge, ideas, principles and processes which are inherent in it. Library through peace education can teach the public about the causes and effects of extremism and war. Libraries as instrument for conflict resolution, through peace education, help in promoting peaceful co-existence, unity, oneness, harmonious relationship among all the citizens. Abdulasalam, J.A et al (2022), in their study of curbing insecurity in Nigeria; The role of libraries in North Central Nigeria agree that, libraries in collaboration with stakeholders can promote moral education, and providing information resources which can foster peace and conflict resolution. The concept of peace education is a deliberate attempt to teach children, youth and adult the dynamics of conflict and the promotion of peace making skills at homes, schools and communities, using all the instruments of socialization (Acita and Idris, 2016).

Provision of Materials

Finally, libraries of all kinds are in position to provide needed learning materials which support specific sector of economy. Take for instance, libraries which are established in Universities of Agriculture, Colleges of Agriculture, Agricultural Research Institutes provide learning materials, information service delivery in support of farmers, agriculture extension workers, livestock producers, research worker to meet their needs. The aim is to ensure food security and sustainability for overall economic growth. This is the approach by which libraries intervene in other sectors of the economy by providing reading materials that meet their sectorial information needs.

Conclusion

Insecurity, if it is not handled on time and handles very effectively, the economic lost, social unrest, political crises and other peaceful disruptions will be the order of the day in country. The fight for peace should not be left only in the hands of military and other security agencies in the country. Libraries and librarians as information custodians and managers can stir up the tide and be fully involved in the fight against insecurity. Effective provision of information to curb insecurity for peace to exist will create enabling environment for sustainable economic development in Nigeria.

Suggestions

a. The national government of Nigeria should as a matter of urgency involve libraries and librarians in the war against insurgency through policy formulation

b. Libraries and librarians should make a useful noise and market themselves and their products in order for them to be seen, known and used.

c. Libraries as reservoir of knowledge and community bridge builders should stand up to its responsibilities of preaching peace education through propaganda programmes.

d. Adequate fund should be given to libraries and librarians by the parents organization and/or proprietors of schools in terms of academic libraries and the State and Federal Government in terms of public libraries in order to acquire needed resources which will aid them in information dissemination.

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INFLUENCE OF FAMILY BACKGROUND ON CAREER ASPIRATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ZONE C, BENUE STATE

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Abstract
Career Aspirations implies the way in which an individual expresses himself and relates to society through work. This study examined the Influence of Family Background on Career Aspirations of Secondary School Students in Zone C of Benue State. The study was guided by research questions and hypotheses. The population of this study comprised all senior secondary school students of the 23 local government areas in Zone C of Benue State. The study was guided by research questions and hypotheses and 35 items questionnaire was administered on 377 respondents in 12 schools in the Zone. The data on research questions were analyzed using arithmetic mean and standard deviation. The hypotheses were further tested using chi-square statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. Leveraging on Anne Roe's theory of Career Aspiration, the study found that parents' socio-economic, parents' location or residential home, parental attitude, parents' level of education and parents' religion has significant influence on the career aspiration of students. The study therefore concludes that students should be appropriately guided in developing their capabilities since family factors have proved to exert influence on students' career aspiration. The study recommends that; parents/school administrators should not prevail over a child's career aspiration and capability rather proper guidance should be given to children. The study also recommends that government through the Ministry of Education should organized career workshop and seminars for both JSS and SS classes every year to enable them match their career aspiration irrespective of whatever family influence.

Keywords: Influence, Family Background, Career Aspiration, Secondary School Students.

Introduction

Secondary education occupies a unique position in the educational system of Nigeria, because it is that level that determines the academic and professional career of students. However, at the secondary school level, a student may choose to pursue science based subjects, art based subjects or commercial based subjects. Many students are faced with the problem of realistic career preference hence Aspirations (Kolo, 2019), some students do not know school subjects that are relevant to their future preferred career. Some students make career Aspirations that are in opposition to their interest and personality structure. To some they do not understand the type of careers opened to them in the present Nigeria situation after graduation from secondary school. The future therefore looks very bleak as far as their careers are concerned and this constitutes a problem to motivation for learning among our students.

Career is a bigger term subsuming vocation, occupation and job or work in that descending order (Denga, 2016). He further explained that career Aspirations is one of the most difficult decisions in a person's life. It involves person total life because it determines his income, his choice of friends, his pattern of dress, his influence in society and very often the amount of risk to which he is exposed. Therefore, noting these consequences it is very important for career guidance to be provided so that by the time a student is making a career aspiration to enter into, he/she may likely choose those careers that could give an individual an inner satisfaction.

Generally, there are many factors, which are recognized as influencing career aspirations among students among which are extrinsic factors and intrinsic factors that motivate an individual to enter into certain career. The extrinsic factors includes: Parents, teachers and others who occupied a significant place in the life of a child, while the intrinsic factors are: Sex; gender is an important determinant in career aspirations and planning. Traditionally there are careers that are to be considered feminine such as teaching, nursing, catering, hospitality, hair dressing and dress-making while others are more suited to males engineering, building, and mining etc. But nowadays the dividing line between masculine and feminine careers is diminishing, in that you can find both sexes in almost all professional fields. Interests; individual's likes and dislikes contribute to his choice and performance in any given career. A person may also posses personal physical abilities required in a particular occupation. Children with high intellectual ability may like jobs that demand high intellectual ability and so on (Denga, 2016).

Students require guidance in order to make the right career aspirations. Maina (2013), states that positive or negative parental influence shapes one's career. Many children grow up idealizing the professions of their parents. If one looked up to their mother and admired her teaching skills that may influence one to pursue a career in education. Parents may also intentionally or unintentionally push a child toward a particular career path, especially in the cases of family-owned businesses, where parents expect their children to take over the company. Still other parents apply pressure on their offspring to strive for particular high profile careers, feeling they are encouraging their children to reach high. Parental support and encouragement are important factors that have been found to influence career choice. Children may choose what their parents desire simply to please them.

Statement of the Problem

Choosing a career is often considered a major turning point in a young adult's life. Career aspiration has been known for long as an individual's choice of lifelong occupation. The problem of career aspiration among secondary school students has drawn the attention of many researchers. Secondary school students should have the opportunity to explore all of the choices available in order to make a logical educated plan when choosing a career.

However, parents occupied a significant place in the life of a child. Some parents may have occupation which themselves could not be fulfilled but want their offspring to fulfil them.

Parents may directly or indirectly dictate to their offspring the careers to pursue. For example, most of the time, the students have problem in terms of career aspiration whereby they don't even know the career to choose; in the choice of subjects combination, they tend to follow crowd. Some of them are either positively or negatively influenced by their parents' career. At times some parents do force their children to go for certain careers which they do not interest in nor have the ability to cope with.

Some parents encourage what is known as family occupation by shaping up the interests of their children to take after their profession. Many parents may not realize that their influence on students' career aspiration may present opportunities or obstacles during their career selection. This study therefore, examined the Influence of Family Background on Career Aspiration of Secondary School Students in Zone C of Benue State.

Research Objectives

This study was guided by the following objectives that specifically intended to:

➢ Determine the influence of parents' level of education and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.
➢ Determine the influence of parents' occupation and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.
➢ Determine the influence of parents' socio-economic status and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.
➢ Find out the difference between students' gender and their career aspiration in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.
➢ Find out the difference between career aspiration of students' in public and private senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

Research Hypotheses

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

$H0_1$: There is no significant relationship between parents' level of education and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

$H0_2$: There is no significant relationship between parents' occupation and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

$H0_3$: There is no significant relationship between parents' socio-economic status and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

$H0_4$: There is no significant difference between students' gender and their career aspiration in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

$H0_5$: There is no significant difference between career aspiration of students' in public and private senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

Methodology

This study adopted correlational survey research design. The population of this study consists of all senior secondary schools students within Zone C of Benue State with the total number of one thousand seven hundred and sixty-six (1766) SS II students out of which 306 students were sampled. The instruments used for data collection of this study, were two instruments namely: Students' career Aspiration Questionnaire and Socio-economic Status Scale. The instruments were validated by experts and considered reliable for use with a Cronbach alpha coefficient of internal consistency of 0.739 for (SCAQ) and 0.913 for (SSS). The data was collected by the researcher and research assistants. The statistical tools used to analyse the data were Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 while independent sample t-test was used to test hypotheses 4 and 5.

Results

Research Hypothesis One: There is no significant influence between parents' level of education and career aspiration of students in senior secondary school in Zone C of Benue State.

Table 1: Results of Spearman Rank Correlation of influence between parents' level of education and students' career aspiration.

Variable	N	X	S.D.	Rho.	sig.	Decision
Parents level of education	306	3.31	1.77	.044	.438	Accepted
Career aspiration	306	28.16	4.00			

Result in Table 1, shows that there is no significant influence between parents' level of education and students career aspiration. Spearman rank order correlation was used in testing the hypothesis. From table 1, the correlation value of Rho = .044 represents the correlation between parents level of education and students career aspiration while the sig-value of .438 represents the significance level. Based on the obtained correlation value (Rho = .044, sig. = .438, $\geq$ 0.05), a statistically not significant influence exist between parents level of education and students' career aspiration. This is because the obtained sig-value is $\geq$ .05 level of significance. Based on the obtained result, the stated null hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis Two: There is no influence between parents' occupation and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

Table 2: Results of Spearman Rank Correlation of the influence between parents' occupation and students' career aspiration

Variable	N	X	S.D.	Rho.	sig.	Decision
Parents occupation	306	1.98	1.25	.080	.163	Accepted
Career aspiration	306	28.16	4.00			

Result in Table 2, shows that there is no significant influence between parents occupation and students career aspiration. Spearman rank order correlation was used in testing the hypothesis. From table 2, the correlation value of Rho = .080 represents the correlation between parents occupation and students career aspiration while the sig-value of .163 represents the significance level. Based on the obtained correlation value (Rho= .080, sig. = .163, $\geq$ 0.05), a statistically not significant influence exist between parents occupation and students' career aspiration. This is because the obtained sig-value is $\geq$ .05 level of significance. Based on the obtained result, the stated null hypothesis was accepted.

Research Hypothesis Three: There is no significant influence between parents' socioeconomic status and career aspiration of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

Table 3: Result of the Spearman Rank Correlation of the influence between parents' socioeconomic status of education and students' career aspiration

Variable	N	X	S.D.	r.	sig.	Decision
Parents socioeconomic status	306	2.12	1.48	.129	.024	Rejected
Career aspiration	306	28.16	4.00			

Result in Table 3, revealed that there is significant influence between parents' socio-economic status and students' career aspiration. Spearman rank order correlation was used in testing the hypothesis. From Table 3, the correlation value of Rho = .129 represents the correlation between parents socio-economic status and students career aspiration while the sig-value of .024 represents the significance level. Based on the obtained correlation value (Rho= .129, sig. = .024, < 0.05), a statistically significant influence exist between parents socio-economic status and students' career aspiration. This is because the obtained sig-value is < .05 level of significance. Based on the obtained result, the stated null hypothesis was rejected.

Research Hypothesis Four: There is no significant difference between gender and career aspiration of students in senior secondary school in Zone C of Benue State.

Table 4: Result of the independent sample t-test showing gender difference on students' career aspiration

Career aspiration	N	Mean	S.D	df	T	Sig.	Decision
Male	149	27.59	3.92	304	2.492	.013	Rejected
Female	157	28.73	3.99				

Table 4, presents the results of the independent t-test on whether there is a significant gender difference in the career aspiration of senior secondary school students. The result showed that t (304) = 2.492 and p = 0.013. Since the p-value (0.013) is less than the alpha value (0.05), the hypothesis was therefore rejected. Thus, there was significant gender difference in the career aspiration of secondary school students in Zone C of Benue State. It means female students have higher mean score than their male counterparts in terms of career aspiration.

Research Hypothesis Five: There is no significant difference between school type and career aspiration choice of students in senior secondary schools in Zone C of Benue State.

Table 5: Result of the independent sample t-test on difference between school types on students' career aspiration

Career aspiration	N	Mean	S.D	df	t	p.	Decision
Private schools	52	27.37	3.86	304	1.563	.119	Accepted
Public schools	254	28.33	4.02				

Table 5, presents the results of the independent t-test on whether there is a significant difference between school type and career aspiration of senior secondary school students. The result showed that t (304) = 1.563 and p = 0.119. Since the p-value (0.119) is greater than the alpha value (0.05), the hypothesis was therefore accepted. Thus, there was no significant difference between private and public school in terms of career aspiration of secondary school students in Zone C of Benue State. It means both private and public schools were the same in terms of career aspiration.

Discussion of findings
The study revealed that there is no significant influence between parents level of education and students career aspiration. This result is in line

with that of Clutter (2010), who sought to find out the relationship between parents' highest level of education and the career aspiration of the students. This was achieved by carrying out a correlation between students career choice and parents educational level. Results of this correlation indicated that the father's education level is insignificantly and negatively correlated with the students' career choice while that of the mother's was both positively and significantly correlated. This is an indication that the mother's level of education significantly influences the students' future careers.

The result of this study revealed that there is no significant influence between parents' occupation and students' career aspiration. The negative correlation means that the students would choose careers different from those of their parents. This result is in line to that of Olaosebikan and Olusakin (2014), whose findings indicated that parental influence could not have significant effect on adolescents' career aspiration, and that perceptions of parental occupational satisfaction will not have effect on career choice of adolescents students in Badagry Local Government based on the following intervening variables such as sex, and type of school.

The result of this study revealed that there is a significant influence between parents' socio-economic status and students' career aspiration. This result is in line with that of Jungen (2008), who supported the view that parents' socio-economic status has influenced on their children's career aspiration. They noted that many parents due to certain personal likeness and social economic conditions of certain career persuade their children to study certain subjects that would lead to particular. Ferry (2013), identified schooling as one of the cultural and socio-economic factors affecting the choice of a career. Davis (2009), found that parents that are very wealthy and rich would have programmed the kind of discipline or professions they want their children take to. For instance, they tend to have influence in students career aspiration for.

The result of this study revealed that there is significant difference between male and female in terms of career aspiration. This result is in line with that of Adamu (2013), in his study found a remarkable gender difference in occupational choice of students. Males were found to have preferred courses in social, science, persuasive and artistic while females favoured courses in social, clerical and science. Males were found to have preferred courses in engineering, environmental studies, veterinary medicine and agriculture while female favoured courses in education, arts and administration. The result is also in line with the previous literatures reviewed in Nigeria (Akinboye, 1997), and those of western studies on gender differences in (Betz, 2005).

The result of this study reveals that there is no significant difference between private and public school in terms of career aspiration. This result is in line with that of Okwelle and Amakiri (2020), who conducted a research on Parental Background and the Career aspiration of Secondary School Students and found that there was no significant difference in the mean response of students' career aspiration from public and private secondary schools in Ahoada East Local Government Area.

Conclusion

The study concludes that there is no significant influence between parents' level of education, parents' occupation and students' career aspiration but there is significant influence between parents' socio-economic status and students' career aspiration. It also concluded that there is significance difference between male and female students in terms of career aspiration but no significant difference exist between private and public school in terms of career aspiration.

Recommendations

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

❖ Parents should not force students to pursue careers similar to their own against their will. This is because majority of the students indicated they would not choose careers similar to those of their parents. A strong parent-child influence is essential in shaping the students career aspiration. In this regard, it is recommended that parents should take

time to discuss different kinds of careers with their children. Whenever necessary, the parents should guide their children in choosing a career and express satisfaction with the child's decision.

❖ School counsellors should educate the students to be aware of various environmental factors that might be influencing their career aspiration. They should also advice teachers and parents on how to prepare students at an earlier stage by choosing the right career.

❖ Government should intensify efforts to send trained Counsellors to secondary schools and primary schools to provide vocational, educational and persona-social services to the students.

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