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International Journal of Educational Administration and Policy Studies

Full Length Research Paper

Creating a psychological paradigm shift in students' choice for tertiary education in Sri Lanka: The influence of socioeconomic factors

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This paper investigates the potential influence of socioeconomic factors in the students' choice for tertiary education. The approach of this study combines an opinion survey, desk research and a case study. Shifting of a psychological paradigm is easier said than done. It may need social awareness about the existing problems, gaps, significance and negative/positive impact of different scenarios, and availability of potential solution. The data analysis and discussions have been done under identified key socioeconomic factors relevant to education. Parental levels of education, income, and financial status have been given priority in the discussion. Parents' involvements in education and material support have been recognized as influential factors in students' choice in university education. The language of instruction and peer group in school environment was considered finally. However, none of these factors are within the control of a person or an institute. The objective of the study is to explore factors required to establish favourable socioeconomic conditions providing students with right direction while implementing necessary policy changes to create suitable pathways in the tertiary education. The paper recommends vertical integration of teaching majors from school, to the university, to the industry which would provide many benefits.

Key words: Psychological paradigm, students' choice, tertiary education, socioeconomic factors.

INTRODUCTION

The Sustainable Development Goals are a blueprint for a better, more sustainable future for everyone. Every one of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations as a universal requirement to take action to eradicate poverty, safeguard the environment, and ensure that by 2030 all people live in peace and that prosperity is dependent on education. It is a transformative force that improves people's health and livelihoods, contributes to social stability, and propels long-term economic progress (GPE, 2021). A paradigm shift is a significant shift in how something works or is completed in terms of conceptions and practices. A paradigm shift can occur in a variety of situations (www.investopedia.com, 2019). It is a systematic way of

thought patterns (Heino, 2017). Through a paradigm shift, people may be able to distinguish between essential and non-essential information to act in accordance with the challenges. Tertiary education is derived from the terms "higher education", or "post-secondary education" where it refers to "a level of education which is beyond the secondary education, undertaken in tertiary education institutions but in a wide variety of other settings, including secondary schools, at work, via free-standing, information technology-based offering and a host of private and public entities" (Whitman, 2003, p. 191). Some research indicates that influences of existing students, alumni and staff of the education institutes are playing a vital role in selection process of degree college/university. Employment prospects and earning potential (after graduation) is a key factor in program choice. That means, college graduates who obtained better jobs, thus satisfied with their education, act as key influencers in program and university choice. However, high paying jobs generally demands equally higher educational and professional qualifications, skills, and most importantly the competencies in the respective field. Apart from the fringe benefits, some candidates seek for job security and convenience such as flexible working hours, or sustainable retirement benefits such as lifetime pension schemes.

Parental education, household income, financial, non-financial benefits and material assistance, language, parental involvement in child education, and peer group in the school setting are all socio-economic aspects that affect education. The American Psychological Association defines socioeconomic status as an individual's or group's social standing, or class as determined by a mix of education, income, and occupation (APA, 2021). The choice of selecting a suitable academic discipline in the university is not only crucial to the candidate but to the society as well. If the decision is made without a proper evaluation of industry demands, economic and technological trends and other global transformations the hard-earned qualification will not pay dividends. This fact is even applicable to candidates who wish to become entrepreneurs after the graduation. The graduate qualification should be in demand to make its due contribution to the society. This is a serious problem for countries like Sri Lanka as government universities offer the education free of charge. In other words, it is funded by either the tax money of other citizens or though international loans secured at high interests. Either way, the country does not get maximum productivity spending on tax money or borrowing loans at higher interests' rates. Aside from that, the industry sector suffers due to lack of qualified people to employ. The shortage of indispensable human capacity leads investors to hire expatriate workers at substantial cost resulting loss of foreign exchange. As a result, the manufacturers or the service providers become uncompetitive in the global market. Therefore, this problem has a chain effect that

has negative impact on individual and society. The industrial inclusiveness in university curriculum is indispensable (Edirisinghe et al., 2021).

The research was done in Sri Lanka. The economic model of the country experienced substantial changes during the last four decades and the researchers have been exposed to the education sector during this period. It is of their opinion that the improvements that were crucial in the country's higher education sector has not gained fully to support the country's development agenda. It is noted that the existing supply of graduates are not commensurate with the industry demand. This has created an imbalance between the human resources required to facilitate the industry demand and the qualifications secured by the undergraduates. This gap is seen expanding constantly as the industrial sector keep on adding technology to their operations. Unlike in the past, now employers look for candidates who comes with a sound academic background in specific area of the job. For example, a manufacturing company may seek a graduate in supply chain management to handle their logistics. This fact is evident from the transformation of designations of certain job categories. Few years ago, manufacturing firms hired storekeepers with qualifications in common business administration while today similar tasks are done by people quailed in specific academic subjects. These new designations include Logistics Engineer, Analyst, Consultant, Purchasing Manager, International Logistics Manager, Inventory Manager or Supply-Chain Manager. As the name reflects such responsibility cannot be performed by a person with a common degree in business administration or a Bachelor of Arts. Within and outside the school, college, or university, variables that contribute to effective and quality academic performance can be found. It is evident from the literature and constant dialogues with stakeholders in the industry that the socioeconomic factors may affect the program choice (that is, demand for specific academic disciplines) of undergraduate students. Therefore, to make a shift from the current psychological paradigm to another, these socioeconomic components should be identified and appraised. Accordingly, this paper attempts to investigate the relevance and the impact of socioeconomic factors selecting the area of higher education or the students' program choice.

Significance of the study

A Psychological paradigm shift results in multicultural perspective (Pedersen, 2001). Understanding rather than measuring, predicting consequences rather than causation, social significance rather than statistical significance, subjectively derived rather than objectively are the qualities which were derived in a psychological paradigm shift. The term psychological paradigm shift is

derived through term physical science, but it has a difference when it comes to the applicability to the depth psychology. Those who enter government universities after a very competitive selection process in Sri Lanka are compelled to be unemployed mainly due to mismatch of employers' perspectives in the modern world against the skills and competence they developed in the tertiary education. It is therefore timely, if not already late, to develop a mechanism that leads to a psychological paradigm shift in students' demand and enrolment for various academic disciplines in the tertiary education in Sri Lanka. The immediate puzzle that comes to mind then is whether the universities in Sri Lanka conduct degree programs cater to the employers' perspectives in the modern world. It is reported that more than 12,000 Sri Lankan students go overseas annually for higher education opportunities; as the authorities failed to cater to the demand within the country causing a drain on foreign exchange of $ 50 million per annum (Edirisinghe, 2020). Even if the students get a degree awarded by a foreign university while studying in Sri Lanka, the foreign exchange is drained through royalty fee and other affiliation charges (Edirisinghe et al., 2018). In fact, there are many criticisms that the leanings of degree programs conducted in government universities do not result in creating a graduate that the commercial world demands in the present context. However, on the other hand, the contribution from the non-state higher education is emerging. Therefore, these institutions will react to the demand immediately and cater to the shifted paradigm. Therefore, this research will primarily question the factors that lead to a psychological paradigm shift in students' demand and enrolment for various academic disciplines in the tertiary education in Sri Lanka.

While socio-economic factors can be a major contributor, other variable such as learner factors and institutional factors also to be examined to make a comprehensive conclusion. However, this study will focus only on the impact of socio-economic factors of students' choice making on academic programs in the university education. Apart from the choice of selecting a degree program from existing list of academic disciplines, the non-availability of wide range of programs is the major barrier faced by students in some countries. For example, two decades ago there were very few degree programs were available in Sri Lanka. There were no private universities allowed to offer degrees and the government universities keep on adding graduates in common academic disciplines without evaluating the industry demand. This has created a huge unemployment and underemployment problem in the country. This scenario has been changing gradually with private sector awarding degrees accredited by foreign universities. However, the fact remains that students and parents still demand the common degrees that are familiar to them by name.

Therefore, creating a psychological paradigm shift in students' (and parents') choice for tertiary education in the current context is an effective and efficient mechanism to attain the sustainable development goals.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research approach of this paper is tri faceted combining opinion survey, desk research. A case study about the tertiary education and selected state universities in Sri Lanka based on secondary data was also conducted. The paper aims to study the influence of socioeconomic factors that could create a shift in the students' choice of psychological paradigm in tertiary education a vast population to be covered. For example, the target population of this study may consist some top official in leading ministries including Ministry of education, vice chancellors, deans of various faculties in private and government universities, school principals, teachers, and students top officers of industry associations, officers of carrier development unit of higher education institutes, representatives from a university alumnus, current students in state and private universities, lecturers in state and private universities, cross section including HR managers of firms covering both private and public sectors, managers of Technical colleges, managers of companies that provide internships to students and parents of university students (state and Private universities).

The conceptual model stated that personal values, motivation, selection criteria, and demographic and socioeconomic factors all influence student university choice. Students generally select the academic discipline based on their own knowledge and parents, siblings, teachers, peers, and the culture in in the school they attend may influence that decision. The degree choice will then come within the selected academic discipline. Then they select the respective universities that offer the degree. Final decision will take place after lengthy appraisal of available information about the potential universities. However, in Sri Lanka this flow may differ to some extent regarding those who qualify for the state universities. The University higher education in Sri Lanka comes under the purview of the University Grants Commission (UGC). The structure of the Higher Educational Institutions established under the Universities Act is presented under three categories namely: Universities, Institutes, and Campuses. There are other government universities/institutes which are established by Acts of Parliament of Sri Lanka, degrees of Institutes Recognized under Section 25 A of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. Private sector education at tertiary level became very popular during last two decades. They mainly offer degrees approved by University Grants Commission, Ministry of Higher Education, and Ministry of education. In addition to this UGC recognizes degrees conducted by various institutes and offered by Foreign Universities.

International Advanced Level Examinations conducted by the Cambridge International Examinations and Pearson/Edexcel International examination boards amount to approximately 12000 students per year with no access to state universities. The University Grants Commission (UGC) is the competent authority for funding most of the government Universities in Sri Lanka and functions within the context of the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978. It is a public organisation, established under the Parliament Act No 16 of 1978. University Admission in Table 1 shows the selection of students by the UGC for registration to undergraduate courses of the Universities and Higher Educational Institutes (HEIs) established under the Universities Act.

Opinion survey

Initially, convenient sample of forty-six opinion leaders representing all stakeholders of the education sector have been identified. The

Table 1. The demography of respondents of the survey.

Category	Number
Secretaries to leading ministries in Sri Lanka	3
Vice chancellors	3
Deans of various faculties in private and government universities,	7
School principal	1
Senior teachers (government and private schools)	2
Presidents of industry associations	5
Officers of carrier development unit of higher education institutes	2
Representatives from a university alumnus	2
Current university students Government and Private	2
Senior lecturers (government and private universities)	6
Chairmen of companies	2
CEO of companies	1
General Managers of companies	1
HR managers of leading firms covering both private, and public sectors	2
Managers of Technical colleges	1
Managers of companies that provide Internships to students	3
Parents of university students (government and private universities)	4
Total	47

demography is self-explanatory to their relevance to subject rear investigated. For example, senior lecturers responses covered both government and Private universities. The degree selection choices under these two sections are substantially different. Company managers and CEOs selection preferences may be driftnet that the opinions of both parties need to be considered (Table 1). A qualitative analysis was administered to the response of structured sections of questionnaires. Non structured sections were compiled based on most relevant areas for the study. A comprehensive literature survey was done simultaneously, and semi structured questionnaire was designed based on the previous research.

Secondary data and case study

Secondary data will be collected through domestic and international publications. Contemporary reports and analysis of international institutions such as International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD); The World Bank; United National Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); World Economic Forum (WEF); United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) were studied extensively to compare various trend and opinions. Reports of Department of Census and Statistics, University Grants Commission, Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Ministry of Education, and Department of Examinations have been referred to evaluate comments received in the interview process. A case study was done to better understand whether the data collected through global analysis is commensurate with the reality in the context of Sri Lanka and to ascertain how far it can be helpful in the way forward.

Conceptualising the problem

Generally, household income level, parents' level of education, occupation, marital status, race, and gender may be considered as socioeconomic factors. They are often measured by the status of

the household or by area-based indicators of deprivation. Examinations of socioeconomic status often reveal inequities regarding access to resources, plus issues related to privilege, power, and control (APA, 2021). Generally, the education in any country is influenced by the factors of socioeconomic and geopolitical factors. Therefore, it is vital to understand the relevance of these components to create a psychological paradigm shift in students' demand and choice for tertiary education. Human development is about giving people more freedom and opportunities to live lives they value (UNDP, 2021). Therefore, developing people's abilities and giving them a chance to use them is the fundamental outcome of education. The enhancement of human to increase their capabilities and expand their capacity by providing the rightful education leads to development of a better society. Education enhances the humans' ability to think and make better decisions helps develop good social environment in a country. People grasp their education through the technology and science and the outcome of knowledge reflects physically, cognitively, and behaviourally that helps make a more refined and developing society.

This research compliments the objectives of current project operative under the Accelerating Higher Education Expansion and Development (AHEAD) of the World Bank. Figure 1 depicts the methodology of the conceptual model in the original research paper. The original model illustrated how the socioeconomic factors flowing downwards to selection criteria and then constrained by the availability of academic programs in the university system. This study considers the impact of selection criteria (program choice) by the socioeconomic factors within available academic disciplines.

However, the program may be influenced through the ranking given by the education authorities (Z score) in case of free or concessionary fees offered by governments. In Sri Lanka, the University Grants Commission allocates the degree program/ institute for the University entrance each year based on the Z score ranking the candidate obtained. This portion constitutes approximately 17% for the students who get minimum qualifications to enter to the university namely, three ordinary passes at the G.C.E. (Advanced Level) Examination. Other than that,
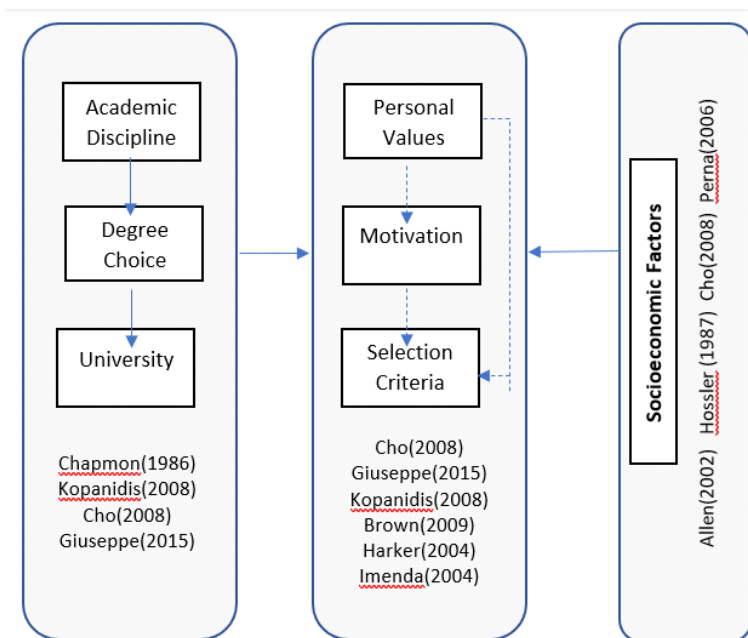
Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

Table 2. General social indicators - Sri Lanka.

Indicator	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019(a)
Population '000 (Mid-Year)	20,970(b)	21,203(a)	21,444(a)	21,670(a)	21,803
Annual population growth (%)	0.9	1.1(a)	1.1(a)	1.1(a)	0.6
Density of population (persons per sq. km)	334	338(a)	342(a)	346(a)	348
Labour force participation rate (% of household population)(c)	53.8	53.8	54.1	51.8	52.3
Unemployment rate (% of labour force)(c)	4.7	4.4	4.2	4.4	4.8

(a) Provisional (b) Revised.
Source: CBSL (2021).

institutional reputation, ranking of the institution, price of the program, passport to employment, and career prospects have been found most important to university and program/course choice for paid programs. Once these fundamentals are in line, the students may focus on detailed evaluation such as class and curriculum structure, quality of teaching faculty, teaching methods, learning environment, assessment criteria, campus location, and so on. Safety/security concerns are another concern for female candidates due to cultural influences in certain countries. Even if required academic discipline is available in the country it may not be accessible to a candidate if the program is not conducted by the institute they chose. Similarly, factors such as friends attending the same institution or family influence could be the decisive factor in program selection.

RESULTS

Since the study hypothesised that Socio-economic factors influence the students' choice for tertiary education, key trends in the socio-economic factors

namely, parental level of education, parental income, financial and material support by parent, language, parental involvement in child education and peer group in school environment were examined. The quantitative data were found in certain factors while other qualitative data were collected through interviews. To understand the background of the scenario, Tables 2 to 5 provide a snapshot of the country's socioeconomic status at present. Sri Lanka is a country with a lower-middle-income status, with a GDP per capita of USD 3,852 in 2019. Sri Lanka's transformation to a more competitive, inclusive, and resilient country is supported by the World Bank Group. It has a population of 21.8 million people, and the government has continued to execute numerous projects and programs to improve the socioeconomic well-being of low-income and vulnerable people and families.

Parental level of education is a key contributory factor in students' choice for tertiary education. It is estimated

Table 3. Gender wise labour force participation rate.

Variable	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	74	74.9	74.9	74.6	74.7	75.1	74.5	73	73	71.9
Female	34.3	32.9	35.4	34.6	35.9	35.9	36.6	33.6	34.5	32

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 4. Gender wise labour force unemployment rate.

Variable	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Male	2.7	2.8	3.2	3.1	3	2.9	2.9	3	3.3	4
Female	7.1	6.3	6.6	6.5	7.6	7	6.5	7.1	7.4	8.5

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 5. Labour Force and Employment-Overall and Foreign Employment.

Variable	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Labour statistics-employed population (x1000)	7,592	7,489	7,681	7,700	7,831	7,948	8,208	8,015	8,181	7,999
Foreign employment-departures for foreign employment	262,961	282,447	293,218	300,703	263,443	242,816	211,992	211,459	203,186	53,713

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 6. Number of students accessed general education 1970 – 2019.

Variable	1970	1980	1989	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2019
Government school - students	2716187	3389776	4179520	4111272	4216571	4193908	3942077	3940072	4129534	4149661
Private school - students			83816	82593	87674	95383	106262	117362	136228	139070

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 7. Number of students accessed university education – 1970-2000.

Variable	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Students graduated	3,735	3,146	3,252	4,481	4,522	5,342	9,374

Source: CBSL (2021).

that current students age group in the universities is between 19 to 23 years. With a secondary education, 420 million people would be lifted out of poverty. A child whose mother can read has a 50% higher chance of living past the age of five. An extra year of schooling can boost a woman's earnings by up to 20% (GPE, 2021). Therefore, in a reverse calculation it may be realistic to assume their parents would have processed their education pathways between 1965- 1995 period. Accordingly, access to general education to their parents

could be assumed under government school system and private schools based on data given in Table 6. Private school education commenced in Sri Lanka in 1989. Table 7 illustrates the trend of students accessed university education between 1970 and 2000.

With due consideration to the contemporary skill needed in the economy, the Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) sector continued its activities to improve the skills base of the labour force. By the end of 2020, there were 1,239 registered institutions

Table 8. University education in numbers, age specific ratio, and admission vs eligibility.

Variable	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Students	11,813	17,308	29,471	48,296	70,477	83,778	84,451	88,855	93,787	95,920
Students graduated	3,735	3,252	4,522	9,374	13,042	29,545	28,808	n.a.	26,024	n.a.
Age specific enrolment ratio (age 19-23 yrs)						6.6	6.8	6.8	7.5	7.5
University education - Admission as a percentage of eligible						17.1	18.6	19.11	19.1	19.1

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 9. General education.

Item name	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Age specific enrolment ratio	99.2	98.4	97.4	96.3	92.8	95.4

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 10. Key economic indicators – Sri Lanka 2014-2020.

Indicator	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 (a)
GDP at current market price (Rs. billion)	10,361	10,951	11,996	13,328	14,291 (h)	15,013 (a)(h)	14,973
GNI at current market price (Rs. billion)	10,125	10,676	11,676	12,975	13,901 (h)	14,581 (a)(h)	14,568
Per capita GDP at current market price (US$) (i)	3,819	3,841	3,886	4,077	4,057 (h)	3,852 (a)(h)	3,682
Per capita GNI at current market price (US$) (i)	3,732	3,745	3,782	3,969	3,947 (h)	3,741 (a)(h)	3,582

in the TVET sector conducting over 3,400 accredited courses (CBSL, 2021).   Table 8 explains very crucial information about university education in Sri Lanka during the period in concern. It provides number of students, their age specific ratio, and admission versus eligibility. Age specific ratio indicates the percentage of graduate students out of the population between ages 19 to 23 years. It also provides the count of the students who admitted to universities from the total candidates who fulfilled minimum qualification to enter to university education in Sri Lanka. The current scenario of general education in Sri Lanka is explained in Table 9.

It is also reiterated that parental income and financial and material support by parent are key factors under the socioeconomic condition. Sri Lanka maintains a mixed economy since 1977 and it has met the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) target of halving extreme poverty and is on track to meet most of the other MDGs. Sri Lanka's poverty head count index was 4.1% by 2016 and strives to transition to an upper middle-income country (Table 10). Sri Lanka is in efforts to have the social inclusion, governance, and sustainability. Education plays a key role in improving the terms on which individuals and groups take part in society. It helps to improve the ability, opportunity, and dignity of those disadvantaged, thus widening the scope of education at tertiary level may lead to effective social inclusion. The Department of Samurdhi Development (DSD) offers a financial buffer and implements several livelihood,

entrepreneurship, and social development programmes to help beneficiaries improve their overall socio-economic well-being (Table 11). Table 12 illustrates the present flow and trend of students advancing/filtering to tertiary level education. However, this consists only of the government sector statistics. Rest of the candidates that is, approximately 140,000 candidates or 77% do not get the opportunity to enter to Government University due to lack of infrastructure and resources. Performance of Candidates in G.C.E (A.L.) Examinations is given in Figure 2.

To understand the gaps, it may be vital to review the prominence given to tertiary education at the policy level. Sri Lanka needs to urgently increase higher education enrolment with a special focus on degree programs, such as STEM programs, that are important to drive future economic growth through higher value-added industries and services (AHEAD, 2018). Table 13 shows the eeconomic and finance view reflected through the government expenditure on tertiary education. The table provides the insight of successive governments' focus on this scenario as a percentage of total government expenditure and as a share of total education expenses. Table 14 illustrates total graduate output in Sri Lanka since 1990. This information has a fundamental importance to analyses the gaps in existing system. Table 15 reveals the growth of state university system that provides the foundation for the status of tertiary education in Sri Lanka. The gaps that need attention in

Table 11. Main Welfare Programmes - Number of Beneficiary Families and Value of Grants.

Year	Divineguma / samurdhi subsidy programme		Nutrition allowance programme		Dry ration programme
	Families (No.) (a)	Value (Rs. million) (b)	Beneficiaries (No.) (a)	Value (Rs. million) (c)	Value (Rs. million)
2016	1,407,235	40, 740	337,554	5,746	111
2017	1,388,242	39,707	372,407	5,408	84
2018	1,384,021	39,239	329,047	5,490	58
2019	1,800,182	44,660	300,246	5,279	105
2020	1,770,086	52,472	238.034	4,761	n.a.

(a) As at year end; (b) Including the kerosene subsidy; (c) Data for 2020 are based on State Ministry of Women and Child. Development, Pre-Schools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services but data for 2016 to 2019 period are based on Ministry of Finance.
Sources: Department of Samurdhi Development; State Ministry of Women and Child Development, Pre-Schools and Primary Education, School Infrastructure and Education Services; Ministry of Finance (CBSL, 2021).

Table 12. The trend of students advancing to tertiary level.

Variable	2016	2017	2018*	2019*
All Candidates Applied for the GCE(A/L)	310,613	315,326	317,651	333,635
All Candidates Sat for the GCE(A/L)	258,193	253,330	267,111	281,786
No. students Qualified	160,517	163,160	167,992	181,206

Source: SGOV (2021), UGC (2021) *=Provisional.

Percentage									
Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Percentage	59	62	58	60	61	62	64	63	64
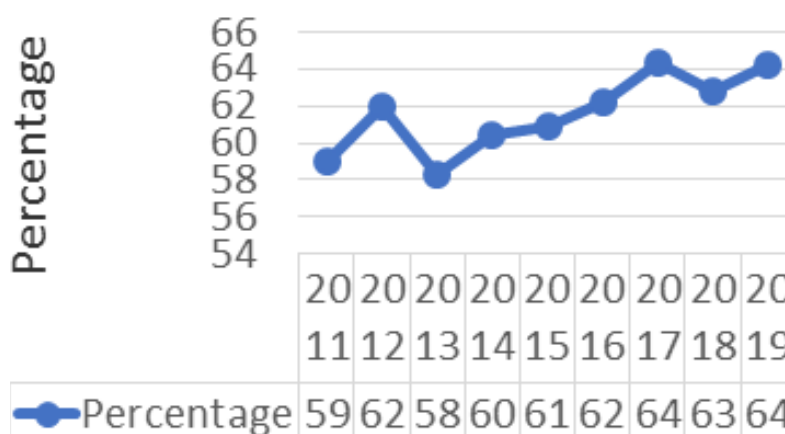
Figure 2. Percentage of qualifying from the G.C.E. (Advanced Level) examination to enter University (CBSL, 2021).

Table 13. University Education Expenditure.

Year	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*	2020*
As a % of government expenditure	1.16	1.45	1.59	1.80	1.21	1.77	2.10	2.02	2.20	2.49	2.08
As a % of education expenditure	10.94	13.91	15.78	17.25	13.24	17.72	20.91	20.25	21.90	23.79	23.56

Provisional (UGC, 2021).

projecting way forward should be identified through these trends.

Figure 4 displays the distribution of existing workforce under three key employment categories in Sri Lanka namely, agriculture, industry, and services. It provides the shifting of employment categories between agriculture

Table 14. Graduate output in numbers.

Year	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*	2020*
First degree	4,476	4,206	9,374	12,545	21,248	31,679	31,460	27,212	29,094	25,757	24,565
Postgraduate	307	1,048	2,169	4,589	6,330	7,513	7,574	10,121	10,959	9,991	7,501

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 15. Institutional development (university education).

Year	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019*	2020*
No. of Universities	9	9	13	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
No. of Faculties	32	36	55	77	79	87	93	101	103	107	109
No. of Departments	229	275	337	411	462	510	556	597	623	641	675
No. of Institutes	8	9	11	16	17	18	18	19	19	20	20
No. of Employees(5)	7,687	8,541	11,486	13,269	15,670	18,380	19,307	20,450	21,792	22,832	22,586
No. of Teachers(6)	2,040	2,808	3,241	3,770	4,984	5,897	6,286	6,575	6,841	7,418	7,258

Source: CBSL (2021).

Table 16. Graduate unemployment in 12 departments.

S/N	Department	Total graduated 2017	Unemployed	Unemployed percentage
1.	Agribusiness Management	25	13	52
2.	Business Management	202	97	48
3.	Horticulture and Landscape Gardening	36	16	44
4.	Plantation Management	36	15	42
5.	Applied Nutrition	22	8	36
6.	Banking and Finance	42	13	31
7.	Accountancy	162	47	29
8.	Biotechnology	16	4	25
9.	Aquaculture and Fisheries	17	4	24
10.	Insurance and Valuation	10	2	20
11.	Livestock and Avian Sciences	19	3	16
12.	Food Science and Technology	31	4	13
	Total	618	226	37

and industry and the consistent higher share of service category, thus showing employment trends during 2011 to 2020.

The private sector continued to engage in the provision of tertiary education alongside the Government. As at the end of 2020, there were 21 Non-State Higher Education Institutes (NSHEIs) recognised as degree awarding institutes offering 164 accredited degree programmes (CBSL, 2021).

Case study

This case study is primarily done based on data provided in the Employability Survey Report - Wayamba University of Sri Lanka. To understand the mismatch in the availability of graduates and the demand for respective disciplines could be compared as one criterion. Graduate employability of universities has gained recognition as a direct measure of success in addressing the needs of employers (Wickramasingh and Wijenayake, 2017). The unemployment and underemployment are both highly detrimental to a country's economic growth (Table 16). When the education system does not provide the right knowledge, skills, and competency (KSC) and consistently upgrade the system in the right direction to align with the global trends the underemployment will be unavoidable. Because the work force will be developing their KSC in one direction and the employer demand will be not commensurate with the global trends. The

Table 17. Gradate employment relevance level of 12 departments.

S/N	Variable	10%	25%	50%	75%	100%
1.	Agribusiness Management	1	1	3	2	5
2.	Biotechnology	1	0	2	5	4
3.	Horticulture and Landscape Gardening	0	2	3	8	7
4.	Plantation Management	1	1	2	7	10
5.	Accountancy	5	7	13	37	51
6.	Banking and Finance	0	3	5	10	9
7.	Business Management	4	9	23	42	12
8.	Insurance and Valuation	0	0	1	2	5
9.	Aquaculture and Fisheries	0	0	3	4	4
10.	Applied nutrition	1	0	1	1	10
11.	Food Science and Technology	0	0	2	8	14
12.	Livestock and Avian Sciences	0	0	4	8	4
	Total respondents	13	23	62	134	135
	Percentage share	4	6	17	37	37

Table 18. Employability status of applied sciences graduates.

Degree	Total graduated 2017	Unemployed	Unemployed percentage
B.Sc. (General)	29	9	31
B.Sc. (Joint Major)	52	12	23
B.Sc. (Special) in Applied Electronics	5	1	20
B.Sc. (Special) in Mathematics with Statistics	5	0	0
B.Sc.(Special) in Industrial Management	6	0	0
Total	97	22	23

candidates will be compelled to what is available in the job market and they will be under employed. As a result, proper employability is an important measure of a country's economic development. The employability of the graduate population is particularly significant in Sri Lanka, because free education is provided to only a small number of individuals who are qualified to enter government universities. The base material for this desk research is the Wayamba University of Sri Lanka's (WUSL) sixth employability report. The information received from the graduates at their convocation was used to create this report. This study provides information on the employability of graduates five to seven months following their final examination in their specialist degree programs.

Further analysis of this report reveals that, even those who are employed are not performing their duties in the relevant filed. Table 17 indicates the percentage of students in relation to different levels of relevancy of the job to the study programme. It shows employers' recognition of the knowledge and training provided by the degree programme as relevant to the needs of the industry. Accordingly, among the respondents, 27% of the students graduated in different degree programmes had 50% or lower relevancy to the job. Only Faculty of

Applied Sciences (FAS), among all graduates of FAS, reported higher employment, that is, 77% at the time of the survey. The respective degree programs are illustrated in Table 18. Among the four faculties of WUSL, students graduated from the Faculty of Applied Sciences have obtained comparatively high level of salaries (Wickramasingh and Wijenayake, 2017).

However, 38% of these graduates are ultimately end up employing in the field that are not relevant (50% or less relevant) to the programs they followed in the university. In other words, there is a mismatch in the areas of teaching in the tertiary education and the real demand in the job market (Table 19). The report highlights a gradual increase of salaries from 2010 to 2017. Among all graduates 57% have obtained more than Rs. 30000.00 as their salary in 2017 (Wickramasingh and Wijenayake, 2017). Employability of graduates can be expressed under three categories namely, permanent, temporary, and self-employment (entrepreneurs). This study shows a progressive decrease in permanent positions between 2013 and 2015, with a loss of 12% compared to 2013. Between 2012 and 2017, there was a 15% decrease in the number of temporary positions, compared to the highest employability recorded in history in 2013. During the study period, the rate of self-employment was

Table 19. Relevancy of the job to the study programme.

Degree	Relevancy of the job to the study programme				
	10%	25%	50%	75%	100%
BSc (General)	0	2	9	6	0
BSc.(Joint Major)	0	4	5	13	15
BSc (Special) in Applied Electronics	1	1	1	0	1
BSc (Special) in Mathematics with Statistics	2	0	0	0	2
BSc (Special) in Industrial Management	0	0	1	2	3
Total respondents	3	7	16	21	21
Percentage share	4	10	24	31	31

observed to be low. Between 2014 and 2017, there was a gradual increase in the number of unemployed graduates, which reached 38% in 2017.

DISCUSSION

Psychological paradigm shift

Psychology is the study of mind and behaviour. Behaviourism and constructivism are two of the most influential theoretical frameworks in education. In education, behaviourist approaches emphasise changing behaviour through rewarding correct performance (Diffen, 2021). Cognitivism is also a learning theory about how people perceive and remember information, apply, and learn. Constructivism focuses on the idea that students create knowledge through learning experiences. Connectivism is positioned as a new philosophy of education for the digital age and gives more emphasis on the impact of technology and networks. A scientific revolution occurs when: the new paradigm better explains the observations and offers a model that is closer to the objective, external reality; and the new paradigm is incommensurate with the old (McLeod, 2021). A paradigm focuses on one way looking to a situation and it provides the basis for the way of thinking and acting accordingly. When one paradigm hypothesis is superseded by another, a paradigm shift occurs. A paradigm theory is a large theory that provides a broad theoretical framework for scientists working in an area. During a paradigm shift, the theoretical opinions of scientists working in the field alter. However, when used outside of philosophy, it usually refers to a dramatic shift in theory or practice. As a result, this research focuses on an emerging scientific framework that includes biological impacts, societal pressures, and environmental elements that influence students' decision to pursue higher education in a certain academic subject.

Students' choice for tertiary education

Considering the above background of tertiary education

in Sri Lanka, the higher unemployment rate of graduate is not only a problem for them. Firstly, it is a problem to other candidates who fulfil minimum entry qualifications to enter to universities but were deprived access due to lack of resources in the state universities. Secondly, it is a problem to those who pay taxes to provide free education in universities. Thirdly, it is a problem to their parents and other family members who contributed to a major part of students' lives making them graduates. Overall, it is a socioeconomic problem. Therefore, creating a psychological paradigm shift in students' choice making for tertiary education is much needed to minimise various negative impact on economy and to the social wellbeing. Consequently, those who have the money go overseas using country's valuable foreign exchange and many do not return to Sri Lanka after qualifying which is another big loss to the country as well as to the parents. Many Sri Lankan youth reportedly view migration or international schooling as an opportunity to enhance their employment prospects, and Sri Lanka's tertiary-level student population is quite mobile – in part because higher education in Sri Lanka has insufficient capacity to address student demand, especially at the undergraduate level (D'Souza and Moore, 2017). With due consideration to the issue of employability of graduates, approval was granted by the Cabinet of Ministers of Sri Lanka to consider STEM+A subjects, that is, Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics through Art (CBSL, 2021). Tables 13 and 15 explain the university education expenditure and institutional development that ensure governments commitment towards university education.

Psychological shifting of the selection paradigms in education pathways

It is always encouraging if state universities introduce degree programs on emerging fields so that non state universities can follow suit. However, it is rarely seen such initiative. The reality of students' choice for higher education was evidenced in the recent interest free loan scheme (IFLS) introduced by the Ministry of Higher

Education. There was a higher demand for the common programs conducted by the state universities. It is however sad that the job opportunities for those common degree programs are low even in the current situation. Therefore, more students following similar programs could lead to a serious problem shortly and some remedy should be required as early as possible. Sri Lanka needs to urgently increase higher education enrolment with a special focus on degree programs, such as STEM programs, that are important to drive future economic growth through higher value-added industries and services (AHEAD, 2018). The tertiary education in Sri Lanka is faced with two fundamental challenges. On one hand out of those passing the G.C.E. Advanced Level Examination only 17% enter universities while 83% are left behind. Nearly 150,000 students annually lose the opportunity to proceed to higher education due to the closed national higher education. This means, during the last 40 years we have sacrificed a minimum of two to four million of youths in Sri Lanka without any sustainable solution. On the other hand, there is a higher unemployment rate of graduates in the country even after this competitive selection process. While those who are deprived of an opportunity to pursue their higher education despite them qualifying, their future is unwelcoming for no fault of theirs.

The highest unemployment rate (9.1%) is reported from the G.C.E. (A/L) and above group in Sri Lanka. It is 5.1 and 13.2% for male and female respectively (Department of Census and Statistics, 2018). As of 2017, total number of unemployed graduates in Sri Lanka was 34,316. Among the unemployed graduates, about 54% are Art degree holders, while the other 46% consist of other degree holders (Department of Census and Statistics, 2017). Consequently, those who have the money go overseas using country's valuable foreign exchange and many do not return to Sri Lanka after qualifying, which is another big loss to the country as well as to the parents. Many Sri Lankan youth reportedly view migration or international schooling as an opportunity to enhance their employment prospects, and Sri Lanka's tertiary-level student population is quite mobile – in part because higher education in Sri Lanka has insufficient capacity to address student demand, especially at the undergraduate level (D'Souza, and Moore, 2017). Sri Lanka has an under-developed higher education sector which needs to be expanded rapidly to help attain the country's ambition to achieve fast, equitable growth and upper middle-income countries (UMIC) status. With a gross enrolment ratio (GER) of 19% in 2013 Sri Lanka is well below UMICs and even LMICs, which have average GERs of 37 and 23% respectively (AHEAD, 2018). The private schools were introduced in Sri Lanka in 1989 and it is noted a shift in the paradigm of school education leading to substantial change in parents' mind-sets. The traditional dependence on government education system was changed and parents logically understood the private

schools are delivering a responsible service at an affordable price. The difficulty of gaining slot in most preferred government school became a miraculous task due to heavy competition for popular schools.

Socioeconomic factors in education

Socioeconomic status is the person's economic and social position in relation to others. The income, education, employment, community safety, and social supports are usually considered as social and economic factors. These factors can significantly affect how well and how long people live. Access to good educational institutes, stable jobs, social security, and strong social networks are fundamentals in living a good life while healthy choices and affordability to best medical care that allows people to live longer. Employability is seen as one of the developmental parameters, and low employability leads to social deterioration and disruption that hampers the development of a country (Wickramasingh and Wijenayake, 2017). These are highly interrelated because employment (or entrepreneurship) provides income that facilitates housing, education, childcare, food, medical care, savings that relives stress for possible economic crises throughout the life. In contrast, unemployment or underemployment deprives peoples' access to quality of life and bring distress. The universities naturally inherit the responsibility to guarantee that their graduates are equipped with the right knowledge, skills, and attitudes to support the realization of knowledge-based economy in the country (Wickramasinghe and Wijenayake, 2017). Tables 2, 3, 4 and 10 explain the general social indicators, gender wise labour force participation rate, gender wise labour force unemployment rate, and key economic indicators between 2014-2020 in Sri Lanka. These analyses provide a clear message about the socioeconomic scenario. Creating a shift in the psychological paradigm in the next generation about the choice for tertiary education would be important to align the industry demand with the type of graduates produced by the university system. Data collected via literature, focus group, and case study to ascertain the influence of socioeconomic Factors on students' choice for tertiary education. Key socio-economic factors in education namely, parental level of education, parental income, financial and material support by parent, language, parental involvement in child education and peer group in school environment will be discussed in the next chapters.

Parental level of education, and parental involvement in education

Tables 6 and 7 demonstrate the students' access to general education and university education during 1970 –

2019. The current parents consist of those who come from that social background. For example, a student accessed primary education in 1970 (year 1 in school enrol children of 5 years age) is now in his or her 56th year. Those who entered to a university in 1995 at the age of 20 years are now in the age of 46. In all probabilities their children may be exploring suitable path for the university education by now. Accordingly, we can get a basic idea about the status of the education level of parents in that generation. For example, 4,193,865 persons had accessed the general education in Sri Lanka in 1990. Out of them about 2% obtained their primary and secondary education mostly in English medium through private schools. The population share of age between 5-14 years in Sri Lanka is approximately 25%. Accordingly, the estimated share who had the access to general education in 1990 is more than 98%. Similarly, Table 8 displays the access to university education in numbers, age specific ratio, and admission versus eligibility. The studentship in universities has increased from 17,308 to 70,477 between 1980 and 2010. It shows that the share of graduates in the country has not exceeded even 1%. Therefore, parental level of education, and parental involvement in education at the tertiary level is not at favourable level in terms of students get reasonable input to their selection of academic discipline at university level.

The tertiary education in Sri Lanka is faced with two fundamental challenges. On one hand out of those passing the G.C.E. Advanced Level Examination only 17% enter universities while 83% are left behind. Nearly 125,000 students annually lose the opportunity to proceed to higher education due to the closed national higher education. This means, during the last 40 years we have sacrificed a minimum of two to four million of youths in Sri Lanka without any sustainable solution. On the other hand, there is a higher unemployment rate of graduates in the country even after this competitive selection process. While those who are deprived of an opportunity to pursue their higher education despite them qualifying, their future is unwelcoming for no fault of theirs. The highest unemployment rate (9.1%) is reported from the G.C.E. (A/L) and above group in Sri Lanka. It is 5.1 and 13.2% for male and female respectively (Department of Census and Statistics, 2018). As of 2017, total number of unemployed graduates in Sri Lanka was 34,316. Among the unemployed graduates, about 54% are Art degree holders while the other 46% consist with other degree holders (Department of Census and Statistics, 2017). The country also fares badly in terms of the proportion of higher education students enrolled in subjects of vital importance for economic development, such as the sciences (including medicine), technology, engineering, and mathematics. The proportion of students is just 17 percent, causing Sri Lanka to be ranked only 79 of 99 countries. For engineering alone, with an enrolment share of 8% the country fares even worse at 92 of 103 countries (STEM) (AHEAD, 2018).

Parental income, financial and material support by parent

In the global marketplace, education leads to economic prosperity. People in a society get the knowledge, skills, and competence (KSC) they need to compete in the global marketplace, as well as the skills they need to make technology commodities that can be sold on the open market, through education. As a result, countries with more educated individuals prefer to compete with others by adding more value to society. It is evidenced from research that education and economic growth are highly correlated. In a research that used enrolment rate as a proxy for education and per capita GDP as a proxy for economic growth concluded that each additional year of enrolment increases per capita GDP from the data collected across more than 100 countries during the years 1960 to 1990. In another research it was found that variation in schooling explains approximately one third of the variation in economic growth. Some findings established that constant return to capital as it assumes that the other elements (labor and technology) that determine GDP grow proportionately with capital. In other words, each increase in capital increases output correspondingly. Their results indicate strong positive relationship on the long run between average GDPs per capita and the level of educational attainment, terms of trade and life expectancy (UKEssays, 2018). Table 9 provides the key economic indicators of Sri Lanka such as GDP, GNI, and per capita during 2014-2020. The financial and material support that could be extended to candidates accessing the tertiary education depends on this scenario. Also, the Table 10 provides the main welfare programmes, number of beneficiary families and value of grants. In addition, the students who get selected to government universities get the Mahapola higher education scholarship. This is an educational trust fund created and operated by the Government of Sri Lanka for the benefit of tertiary education.

Psychological paradigm shift can be influenced through the vertical integration efforts in education. For example, the majors that are being taught in the university can be included in the secondary level education. This would provide some entry to the subject area at early stages of the student. On the other hand, parents will be more aware about the evolving subjects that were, most probably, not available during their generation. With non-state universities increasing their capacity both quantitatively and qualitatively the government has now joined hands with private sector. The government offer a loan free of interest for those who secure minimum qualification to enter to a university. Interest Free Loan Scheme is an Interest Free Loan, granted to the students who have qualified in G.C.E (A/L) but have not been

selected to a State University based on the Z-score to follow a Degree offered by Non-State Higher Education Institutes. There are two positives in this novel approach. Firstly, more students can enter to tertiary education using this facility. Secondly, non-state universities have a wide range of degrees that students can select from. Table 5 explains the labour force and employment-overall and foreign employment. Sri Lanka being a developing country generally has a lower salary scales compared to developed country that attracts for foreign employment. Figure 4 shows the distribution of existing workforce which is self-explanatory to the parental income, financial and material support by parents.

Language

According to chapter iv 18. (1), of the constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka "the Official Language of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala; (2) Tamil shall also be an official language; and (3) English shall be the link language. Parliament shall by law provide for the implementation of the provisions that the national languages of Sri Lanka shall be Sinhala and Tamil. As per 21 under medium of instruction: a person shall be entitled to be educated through the medium of either of the national languages: provided that the provisions of this paragraph shall not apply to an institution of higher education where the medium of instruction is a language other than a national language; where one national language is a medium of instruction for or in any course, department or faculty of any university directly or indirectly financed by the state, the other national language shall also be made a medium of instruction for or in such course, department or faculty for students who prior to their admission to such university, were educated through the medium of such other national language: provided that compliance with the preceding provisions of this paragraph shall not be obligatory if such other national language is the medium of instruction for or in any like course, department or faculty either at any other campus or branch of such university or of any other like university; in this article "university" includes any institution of higher education" (GoSL, 2000).

The official school timetable allocates 3 h a week for the teaching of English in Grades 3 and 4 and 3.5 h in Grade 5. However, between 23.2 and 24.8% of time is lost between official prescriptions for time and classroom practices (Little et al., 2019). Many studies have shown that students are faced with challenges in English medium undergraduate classes of Sri Lankan universities where English is taught as a Second Language. Students who are weaker in their English proficiency have several issues concerning their language proficiency, which in turn, hamper their learning of content subjects. In 2000, the government gave permission to commence English medium classes in government schools but later proved

unsuccessful and the problem remains. Majority of respondents agree that the language as a key determinant of students' dropout from university education or obtain comparatively weaker results than they did in the school where the language for instruction is Sinhala or Tamil. These underpinning issues may vary from common difficulties to serious barriers. Primarily there is a difficulty in understanding concepts at the university level if the English knowledge is poor. Even if they understand they consume excessive time and the level of knowledge they finally acquire will be lower.

In Sri Lanka, the admission of students to universities within the country is based on a quota system with a 40% merit quota, 55% district-wise quota and a 5% quota for educationally underprivileged districts based on their population. This has resulted to more students from rural areas joining the university. Generally, the competence in English of the students from these areas is lower. Currently, the district quota system is applicable for selection of students to all streams (Commerce, Biological Science, Physical Science and Technology streams) other than the Arts stream, where all-island merit-based admission operates (Gunawardane, 2021). They either get isolated among those who perform well or such students with similar feelings of inaccessibility and separation get into clusters rather than improving their English competence.

Peer group in school environment

The Sri Lankan Education system, particularly the GCE Advance Level examinations are focused mainly on five streams: Science, Mathematics, Commerce, Arts and Technology. Many Advance Level qualified students take up the choice of following an Information Technology degree programme, though their A/L preference was either the Bio/Science/Maths stream or the focus being on the commerce field. Not only does socioeconomic status (SES) include income, but it also includes educational attainment, financial security, and subjective notions of social rank and social class. Socioeconomic status can refer to a person's quality of life as well as the possibilities and privileges they have in society. Poverty, specifically, is not a single factor but rather is characterized by multiple physical and psychosocial stressors. Further, SES is a consistent and reliable predictor of a vast array of outcomes across the life span, including physical and psychological health. Thus, SES is relevant to all realms of behavioural and social science, including research, practice, education, and advocacy (APA, 2021). Table 12 and 14 displays the trend of students advancing to tertiary level and graduate output in numbers respectively. Figures 2, 3 and 4 explains the percentage of qualifying from the G.C.E. (Advanced Level) examination to enter University, distribution of various academic disciplines of degrees offered in Sri
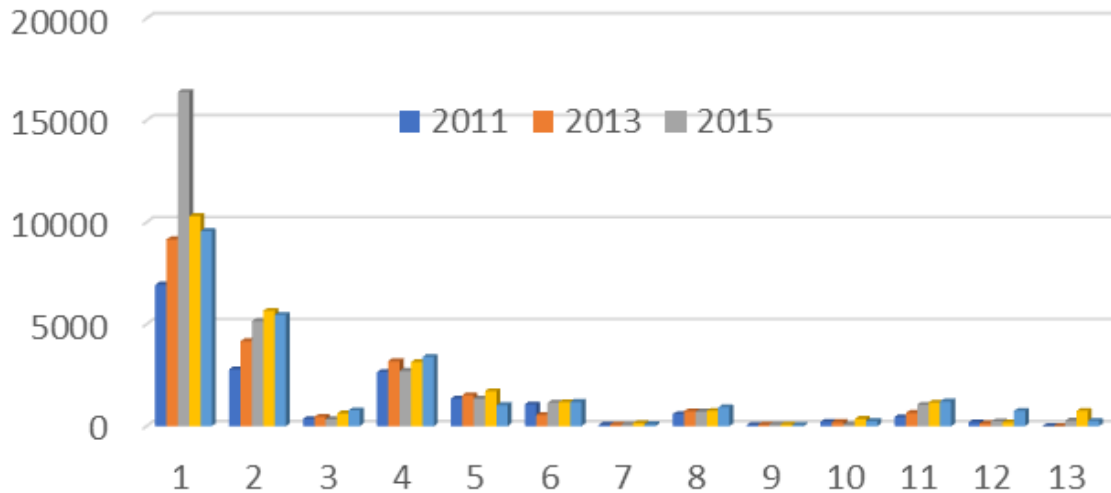
Figure 3. Distribution of various academic disciplines of degrees offered in Sri Lanka between 2011-2019 (CBSL, 2021). Key to Graph: 1. Arts and Oriental Studies (B.A.-B.A. Special); 2. Commerce and Management Studies (B.Sc.-B.Com.-B.B.A.); 3. Law (L.L.B.); 4. Science (B.Sc.); 5. Engineering (B.Sc. (Eng.)); 6. Medicine (M.B.B.S.); 7. Dental Surgery (B.D.S.); 8. Agriculture (B.Sc.); 9. Veterinary Science (B.V. Sc.); 10. Architecture and Quantity Surveying (B.Sc.); 11. Computer Science Information Technology ICT etc.; 12. Indigenous Medicine; 13. Paramedical Studies.
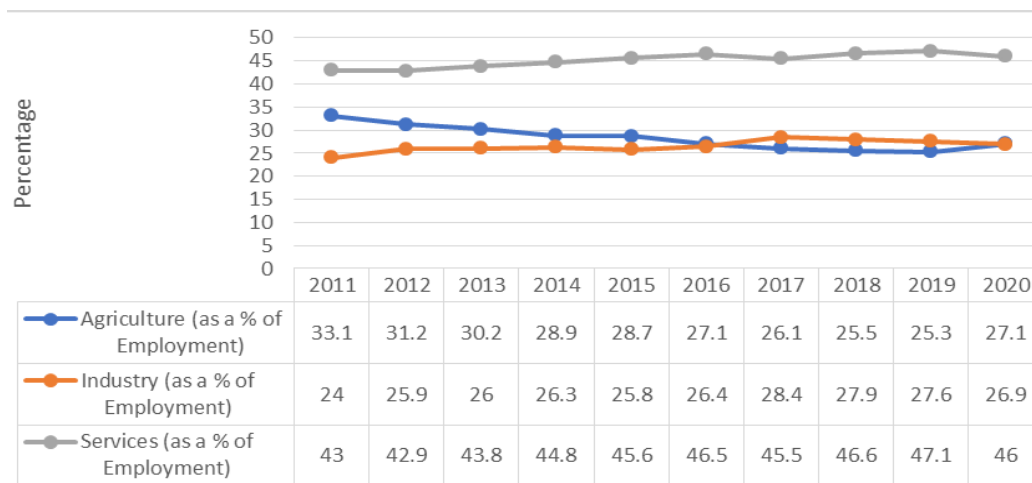

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Agriculture (as a % of Employment)	33.1	31.2	30.2	28.9	28.7	27.1	26.1	25.5	25.3	27.1
Industry (as a % of Employment)	24	25.9	26	26.3	25.8	26.4	28.4	27.9	27.6	26.9
Services (as a % of Employment)	43	42.9	43.8	44.8	45.6	46.5	45.5	46.6	47.1	46

Figure 4. Distribution of existing workforce (CBSL, 2021).

Lanka between 2011-2019, and the students are exposed to this type of peer group in the school environment.

Conclusion

The study concludes there is a major Influence of socioeconomic factors in the students' choice for tertiary education. Therefore, shifting the current psychological paradigm depends on how effectively those socioeconomic factors can be best utilised. The decision selecting the pathway to university education may be guided by the macro-level policies, parental status and practices, students' own values, characteristics, and mindfulness. Undergraduate education is a significant milestone in school leavers as the future career is also affected by this selection. Therefore, understanding the determinants of students' choice in the undergraduate studies is vital. A well thought psychological paradigm shift of students' choice may provide direct economic and social benefits to a country. However, it should be a learned decision by individual student rather than shifting towards global trends. The student should critically evaluate own strengths and weaknesses and align those

with the opportunities and threats in the world. It may be easier to make self-judgement on the strengths and weaknesses but evaluating opportunities and threats is a challenge because the estimates should be valid for the student's lifetime. The key factors namely, parental level of education, their involvement in education, parental income, financial and material support by parent, language, and peer group in school environment have a substantial influence of the students' choice. However, none of these factors are within the control of a person or an institute. Therefore, efforts are required in making available the most suitable pathways in the tertiary education. It is also important to provide the awareness to the students' parents, and peer groups about the trends and how the available opportunities are commensurate with everyone.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

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This study investigated lecturers' perception of contributory pension scheme implementation and job commitment in South-South Nigerian universities. To guide the study, two research questions and one hypothesis were raised. A descriptive survey research that adopted correlational design. The population of the study was all the lecturers in the six federal universities in South-South Nigeria. The sample consisted of 579 lecturers in four selected universities established before the introduction of Contributory Pension Scheme. A multistage stratified random sampling was used in selecting the sample size of the study. Two research questionnaires were used for data collection, "Contributory pension scheme implementation Questionnaire (CPSIQ)" and "University Lecturers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (ULJCQ)". The reliability of the questionnaires were determined using Cronbach alpha statistics with values of 0.96 for CPSIQ and 0.83 for ULJCQ respectively. The data collected were collated and analyzed with Mean ($\bar{x}$) and standard deviation to answer the research questions while the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistic was used to test the hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that the level of contributory pension scheme implementation as perceived by lecturers in South-South Nigerian Universities was low. It also revealed that the level of Job Commitment of University Lecturers in South-South Nigerian Universities was low; and that there was a significant relationship between Contributory Pension Implementation and Lecturers' Job Commitment in South-South Nigerian Universities. The study therefore, recommended among others that government and university management should address the concerns of lecturers about the implementation of Contributory Pension Scheme in Nigerian Universities by ensuring prompt and regular remittance of deductions to lecturers' Retirement Savings Accounts (RSA) so as to create confidence.

Key words: Contributory Pension Scheme, implementation, job commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Pension scheme is designed to ensure that a periodic payment is granted to an employee for services rendered based on contractual legal enforceable agreement by an employer at the agreed time. It encourages employees to be more committed in the pursuit of the organisational goals with the hope that there will be a reward after years

of active service. Historically, pension in Nigeria can be traced to a prolonged struggle between employees and employers. The agitation of workers brought about the privilege of receiving gratuity and pension in Nigeria when the colonial government first legislated on pension for public servants in 1951. The Nigerian workers and university employees have therefore experienced various pension administration, schemes and regimes. The first pension legislation in Nigeria was that of the British colonial administration in 1951 known as the Pension ordinance. It was followed by the National Provident Fund of 1961 which was established by an Act of Parliament. There was the Pension Act of 1979 and the Armed Forces Pension Act No. 103 of 1979 enacted retrospectively to take effect from 1974. The Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) was also established in 1993 to provide social security for both government and private sector employees.

The inability of government to fund and manage these pension provisions and ineffective monitoring of private sector pension schemes probably, gave birth to the Contributory Pension Scheme. The Contributory Pension Scheme was also introduced because of inherent challenges such as poor budgetary allocation in the defined benefit scheme by government in different parts of the world. Contributory Pension Scheme is a fully funded initiative that generates adequate funds through certain percentage of contributions from monthly earnings by both employer and employees through a form of savings. The Nigeria contributory pension policy was passed into law in June, 2004. It created a platform for the employers and employees to contribute into a savings account geared towards the retirement of the employee. The Act establishing the scheme was amended by the National Assembly in June 2014 and is now known as the 'Contributory Pension Reform Act of 2014'. The objectives of the Contributory Pension Scheme is to ensure a uniform set of rules, regulations and standard for the administration and payment of retirement benefits to public service and private sectors employees in Nigeria. It is to ensure that every person who worked either in public service or the private sector receives his retirement benefits as at when due. It is also aimed at assisting improvident individuals to save in order to cater for their old age.

The Contributory Pension Scheme covers the private sector with five or more employees. It replaced the pay-as-you-go or Defined Benefit Pension Scheme (DBPS). The Pension Reform Act of 2014 stipulates that the employer (in the case of Government) will contribute ten percent (10%) while the employee will contribute eight

percent (8%) of monthly earnings which include basic salary, housing and transportation. The Act made provisions to ensure that an employer is obliged to deduct and remit contributions to a Pension Fund Custodian (PFC) within 7 days from the day the employee is paid his or her salary.

The pension fund custodians are licensed financial institutions that are allowed by the Act to keep pension savings. The PFC should notify the Pension Fund Administrator (PFA) within 24 h of any receipt of contributions. The Pension Fund Administrators are institutions approved or licensed by the National Pension Commission to manage and invest pension savings for employees. They have direct dealings with the pension fund custodians. Employees are also entitled to make voluntary contributions into their retirement savings account opened with a pension fund administrator of their choice. An individual's account once opened remains a personal account of the individual throughout his/her life time. The individual may change employers or Pension Fund Administrator (PFA) but the account remains in personal name in perpetuity.

The employees are allowed to change PFA and transfer retirement savings account to another PFA not more than once in a year through the transfer window of the National Pension Commission. Usually, the employee will not have access to the Retirement Savings Account (RSA) and would also not have any direct dealing with the custodian except through the PFA. The Act also provides that no person shall be entitled to withdraw from the RSA until the person attains the age of 50 years or upon retirement thereafter. By the provision of the Act, an employee whose retirement before the age of 50 years is as a result of the terms and conditions of his/her employment may request to withdraw a lump sum of money not more than 25% of the amount standing to the individuals credit and can only do so if within 6 months of retirement, if the individual does not secure a new job. A holder of a RSA upon retirement shall take a lump sum from the retirement savings account provided that the balance standing in credit will be sufficient to procure an annuity or fund programmed withdrawal at retirement. The Act made provision for a programme of monthly or quarterly withdrawals to be calculated on the basis of an expected life span or to cover an annuity for life purchased from a life assurance company (Pension Reform Act, 2014).

It is a general belief that the Contributory Pension Scheme was initiated to put an end to abject poverty which many retired employees experience as a result of the failure of government to honour its pension

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obligations. It is also good to note that before now, it was a common sight seeing public officials shedding tears at public functions because of non-payment of their pensions. The Contributory Pension Scheme was introduced to put to an end this fear, crisis and issues of inability of government to fund pension benefits of retired employees. Many workers appreciate the provisions of the scheme since it involves regular preparation for their retirement.

Laudable as the scheme is, the implementation seems very poor and perceived to be unsatisfactory by many employees including the university lecturers. The employees from various sectors and specifically those in the university system have different perception about the implementation of this pension scheme. For instance, there are situations where pensioners complain about their inability to access their retirement benefits as at when due. The African Independent Television (AIT) aired a documentary on the 7th September, 2018 where retirees under the scheme protested and lamented their inability to receive their monthly retirement benefits. In the same way, Channels Television reported on Thursday, 9th September, 2018 that retired employees in Rivers State expressed their dissatisfaction with the administration of the Contributory Pension Scheme in the state. In that report, it was revealed that the scheme had a total of 8.41 million contributors as at December 2017.

The university lecturers are keen observers of these protests, reports and complaints on the poor implementation of this scheme. They sometimes interact with retired colleagues and also observe the hardship they go through as a result of their inability to access retirement benefits. These lecturers might have therefore developed a feeling of uncertainty about their economic conditions after retirement coupled with the inconsistent government policies on pension.

The Nigeria Labour Congress (NLC) had warned at different occasions that the sustainability of Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) is under threat and that the payment of retirement benefits in Nigeria has become a nightmare. There is a general opinion that pensioners on the scheme are facing a lot of problems to access their funds. The default in pension remittances by government is impacting negatively on the implementation of the scheme in the universities in Nigeria. The Federal Government and many State Governments have been defaulting and have not kept to their own obligation of ensuring regular remittance to the employees' retirement savings account (RSA).

There are negative comments on its implementation as it concerns lump sum which now serves as gratuity to retired employees. It seems many are not happy with the way and manner the lump sum is paid. Some have complained that the payment of lump sum is not adequate and that they would prefer a better package as gratuity when they retire. Others have also perceived delay in the payment of the lump sum after retirement. Some have argued that the provision to pay only 25% of total contribution as lump sum to retirees is not in favour of the beneficiaries. It also appears that the pre-retirement workshop for intending retirees is not properly carried out to prepare intending retirees for retirement and inform them of the processes involved. Many lecturers are not aware of the details and implementation process of the scheme. The difficulty in accessing monthly payment as pension by lecturers who are no longer in the university system is so obvious to the general public. These issues and the perceived challenges may have created uncertainty in the minds of those in active service.

Many lecturers in the universities have complained about the uncertainty of their pension savings. The Academic Staff Union of Nigerian Universities (ASUU) in recent time has expressed fear on the implementation of the Contributory Pension Scheme in the universities. The union has alleged that retired members are not able to access their entitlements. The few that have been able to do so according to report get paid after two years post retirement (ASUU, 2017). This is one of the reservations lecturers have about the capacity of management to effectively implement the scheme. These reservations and fears might influence job commitment of lecturers who are still in active service in the university system. Meanwhile, university lecturers are specifically employed to perform the job of teaching, research and community service. These functions can be performed better if their commitment is high with due consideration to other factors that limit job performance. The willingness of an individual to be involved in everyday activities of the organisation could be referred to as job commitment. It can also be seen as the regularity at work, attendance at meetings, promptness in discharging assigned duties and responsibilities towards achieving set objectives. It is how an individual brings energy and initiative to everyday job. Job commitment is the exercise of true loyalty toward one's organisation. It represents the extent to which an employee develops an attachment and a feeling of allegiance to his job. It is also the extent to which work related activities expected from employees are performed and how well those activities are executed by them. It could be seen as the degree to which an individual executes his or her roles in an institution with reference to certain specified standard set by the institution. The three characteristics of commitment include: employee' belief in and acceptance of the job goals and values; willingness to exert dedicated efforts as a result of his job; strong desire to maintain role performance membership in the organization (Mowday et al., 1992). Job commitment of the university lecturers can therefore be measured in terms of willingness to accept responsibilities, effectiveness and efficiency on the job, willingness to

accept corrections, punctuality to lectures, submission of course outlines, willingness to supervise students for project, attendance and contributions in committee meetings, promptness in preparing students examination results, willingness to carry out student's advisory and mentoring role, research publications and number of community development activities.

There are serious concerns about the level of job commitment of Nigeria university lecturers in recent time. A close look at the attitude of some lecturers in the university system today will reveal lack of commitment and serious bitterness in the performance of their jobs. The willingness to accept responsibilities of teaching and submitting students' examination scores, course outlines as at when due is no longer common. Lecturers appear not to be punctual to classes, while students are often seen seated in lecture halls waiting for their lecturers for a long time even after the scheduled time. It seems not an offence for lecturers to miss their classes or come late to class. The compilation and submission of students' examination scores appears an insurmountable task in the universities today. Meanwhile, some students are often seen complaining of inadequate attention from their supervisors. It takes months before feedbacks and corrections made are returned to supervisees. The ones who regularly get this required attention and guide from their supervisors are considered lucky and favoured.

The concept of in-loco-parentis is fast eluding the Nigeria university system. Lecturers are no longer willing to counsel and mentor students towards academic accomplishments. Many course advisers are not readily available to perform such jobs. Many students are seen making mistakes in the process of registering their courses and other academic activities on campus. Some of these mistakes would have been avoided with the assistance of a course adviser.

The universities are unique institutions that make decisions through the committee system. However, the non-availability of lecturers to function in these committees is seriously limiting the quality of decisions and policies in the university system. It is usually difficult for most committees to meet because of different reasons from the supposed members. The implementation of reward policies especially the pension policies may have a way of increasing the commitment of employees. The observed and reported sufferings of pensioners in Nigeria today have further declined the expected commitment of university lecturers. When organizational programmes are not well implemented, especially policies that have to do with rewards, salaries and pensions, it can result to increased conflict, absenteeism, lateness, tendency of looking for alternative source of income, excessive job turnover which in returns end up in employees poor job commitment. Pension provides an employee a level of economic benefit when he or she retires from employment. Negative perception about rewards and pensions among employees in the university system could lead to poor job commitment.

This study is hinged on the Self-actualization Theory as contained in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943). Accordingly, it can be described as the complete realization of one's potential as manifest in peak experiences which involve the full development of one's abilities and appreciation for life. However, Goldstein (1940) and Maslow (1943) are three individuals who have contributed immensely to the understanding of the concept of self-actualization. Although the present day understanding of self-actualization tends to be more aligned with the view of Maslow (1940) viewed self-actualization as the ultimate goal of every organism, and refers to man's' desire for self-fulfillment, and the propensity of an individual to become actualized in his potential. He contended that each human being, plant and animal has an inborn goal to actualize itself as it is. Goldstein (1940) pointed out that organisms, therefore behave in accordance with this overarching motivation. while Rogers (1951) described self-actualization the continuous lifelong process whereby an individual's self-concept is maintained and enhanced via reflection and the reinterpretation of various experiences which enable the individual to recover, change and develop (Rogers, 1951). The relevance of this theory to this study is that lecturers in their active stage or career path hoped to get better package as retirement benefit to be self-fulfilled and happy for their meritorious service to the universities. Many would put in their best and even contribute voluntarily with the hope of earning good benefit at retirement. Efficient and effective pension management system can be a tool for creating and maintaining an environment for the high level job commitment from the university lecturers (Ahmed et al., 2016). This is because it assures them of life after retirement. Efforts must be made to give them that hope of a reasonable income at retirement which will increase their level of job commitment while in active service.

Hence, many workers unions, particularly the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), have to negotiate workable pension schemes in the university system. ASUU as a trade union posits that the academia represents the critical mass of scholars in the society with the potential for transforming and therefore deserves a rewarding pension package on retirement. Consequently, the intention of this study is to investigate the views of university lecturers about the implementation of the Contributory Pension Scheme and its influence on their job commitment.

Understanding the problem

It has been observed that management of pension

schemes in Nigeria is confronted with numerous problems. The observed protests from various media houses on the alleged poor implementation of the Contributory Pension Schemes are perhaps the worries of those in active service. The Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) which was introduced to address the long existed crisis of retirement benefits in the country seems to have done little or nothing to improve the situation. It has also been alleged that the lecturers who retired under the Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) do not get their retirement benefits after two years of retirement. As a result, many lecturers in active service seem to have developed fears and are skeptical whether their pensions will be paid at retirement. Could this fear have any influence on their job commitment in the university system? From personal observation as a university employee, many workers particularly the university lecturers seem to do their jobs with little commitment. It is a common characteristic in many Nigeria universities to see lecturers come to class only when they want to. Even when they do, they come late. Prompt submission of students' examination scores is no longer common, mentoring and course advising is not carried with a sense of duty but like a thing of favour. Interactions with some lecturers show that the misgivings lecturers have about contributory pension scheme implementation is what decimated their commitment to job performance. For instance, lecturers are seen teaching in other institutions while still in active service in a public university, engaging in other businesses to make more money in their active age, because there seem to be no happiness in retirement as a result of mismanagement of pension schemes. Could it be possible that the seemly poor implementation of Contributory Pension Scheme is responsible for the observed poor job commitment among university lecturers? Could it also be that the implementation of pension scheme has a relationship with job commitment level in south-south Nigeria universities?

It was therefore the intention of this study to investigate whether, the perception of lecturers as regards contributory pension scheme implementation have any influence on their job commitment in the university system.

Research questions

Two research questions and one hypothesis were raised to guide the study:

1) What is the lecturers' perceived level of contributory pension scheme implementation in the South-south Nigerian universities?

2) What is the level of lecturers' job commitment in South-south Nigerian universities?

Hypothesis

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between the lecturers' positive perception of contributory pension scheme implementation and their job commitment in South-south Nigeria Universities.

METHODOLOGY

The study was a descriptive survey research that adopted correlational design. The design was considered appropriate because the researcher would observe, describe and investigate the relationship between lecturer's perception of contributory pension scheme implementation and job commitment in South-south Nigerian universities. The population of the study was all the 6465 lecturers with tenured appointment in the six (6) federal universities in South-South, Nigeria. A multistage stratified random sampling was used to select four (4) Federal Universities in Akwa Ibom State, Cross Rivers, Edo and Rivers States (University of Uyo, University of Calabar, University of Benin and University of Port Harcourt). The selected universities have a total of five thousand seven hundred and ninety two (5792) lecturers. From the selected universities, a total of five hundred and seventy nine (579) representing ten percent (10%) of the lecturers were randomly selected and ensured that all categories of lecturers were included in the study sample

Two (2) research instruments were used to collect data for the study. The first questionnaire titled: "Contributory pension scheme implementation Questionnaire (CPSIQ), has two (2) sections, A, and B. Section "A" dealt with demographic information such as name of institution, department, age, gender, work experience, academic status, area of specialization and marital status. Section B contains 24 items to assess the extent to which lecturers perceive the implementation of Contributory Pension Scheme on a 4-point Likert type rating scale coded as VH, H, L and VL. This questionnaire was administered on the lecturers as respondents.
Similarly, the second questionnaire titled: "University Lecturers Job Commitment Questionnaire (ULJCQ)" has section A and B. Section "A" contains demographic information such as name of institution, department, age, sex, experience, career status, area of specialization and marital status, while section "B" contains 24 items on the indices of job commitment on a 4-point Likert type rating scale coded as very high (VH), high (H), low (L) and very low (VL). The Heads of Departments were requested to assess lecturer's job commitment. Three (3) experts in the Department of Educational Management, Faculty of Education University of Benin carried out face and content validity of the questionnaires (CPSIQ and ULJCQ). These experts scrutinized the arrangement and formulation of the questionnaires using (Face Validity), ensured that the research questions and the hypothesis were adequately covered and that none was overloaded at the expense of other (Content Validity).

To ensure internal consistency of the items, a pilot study was conducted on 20 respondents each from the university not used in the study. The Cronbach alpha reliability test was carried out and the result reliability indicated coefficient of 0.96 and 0.83 for CPSIQ and ULJCQ respectively, were obtained indicating that the test
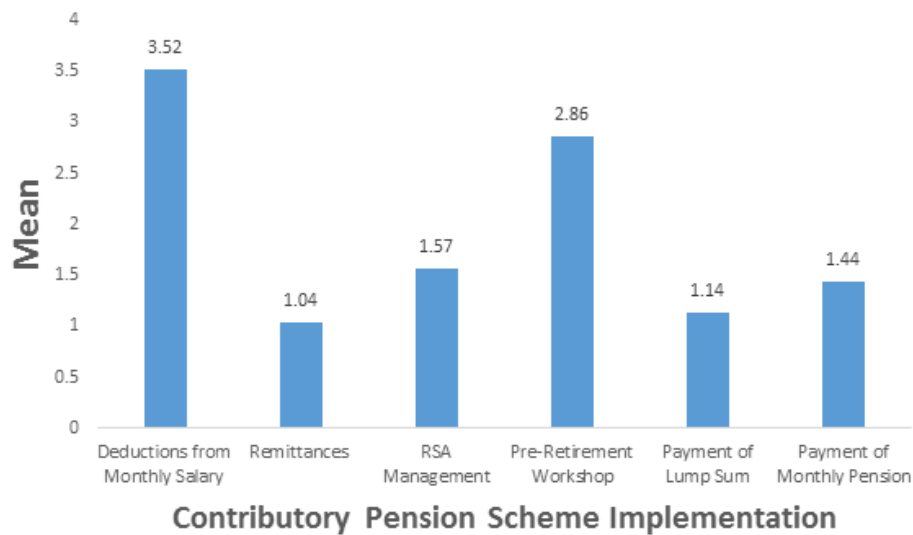
Figure 1. Bar chart showing the level of contributory pension scheme implementation.

instruments were reliable. The pilot study also offered the researcher the opportunity to assess the techniques of questionnaire administration, adequacy of questionnaire items and revealed the feasibility, consistency and any other problem that might arise during the study.

The questionnaire titled "Lecturers' Perception of contributory pension scheme implementation (CPSIQ) was administered to lecturers in the sampled universities. The lecturers were traced to their offices and board meetings, encouraged to respond to the questionnaire items. The second questionnaire titled: "University Lecturers' Job Commitment Questionnaire (ULJCQ) was administered on Heads of Departments (HODs) after coding to ensuring linking it with the response of lecturers on implementation. They were also encouraged to respond to the questionnaire items. The administration of instruments was carried out by the researcher and (6) trained research assistants and it lasted for six (6) weeks (2018/2019 academic session). Data collected to answer the research questions were descriptively analyzed with mean and standard deviation. A theoretical mean of 2.50 was set in line with the rating scale to reach decision. Thus, where the calculated mean was greater than the critical mean, contributory pension scheme implementation or lecturers' job commitment was said to be low. Where the calculated mean is greater than the theoretical mean, contributory pension scheme implementation and job commitment is said to be high. The hypothesis was tested with Pearson r-statistic at 0.05 level of significance .Tables and figures were used to present and illustrate results.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

Research Question 1. What is the lecturers' perceived level of contributory pension scheme implementation in the South-south Nigerian universities?

To answer research question 1, the indices of contributory pension scheme implementations was assessed on a 4-point rating scale by the university lecturers. Their responses were descriptively analyzed and result presented in Table 1.

According to the data in Table 1, the level of contributory pension scheme implementation in South-South Nigerian universities is low (1.93). Analysis according to indices of implementation shows that implementation is high only in deductions from monthly salary (3.52) and pre-retirement workshop (2.86). Implementation is lowest in remittances into RSA (1.04), followed by payment of lump-sum (1.14). The payment of monthly pension is also low (1.44). The result is illustrated with Figure 1.

Research Question 2: What is the level of lecturers' job commitment in south-south Nigerian Universities?

To answer research question 2, the level of job commitment of university lecturers in South-South Nigerian universities was assessed by Heads of Departments of sampled universities on a 4-point rating scale. The indices of job commitment as assessed by Heads of Department were descriptively analyzed and results presented in Table 2.

According to the data in Table 2, the level of job commitment of university lecturers in South-south Nigerian universities is low with a mean score of (1.55). Analysis according to the indices of job commitment shows that preparation of course outline is lowest with a mean score of (1.53). This was closely followed by course advisorship (1.58), Students project supervision

Table 1. Mean analysis of the level of contributory pension scheme implementation.

Contributory pension scheme implementation	Score	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Standard deviation	Remarks
Deductions from monthly salary	1633	3.52	0.617	High
Remittances into RSA	483	1.04	0.367	Low
RSA management	727	1.57	0.783	Low
Pre-retirement workshop	1327	2.86	0.357	High
Payment of lump sum	529	1.14	0.490	Low
Payment of monthly pension	670	1.44	0.514	Low
Total average	**895**	**1.93**	**0.500**	**Low**

Critical/Theoretical Mean = 2.50, N = 464

Table 2. Mean analysis of university lecturers' level of job commitment in South-South Nigerian universities.

Indices of job commitment	Score	Mean ($\bar{x}$)	Standard deviation	Remark
Teaching of assigned courses	834	1.80	0.721	Low
Preparation of course outline	712	1.53	0.633	Low
Marking and grading of results	990	2.13	0.565	Low
Course advisorship	732	1.58	0.662	Low
Students project supervision	775	1.67	0.703	Low
Attendance at department board meetings	938	2.02	0.509	Low
Total average	**830**	**1.55**	**0.607**	**Low**

Critical/Theoretical Mean = 2.50, N = 464.

(1.67), and teaching of assigned courses (1.80). Although, the marking and grading of results scored the highest (2.13) while attendance at departmental board meetings scored (2.02). The result is illustrated with Figure 2.

Ho$_1$: There is no significant relationship between lecturers' perception of contributory pension scheme implementation and their job commitment in South-south Nigeria Universities

The hypothesis was tested using the Pearson product moment correlation statistics at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The data analysis is presented in Table 3.

The data in Table 3 shows the Pearson r value of (0.279) with a p value of (0.000) at an alpha level of 0.05. The p value of (0.000) is less than the alpha value of (0.05). Thus, the hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between lecturers' perception of contributory pension scheme implementation and job commitment in South-South Nigeria universities is rejected. The analysis therefore confirms that a significant relationship exists between the level of contributory pension scheme implementation and university lecturers' job commitment. This means that as the contributory pension scheme implementation improves lecturers' level

of job commitment will also improve.

DISCUSSION

Contributory pension scheme implementation in Nigerian universities

The study, in general, revealed a perceived low level of contributory pension scheme implementation in South-south Nigerian Universities. The indices of implementation were revealed to be low in remittances into Retirement Savings Account (RSA), payment of lump sum and payment of monthly pensions to retirees. However, the indices of implementation was high in the areas of deductions from lecturers' monthly salaries and ensuring that potential retirees were made to attend pre-retirement workshop. Therefore, the study discovered that most of the indices designed to ensure proper implementation were not carried out. Consequently, this means that the problems identified by Boyo (2014) that are associated with management of pension schemes in Nigeria before the introduction of Contributory Pension Scheme in 2004 still exist.

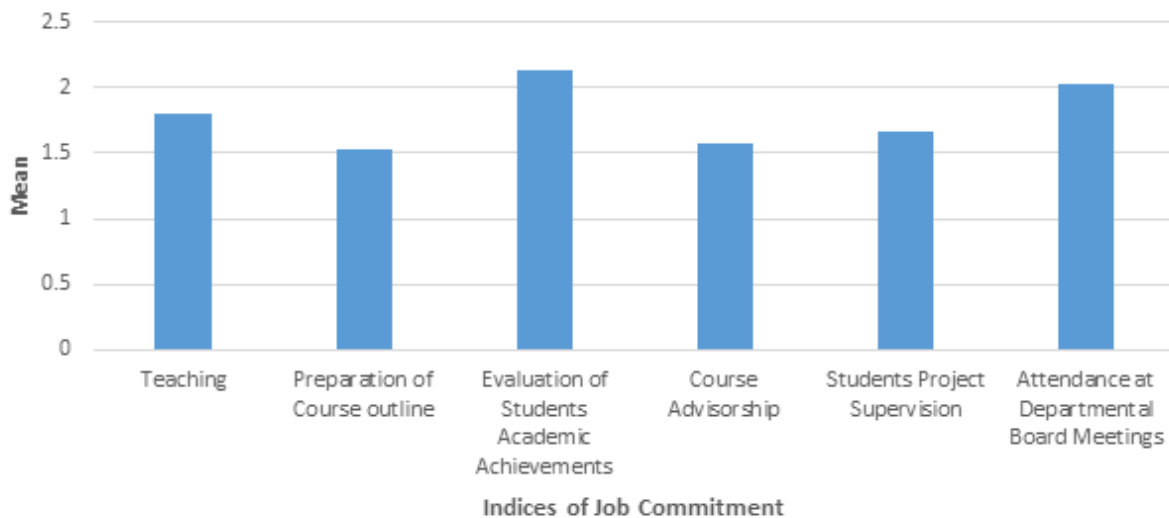The findings of this study correlates with the findings of

Figure 2. Bar chart showing university lecturers' level of job commitment.

Table 3. Correlation analysis of the relationship between contributory pension scheme implementation and lecturers' job commitment in South-South universities.

Variable	N	r	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Contributory pension scheme implementation Job commitment	464	0.279	2	0.000

$p<0.05$.

Oyemwinmina and Edomwonyi (2016) who assessed the perception of University of Benin staff on the contributory pension implementation. They reported that the staff faulted the scheme for the lack of transparency and accountability. This study however disagreed with the position of Oparah (2016) when he opined that the administrative and management lapses that characterized the Defined Benefit Scheme would be absent in the Contributory Pension Scheme.

The study revealed a high level of implementation in deductions from lecturers' salaries. This is expected because according to section 9 (1) of the Contributory Pension Act (2004), the employer is obliged to deduct 7.5% of the basic salaries of employees and remit same along with the employers' portion within 7 days of payment of salary into the Retirement Savings Account (RSA) of employees. It is rather surprising that remittances were low. A situation where lecturers' salaries were regularly deducted without a corresponding remittance by the employer into their retirement saving account could be frustrating and might spring up fears that are capable of influencing job commitment. The result of the study also confirmed the assertion by Adejoh

(2013) that the major problem with contributory pension scheme implementation in Nigerian universities is the inability of Federal and State Governments to remit deductions in line with the scheme. Ahmed and Oyadiran (2013) in their findings, reported that the scheme had not addressed the problems of inadequate budgetary allocation by government to pension management in Nigeria. The study revealed that the implementation as regards management of Retirement Savings Account (RSA) is low. The pension fund administrators are the managers of RSA's. The study supported the postulation by Mbanugo (2006) that managing pension fund is a decision that may make or mar the contributors and their dependents as failure of fund managers to communicate effectively may mean failure of the scheme which translates to loss of livelihood in retirement for the beneficiaries. The pension fund administrators and the National Pension Commission have to be more transparent in management and investment of contributed funds by university lecturers if the intention of the scheme is to be achieved. Babatunde (2012) however disagreed slightly with this finding when he reported a positive relationship between level of

awareness and workers savings in Oyo State under the contributory pension scheme.

The findings of this study validated that of Odin (2015) that teachers in Edo and Delta states had no knowledge of how their funds are managed by pension fund administrators as well as lack any knowledge of the amount they have in their retirement savings account. This finding is at variance with the provisions of the scheme which stipulated that transparency is guaranteed in relation to management of RSA's. The study is in agreement with the report of Ehalaiye (2009) that many workers were not aware of the activities of pension fund administrators and that of the National Pension Commission.

According to this study, the implementation of pre-retirement workshop was high. This could be attributed to the activities of pension fund administrators (PFA) in pursuit of intending retirees as clients. The possibility of PFAs tracing and encouraging intending retirees to attend pre-retirement workshops in conjunction with the National Pension Commission seemed to be the reason for high implementation in pre-retirement workshops. This could be why Yaro (2009) observed that management of pension funds requires the commitment of all stakeholders. He went further to postulate that the question of investment and requirement of technical know-how, prudence, dedication, planning efficient investment and overall compliance with the provisions of the Pension Act is so crucial in performance of the pension managers. The study showed that the level of implementation as regards lump-sum payment was low. This finding confirmed the dissatisfaction of some university lecturers expressed in one of the researcher's interaction with them in the course of this study. Many of them had reiterated that they would prefer their total contribution paid to them in bulk. The option of allowing pension fund administrators to manage their funds and pay the retirees in bits or in segments would not be favourable to their retired colleagues. They have therefore expected the total contribution paid at once to give them the opportunities of personally investing their pension savings. Omoni (2013) asserted that it is worrisome that implementation of pension schemes in Nigeria tend to compound issues for the retirees who have continued to complain about ineffectiveness of pension managers. The findings of this study validated the fears, skepticism and reservations university lecturers have about this scheme. This finding was in agreement with the studies of Olu and Aderonke (2005) when they reported that there exist inconsistencies in the review of gratuity payment pattern in Nigerian's pension scheme without appropriate strategies for financing pension. According to Gillian (2016), poor record keeping, corruption and poor supervision are crucial problems confronting pension schemes in Nigeria. In the views of

Odin (2015) and Akinade (2006), the government would always release polices on pension and gratuity from time to time without judicious implementation of the policies. Could this be the reason why the Federal Government recently approved the establishment of the Nigerian Universities Pension Company?

The study further showed low implementation as it concerns payment of monthly pensions. The study is in agreement with Boyo (2014) that even with the operation of Contributory Pension Scheme in Nigerian universities, there still exist un-dignifying sights of distressed senior citizens and other retirees waiting endlessly after many years of retirement for their retirement benefits to be paid. However, there is a disagreement with the assertion of Nwagwu (2013) that the Contributory Pension Scheme had ensured prompt and regular payment of pensions in Nigerian universities. It is pertinent to state here that this study revealed that problems of poor funding to pension schemes, diversion of pension funds by pension managers, cumbersome verification exercise associated with previous pension plans still exist in the Contributory Pension Scheme. A situation where a retired lecturer would not be able to access his/her retirement benefit 2 years after leaving the services of the university is indicative that the system is back to status quo.

Manuel and Asuquo (2010)) study corroborated this finding when they reported that retired teachers wait for as long as 15 years in many states of the federation before their pensions are paid. Consequently, the ineffective implementation of the scheme as reported by this study is also attributed to the sight or the inability of National Pension Commission to punish defaulters and monitor effectively the activities of pension fund administrators. Boyo (2014) noted that pension fund looters and defaulters often get away without due or appropriate punishment considering the social and economic damage they have caused. Onuka (2015), in response to failure of past pension schemes reported that this failure had occurred and may continue because many pension schemes depend largely on statutory allocation by government which does not come regularly to the schemes. Odin (2015) observed that it seems the apex body in charge of pension in Nigeria is weak. Stakeholders have been calling for the independence of the National Pension Commission. Adejoh had earlier asked in 2013, why the difficulty in remitting deductions into RSA's?; what is the genuiness of many pension fund administrators (PFA's) that have been licensed, to manage pension funds; what is the legal framework put in place by government to ensure that in spite of political changes, the scheme would be sustained?; what happens if PFA's default or go into liquidation?

These questions need urgent answer to avoid a situation of crippled academic activities in the university system.

Lecturers' level of job commitment in Nigerian universities

On the average, the level of job commitment among lecturers in South-South Nigerian universities was low. The observed low level of job commitment could be due to perceived delay in payment of retirement benefits and other rewards to retired lecturers from the university system. The inability of government to keep to agreements with unions in the universities as regard pension management could also result to low job commitment. For instance, the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has consistently demanded that government keeps her promise of ensuring adequate funding of the universities, pay retirement benefits to retired colleagues and also assure them of good pension package at retirement. These agitations are capable of influencing level of job commitment. It took years after series of strike actions by university lecturers for government to approve the Nigerian University Pension Management Company (NUPEMCO). The general working conditions of lecturers in Nigeria are not as attractive as those in the oil companies or even in other federal ministries. As a result, some lecturers have resorted to private business, selling of handouts and engaging in other possible ways of making ends meet. The findings of this study correlated with that of Mohamed (2017) that lecturers job commitment in the universities were affected by uncertainty of rewards. The findings also aligned with the assertion of Osemeke (2016) that policies of compensations and rewards are major determinants of employee commitment.

The study revealed low commitment in teaching of assigned course. The researcher's observation that students usually seat in classrooms waiting endlessly for their lecturers is hereby confirmed by this study. Lecturers are no longer punctual to classes, and even when they come, the number of hours allocated to a course is not effectively utilized. This study however revealed that the low implementation of Contributory Pension Scheme is responsible for this in Nigerian university system.

According to the study, the preparation and review of course outlines are done with little commitment as revealed by this study. It takes more than necessary before courses are reviewed in the universities today. This is seriously affecting quality of graduates from Nigerian Universities. This study aligned with the views of Adekola (2012) that Nigerian university lecturers are less concerned with the quality of their graduates. The study also revealed low commitment in terms of marking and grading of students results. It takes years before results are presented to Senate for approval in many universities in Nigeria long after examinations are written. Hence, there exists delay, in completion of academic programmes

in most Nigerian universities. This delay may not be as a result of poor academic performance of students but due to poor commitment of the managers of the system (lecturers). In some universities visited, Heads of Department usually give deadline for results to be submitted after examination. From observation and interactions in the course of this research, many lecturers never met the deadline, hence the delay in evaluation of students' academic performance. Oredein (2014) also observed this when he asserted that setting, supervising and marking of examinations by some lecturers in public universities always dragged more than necessary in some institutions. He added that it seems that lecturers' moral ethics has melted down significantly.

The study showed low level of job commitment in course advisorship. Many lecturers are more interested in self-development through research and publication, thereby neglecting their course advisorship roles. The concept of in-loco-parentis have since been lost as revealed by this study. Xiao and Wilkins (2015) discovered that lecturers' commitment to academic achievement and social integration of students are both positively related to students' satisfaction in Chinese higher education. The study further revealed low level of commitment in attendance at departmental board meetings. The low commitment of lecturers in this regard is seriously affecting the quality of decisions and policies made in Nigerian universities as revealed by this study. It is expected to be statutory for lecturers to attend departmental board meetings and contribute intellectually to the growth of administrative activities of the department. However, this could be attributed to the perceived low implementation of Contributory Pension Scheme in the university system. Some lecturers are seen teaching in other universities on adjunct and part-time bases to enable them save for their financial needs at retirement.

Contributory pension scheme implementation and job commitment

The finding of this study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between contributory pension scheme implementation and job commitment in South-South Nigeria Universities. This finding has validated the struggle by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) over the years. The Union has consistently demanded from government a good pension package for its members. This had given birth to the Nigerian University Pension Management Company (NUPEMCO), a pension fund administrator that is unique and specifically designed for university and other tertiary institution employees. This study also supported the findings of Chizueze et al. (2011) that contributory

pension scheme implementation significantly affects workers commitment to work, retention, and attitude towards retirement. The study also correlates with that of Ahmed et al. (2016) that there exist significant relationship between adequate retirement package and employees productivity which has a positive impact on the organization.

However, this study is at variance with the findings of Nwagwu (2013) that the Contributory Pension Scheme had encouraged prompt and regular payment of pensioners in the university system, hence the university workers are happy and supportive to management. Also in disagreement with the result of this study is the assertion by Yusuf (2014) that Contributory Pension Scheme gave employees of Nigerian universities the choice of how their pension funds are managed, adding that it gave assurance about the security of their retirement benefits. Another disagreement with this study is the findings of Ahmed and Oyadiran (2013) that Contributory Pension Scheme significantly improved the welfare of civil servants in Lagos State and gave them feelings of security in the future.

Further disagreements with this study were the findings by Adesodu and Dada (2012), Sule and Ezugwu (2009) who adjudged the implementation of Contributory Pension Scheme in educational institutions to be better than the old scheme. It is to be noted that lecturers during active service hoped to be happy at retirement. Therefore, reception of their retirement benefits would surely lead to self-actualization of lecturers at retirement.

Conclusion

The study revealed that university lecturers perceived the level of Contributory pension scheme implementation in South-South Nigeria universities as low. Lecturers' level of job commitment in South-South Nigerian universities was low. Furthermore, there was a positive relationship between perception of contributory pension scheme implementation and job commitment.

Recommendations

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

1. Government and university management step-up implementation of Contributory Pension Scheme in Nigerian Universities by ensuring that the concern of university lecturers are addressed. There should be prompt and regular remittance of deductions to lecturers Retirement Savings Accounts (RSA) so as to create confidence. In addition to the statutory and legal

framework, government should make enough financial provisions towards the funding of the scheme.
2. Pension Fund Administrators (PFAs) should encourage lecturers in active serve to increase their level of job commitment through regular and prompt payment of pensions to retired lecturers. The university management can also deploy information management technologies that will ensure that record of job activities are kept.
3. National Pension Commission and Pension fund administrators should ensure prompt and regular payment of lump-sum and thereafter, monthly pensions to retired university lecturers. This will spur those in active service to increase their commitment to the job as there would be hope of receiving their own retirement benefits at the end of their service in the university.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

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E-library and quality assurance in federal government colleges in Rivers and Bayelsa states, Nigeria

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This study was to determine the relationship between e-library and quality assurance in the Federal Government Colleges (unity schools) in Rivers and Bayelsa states, Nigeria. The population comprised of the teachers and students (SS3 and JS3) of the six unity schools in Rivers and Bayelsa States Nigeria numbering 3186 (teachers 1019, students 2167). A research sample of 637 was used through proportional stratified random sampling technique using 20%. A self-designed questionnaire known as E-library and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (ELQAQ) was used to elicit information from the respondents. Three research questions and one null hypothesis were formulated. Mean, rank order, standard deviation and z-test were used to find solution to the research questions and the hypothesis. The major findings of the study include that Federal Ministry of Education (F.M.E.) is a pacesetter of quality education, the library (print or non-print/digital) is the heart beat of the school system as it increases ones reading habit, e-library has the capacity of storing large content of information which can be accessed from anywhere, not all unity school (under study) have functional e-library, the print library is still useful, unity school teachers and students prefer a blend of the print and e-library as both have their advantages. Based on these findings, it was recommended that the print library should not be relegated but upgraded periodically to complement the digital library for quality service delivery, the Federal Ministry of Education Nigeria should endeavor to complete and equip the e-libraries as planned, the Inspectorate division of the F.M.E. should always inspect schools facilities for quality assurance, more qualified ICT teachers should be recruited in the unity schools (as model schools) to promote computer literacy and the F.M.E. should implement effective and regular capacity building in the unity schools of Nigeria to maintain qualitative education as quality teachers produce quality students.

Key words: Federal Government College, library, e-library, quality assurance.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the biggest instrument for academic progress, social mobilization, political survival and effective national development of any country. It constitutes the single enterprise in the country like Nigeria (Akpa, 2002 in Archibong, 2011). Federal Government Colleges also known as federal unity colleges in Nigeria are 104 in number and they possess ultra-modern edifices (such as classrooms, laboratories,

libraries, workshops, dormitories etc.), which enhances quality education. The Federal Ministry of Education established these unity schools to promote academic excellence, integration, tolerance, cohesion and to promote some principal objectives like the building of a united, just and egalitarian society. This was borne out of rancor, recrimination and ethnicism (tribal consciousness) evident in the Nigerian history between the Northern and Southern protectorates which affected national issues.

As part of the measures taken by the federal government to rid the society of this cankerworm, it was decided that children of varied ethnic and social background come together for a better understanding of one another (cross-cultural fertilization). To further achieve this, a good number of students admitted into such schools were posted and encouraged to study outside their immediate ethnic and geographical areas; they were thus exposed to finer details of different culture of multi-ethnic Nigeria (Ikonne 2008 in Archibong, 2014). Nigeria is a pluralistic society, a multiple culture of about two hundred and fifty distinct ethnic groups, speaking over two hundred and fifty languages and dialects. It is made up of thirty six states and for the purpose of easy administration, the former Head of State and Commander-in-chief of Armed forces, General Sani Abacha on the first of October, 1995 in the 35th Independence broadcast zoned the country into six geo-political units for the purpose of power sharing: North East, North West, Middle Belt, South West, South East and Southern Minorities. Before now, the Northern and Southern protectorates was amalgamated to become a political entity in 1914. Since then there has been the north versus south disparity in the development of western education in Nigeria and as a result of the education imbalance, the idea of ethnic balancing or federal character was necessitated (Ukeje et al 1988 in Archibong, 2008).

Prior to the Nigerian civil war, there existed two of what later came to be known as federal government colleges, namely, Kings College and Queens College all in Lagos, for boys and girls respectively. At the end of the civil war in 1970, there was a proliferation of the likes of Kings and Queens Colleges throughout Nigeria. These schools were rather christened "Federal Government Colleges". These federal government colleges can also be referred to as "federal unity colleges" (FUCs) and include "Federal Government Girls Colleges" with Pro Unitate Motto.

The founding fathers led by Alhaji Abubakar Tafawa Balewa was to foster unity among the youths of the country by bringing young Nigerians aged between 11 and 18 years in one institution where they will live, work and study together for some years and so grow to understand one another and thus become true Nigerians and as much as possible shed their tribal inclinations. Later, others were established and today there are 104 federal unity colleges across the country (Ikonne 2008 in Archibong, 2014).

The federal unity colleges were bastions of academic excellence and models of qualitative secondary education. The colleges were administered and staffed by experienced, carefully selected and motivated education professionals. The principals and teachers in these institutions were among the best in Nigeria. Adequate provisions were made for classrooms, laboratories, libraries, workshops, dormitories, water and sanitation, books and instructional materials. Class room size was manageable, not exceeding 35 and effective teaching and learning was taking place. An overwhelming majority of the graduates of FUCs obtained the required five (5) credit passes, including English Language and Mathematics and directly moved on to choice tertiary educational institutions for further education (Ikonne 2008 in Archibong, 2014).

The library is a combination of both collection of information sources, resources, services and structure in which it is housed. It is a focal point in learning, teaching and research activities of a learning community aimed at achieving quality output. It plays a major role in sustaining education through acquisition, provision and dissemination of information materials (Omeluzor and Ogo, 2018).

An e-library or digital library is a physical site and or website that provide around the clock online access to digitalized audio, video and written material. It provides copies of books, journals etc. available to the users. Normally these materials are classics which have no copyright digital formats (as opposed to print, micro form or other media) and accessible by computers. The digital content may be stored locally or accessed remotely via computer networks. A digital library is a type of information retrieval system and is an increasingly popular research area that encompasses more than traditional information retrieval or data base methods and techniques (Velumani, 2013).

Quality in general terms is most often defined as "fitness to purpose" in relation to the user and customer needs. Quality can also be taken to mean that the "product conforms to standards, specification or requirements" (Juran and Crossby in Babalola et al., 2007). Quality is looked at by quality scholars like Juran, Derming, Feigenbaum, Crossby and Taguchi from three viewpoints: customer, producer and society. Product quality is described as "fitness for use" or conformance to requirements. A different way of defining quality, providing a new way of thinking is Taguchi's approach: "quality is the loss imparted to the society from the time a product is shipped" (Juran, Crossby, Taguchi in Archibong, 2008). Quality Assurance derived from the organizational concept of Total Quality Management (TQM) is defined as a way of managing an organization so that every job, every process is implemented right first time and always. It is the avoidance of non-performance by pre-empting failure through proper planning, execution, monitoring and evaluation (Emetarom, 2007).

Quality of education, although varies, none the less has to do with the quality of educational input and output in it's entirely. Quality is considered as the baseline standard in education which can be measured on a scale of reference. It is therefore an expression or means by which a certain set of standards in education can be achieved (Emetarom, 2007).

Quality in education is an important issue of global concern. This is attested in the conclusions of most of the world and regional deliberation and studies of the last decades. The famous four pillars of the Dehor's Report on Education for the 21st century (learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be) are intended to link education, the development, the aim of which should be complete fulfillment of the individual personality (Sule, 2009).

In the same vein Iheonunekwu (2003) in Emenalo (2009) states that each element in the input-process-output framework of education enterprise should be of an acceptable quality to ensure high quality in education. This means that if educational inputs (financial and human resources) such as funding, learner enrolment, quality and quantity of teachers are in the right proportion, learner /teacher ratio, curriculum, textbooks, school materials and facilities etc. are adequately, proportionately and timely provided for education delivery, quality management is on course. Similarly, when the process of delivering the educational service is monitored, checked, encouraged and improved for efficiency and effectiveness, the end product would be of high quality.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study was anchored on connectivism theory according to Autonomous University of Madrid-Spain (2014). Connectivism is an epistemological approach grounded in the interactions within networks both inside the individual mind and outside to the world, rather than to the individual memory of what to do (behaviourism), what to think (cognitivism), or how to make meaning (constructivism). It is becoming more influential and contentious of late due to its use as the epistemological basis for massive open online courses (MOOCs). Connectivism not only builds on the earlier notion of connectionism from computer science but also on the idea of situated cognition that knowledge occurs not only in the minds of individuals but rather is supra and trans-individual and also exists within and between groups. Its heritage also include that of collective intelligence, which is the idea that through the use of collaborative technologies, people can carry out a task as if the group were a single organism rather than individual agents. However, knowledge is inherently distributed and relies on the presence of networks without which it could not exist and it concurs with the fact that knowledge is emergent from an individual's learning network as

connections are recognized- that is, learning occurs as connections are made.

A library is the most peaceful place on the earth, it is like a corpora of knowledge. One could find books in a library in almost all topics like history, geography or even science e-fiction. Libraries are considered as the shrine where the relics of the ancient saints, full of true virtue and that without delusion or imposture are preserved. A library is like the whole world encompassed in one room. Without a library, an institution will not be complete. It is very essential to education and any problem, any query unanswered, one can find in one of the books stored in the library. Libraries are an integral part of the education system and one is incomplete without the other as a well-stocked library is an asset to any institution.

A library is a place where not only books but also magazines, journals and newspapers are well-stocked for the benefit of the readers. Besides this, one can also get the entire charts, encyclopedia, government gazette etc. A reader can either read in the library or borrow the book/journal as it is a popular place in the academic curriculum. With the growing popularity of the internet, the retrieval of information becomes faster. The primary objective of the library is to organize, and provide access to information. This objective will never change but the format and methods that are used will change dramatically, providing new opportunities and challenges. Libraries have witnesses a great metamorphosis in recent years. The print medium is increasingly giving way to the electronic form of materials. The library is an extremely important entity in an ever-changing society and it must be responsive to the needs of the society. Information Technology (IT) has changed the complexion of today's libraries. Libraries have evolved to become an information provider rather than mere document providers. The shift from the traditional libraries to the digital is not merely a technological evolution but requires a change in the paradigm by which the users access and interact with information. This move from traditional to electronic libraries also alters the fundamental role of the library (Velumani, 2013).

An e-library or digital library (both terms often used interchangeably) can be defined as a collection of digital objects such as text visuals, video, audio, etc. stored as standardized and customized electronic media format (as opposed to print, micro form or other media), along with means for organizing, storing and retrieving the contents at existing access points or own devices (Anurag, 2013).

A digital library, digital repository or digital collection, is an online database of digital objects that can include text, still images, audio, video, digital documents or other formats. Objects can consist of digitized content like word processor files or social media posts. In addition to storing content, digital libraries provide means for organizing, searching and retrieving the content contained in the collection. Digital libraries can vary immensely in size and scope and can be maintained by individuals or organizations. The digital content may be stored locally or

accessed remotely via computer networks. These information retrieval systems are able to exchange information with each other through interoperability and sustainability (Wikipedia, n. d).

Statement of problem

The relevance of a library (print or digital) to an educational institution cannot be over emphasized as it is seen as a repertoire of knowledge, the heartbeat of the school system as well as the academic strong room. Based on contemporary trends, the e-libraries were established globally (even in the federal government colleges serving as model schools in Nigeria). However, certain issues and challenges emerged and so this study seeks to find out if the six unity schools in Rivers and Bayelsa states of Nigeria all have functional e-library and the level of patronage between teachers and students. That is, to verify the contention that e-library brings about quality assurance in secondary education.

Purpose of the study

The general purpose of the study is to determine the relationship between e-library and quality assurance in Federal Government Colleges in Rivers and Bayelsa states, Nigeria namely: Federal Government College Port Harcourt (F.G.C.), Federal Government Girls' College Abuloma (F.G.G.C.), Federal Science and Technical College Ahoada (F.S.T.C.) all in Rivers State; Federal Government College Odi (F.G.C.), Federal Government Girls' College Imiringi (F.G.G.C.), Federal Science and Technical College Tungbo (F.S.T.C.) all in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Simply put, this study seeks to find out if the usage of e-library leads to quality assurance in the six unity schools in Rivers and Bayelsa states, Nigeria. Specifically the study seeks to: find out the relationship between e-library and quality assurance in Rivers and Bayelsa state unity schools; find out if there are still unity schools (under study) without e-library and how they are coping with the pint library; investigate whether teachers and students in unity schools prefer digital to the print library or whether they preferred a blend of the two.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship between e-library and quality assurance in unity schools?
2. Which are the unity schools (under study) without e-library and how are they coping with the print library?
3. Do teachers and students in unity schools prefer digital to print library or they preferred a blend of the two?

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the opinions of teachers and students on the relevance of e-library for quality assurance in unity schools.

METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this study was the correlational design concerned with determining the relationship between two variables (e-library and quality assurance). The study population comprised of 1019 teachers and 2167 students making a total population of 3186. The sample size was 637 comprising of 204 teachers and 433 students which was selected by proportional stratified random sampling technique using 20%. The instrument used was a self-designed questionnaire known as "E-library and Quality Assurance Questionnaire (ELQAQ)" to elicit responses from the respondents. It had two sections: A and B, section A generated demographic data while section B elicited information related to the research topic. The response scale was patterned after a modified four points Likert scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument used was validated by lecturers in the Department of Educational Management and Department of Library and Information Science. A test-retest method was adopted to find out the degree to which the instrument would be consistent in measuring what it should measure. The questionnaire was personally administered by the researchers and they retrieved same on completion for analysis. The data collected from the respondents were tabulated, coded and analyzed and deductions from the tables were used to find solution to the research questions and test the hypothesis. The statistical tools used for the analysis were mean and rank order for the research questions and the z-test of difference for testing the null hypothesis.

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Research question 1

What is the relationship between e-library and quality assurance in unity schools?

Table 1 revealed that respondents agreed that the Federal Ministry of Education is a pacesetter of quality education with mean score of 3.45; they also agreed that the establishment of e-library increases ones reading habit with mean score of 2.68. The table also revealed that the e-library has the capacity of storing large content of information which can be accessed from anywhere in the world as this has mean score of 3.56. Also, the respondents agreed that the library is the heart beat of the school system with mean score of 3.42 but disagreed that there is quality internet service and adequate power supply that facilitates e-learning with mean score of 1.70. However, the grand mean score of 3.08 shows a positive response on the relationship between e-library and quality assurance in unity schools in the study area.

Research question 2

Which are the unity schools (under study) without e-library and how are they coping with the print library?

Table 2 revealed that respondents disagreed that there is

Table 1. Mean scores on the relationship between e-library and quality assurance in unity schools.

S/N	Items	Unity school teachers and students in Rivers State		Unity School teachers and students in Bayelsa State		$\dfrac{\bar{X}_1 + \bar{X}_2}{2}$	Remark
		N	x̄	N	x̄		
1.	The federal ministry of education is a pacesetter of quality education	478	3.25	159	3.64	3.45	Agree
2.	The establishment of e-library increases ones reading habit	478	2.65	159	2.70	2.68	Agree
3.	E-library has the capacity of storing large content of information which can be accessed from anywhere in the world	478	3.47	159	3.64	3.56	Agree
4.	The library is the heart beat of the school system	478	3.46	159	3.37	3.42	Agree
5.	There are large quantities of functional computers in the I.C.T department which enhances teaching and learning	478	2.95	159	2.62	2.78	Agree
6.	Without a library (print or digital) an institution will not be complete	478	2.94	159	3.09	3.02	Agree
7.	A school without e-library is not 21st century compliant	478	3.18	159	3.18	3.18	Agree
8	The e-library is an on-line data base of digital objects/documents which promote quality teaching and learning	478	3.55	159	3.52	3.53	Agree
9.	There is quality internet service and adequate power supply that facilitates e-learning	478	1.48	159	1.91	1.70	Disagree
10.	There are qualified ICT teachers to promote computer literacy in unity schools	478	3.65	159	3.42	3.53	Agree
	Grand mean	**3.08**					

Number (N) of respondents=637.

no e-library in the school with mean score of 2.30; the teachers agreed that there is a functional e-library in the school with their mean score of 2.65 illustrated, whereas the students disagreed to the statement with mean score of 2.42. Also, the respondents disagreed that there are no qualified ICT teachers in their school and the students in the school do not like using the e-library with mean score of 2.21. Furthermore, the respondents agreed that the e-library in the school is still under construction with mean score of 2.88; there is a standard print library in their school which encourages learning with mean score of 2.64. Therefore the grand mean of 2.41 indicates a low functional e-library in the study area.

Research question 3

Do teachers and students prefer digital to print library or they preferred a blend of the two?

Table 3 shows that all the items have positive response rates, since their weighted mean are greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. This result implies that for items 21-30 with mean 3.29, 3.17, 3.09, 3.41, 3.15, etc., respondents agreed that teachers in unity school prefer

digital library to print library, while some prefer print library to digital library. Students in unity school prefer digital library to print and unity school teachers prefer a blend of digital and print library because they both have their advantages. Nevertheless, the grand mean of 3.24 affirm that teachers and students preferred a blend of print and digital library in the study area.

Test of hypothesis

The hypothesis tested at 0.05 alpha level was formulated for the study.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between the opinions of teachers and students on the relevance of e-library for quality assurance in unity schools. Result in Table 4 revealed that the mean score of unity school teachers and students are 2.40 and 2.36. And that the standard deviations of their scores are 0.37 and 0.44 respectively. However, when this mean difference was subjected to an independent z-test statistics, it was observed that the calculated z-value of 1.251 is less than z-critical value of

Table 2. Mean scores of unity schools without e-library and how they are coping with the print library.

S/N	Items	Unity school teachers in Rivers and Bayelsa State		Unity School students in Rivers and Bayelsa State		$\dfrac{\overline{X}_1 + \overline{X}_2}{2}$	Remark
		N	x̄	N	x̄		
11.	There is no e-library in my school	204	2.50	433	2.09	2.30	Disagree
12.	There is a functional e-library in my school.	204	2.65	433	2.43	2.69	Agree
13.	There are no qualified ICT teachers in my school	204	1.93	433	1.76	1.85	Disagree
14.	The students in my school do not like using the e-library	204	2.09	433	2.32	2.21	Disagree
15.	The e-library in my school is still under construction	204	2.97	433	2.80	2.88	Agree
16.	There is a standard print library in my school which encourages learning	204	2.59	433	2.40	2.64	Agree
17.	There is a print library in my school but it is not functional	204	2.44	433	2.24	2.34	Disagree
18	The teachers and students are using the print library based on when the e-library will be completed	204	2.72	433	2.61	2.66	Agree
19.	The library in my school is noisy	204	1.60	433	2.14	1.87	Disagree
20.	The print library in my school is stocked with outdated books	204	2.54	433	2.80	2.67	Agree
	Grand Mean	**2.41**					

N=637

1.960 at 0.05 level of significance, so the null hypothesis was accepted. Hence, there is no significant difference between mean scores of unity school teachers and students on the relevance of e-library to quality assurance.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The study revealed that the relationship between e-library and quality assurance include the facts that the federal ministry of education is a pacesetter of quality education, the establishment of e-library increases ones reading habit, e-library has the capacity of storing large content of information which can be accessed from anywhere in the world, the library is the heart of the school system, there are large quantities of functional computers in ICT department which enhance teaching and learning. Others are: without a library (print or digital) an institution will not be complete, a school without e-library is not 21st century compliant, the e-library is an on-line data base of digital objects/documents which promote quality teaching and learning, there is quality internet service and adequate power supply that facilitates e-learning and there are qualified ICT teachers to promote computer literacy in unity schools.

These findings are supported by Ikonne and Nkom respectively in Archibong (2014) who stated that the federal ministry of education established the federal unity colleges as bastions of academic excellence and models of qualitative secondary education as adequate provisions were made for classroom laboratories,

libraries, workshops, dormitories, water, sanitation, books and instructional materials. The Minister of State for Education Barrister Nyesom Wike revealed that the President Jonathan administration was focused on ensuring every Nigerian school has access, equity, standard and quality assurance noting that with the seriousness of the government, the fortunes of educational institutions across the country will be greatly improved. This is further strengthened by Ekong and Ekong (2018) who submitted that the library is the heart of any academic institution as it helps to provide, inform and educate the students through books, journals, audio visual materials and services. Academics and students now have unrestricted accesses to global digital information resources particularly through the internet for scholarly communication and publications.

Similarly, Shrestha (2008) affirmed that today's library is powerhouse where information is stored, generated and transferred to fulfill the users need. Ternenge and Agipu (2019) posited that one of the objectives of the school library is to inculcate intellectual development by encouraging the development of skills in reading and promoting reaching habits and literacy appreciation.

Findings on the unity schools (understudy) without e-library and how they are coping with the print library revealed that majority of the unity schools have functional digital and print library. However, for the school that the e-library is still under construction, the teachers and students are actually coping with the print library pending on when the e-library will be completed. This approximates to Abubakar (2012) in Archibong (2014) who recounted that when the Minister of State asked how

Table 3. Mean scores on opinions of respondents on whether they prefer digital to print library or they preferred a blend of the two.

S/N	Items	More experienced teachers and SS3 students		Less experienced teachers and JS3 students		$\frac{\bar{X}1 + \bar{X}2}{2}$	Remark
		N	x̄	N	x̄		
21.	Teachers in unity school prefer digital library to print library	423	3.30	214	3.27	3.29	Agree
22.	Teachers in unity schools prefer print library to digital library	423	3.30	214	3.03	3.17	Agree
23.	Students in unity school prefer digital library to print library.	423	3.21	214	2.97	3.09	Agree
24.	Students in unity school prefer print library to digital library	423	3.38	214	3.43	3.41	Agree
25.	Unity school teachers prefer a blend of digital and print library because they both have their advantages	423	3.14	214	3.16	3.15	Agree
26.	Unity school students prefer a blend of digital and print library because they both have their advantages.	423	3.11	214	3.06	3.08	Agree
27.	The print library is not outdated because it is still useful	423	3.07	214	2.87	2.97	Agree
28	The e-library is a modern form of learning for quality output.	423	2.91	214	2.88	2.89	Agree
29.	The print library allows for borrowing and returning of books	423	3.66	214	3.78	3.72	Agree
30.	With the e-library, learning materials cannot be borrowed.	423	3.61	214	3.62	3.61	Agree
	Grand mean	**3.24**					

N=637

Table 4. Z-test analysis on the difference between the mean scores of teachers and students on the relevance of e-library for quality assurance in unity schools.

	Variable	N	Mean	Std Dev.	Df	Z-cal	Zcri	Level of Sig.	Decision
Relevance of e-Library to quality Assurance	Teachers	204	2.40	0.37	635	1.251	1.960	0.05	HO1 accepted
	Students	433	2.36	0.44					

libraries, laboratories, classrooms, hostels and assembly halls will be fixed. For the schools not selected for the phased rehabilitation for the year, a framework has been worked out with UBEC to make district interventions in the Junior Secondary section which falls under the present UBEC mandate; these schools will not remain the same again".

In furtherance, Premium Times (2012, September 27,) postulated that Nigeria's Minister of State for Education Nyesom Wike said that well-furnished e-libraries will be set up in 50 unity schools across the country as part of a federal government initiative in a bid to promote quality education.

Also supporting the findings is Premium Times (2019, April 27) which opined that the federal government has given a directive for the overhaul of all unity schools otherwise known as federal government colleges across Nigeria. The Permanent Secretary of the federal ministry of education, Sunny Echono said President Muhammadu Buhari gave the approval to the ministry of education to rehabilitate dilapidated structures and construct new classrooms, improve libraries, the laboratory and other amenities in the unity schools in Nigeria.

Concerning the findings of whether unity school teachers and students prefer digital to print library or they preferred a blend of the two. The respondents agreed that unity school teachers and students preferred a blend of digital and print library because they both have their advantages, the e-library is a modern form of learning for quality output and the print library allows for borrowing and retuning of books.

The findings are supported by Shrestha (2008) who confirmed that in today's scenario more students surf the internet for information than going through the library resources as it is less complicated and readily available. Still students who are regular users of the library know that libraries have resources that are more comprehensive and scholarly than most websites provide which also are not freely available or may not be online at all. These findings are also strengthened by Ternenge and Agipu (2019) who submitted that the library is a repository of knowledge which helps secondary school teachers to achieve the objectives of producing students that are well informed and are prepared for lifelong education. Library facilities contain information in both print and non-print formats such as textbooks, journals,

indexes, newspapers and magazines, reports, internet, video tapes, diskettes. The unavailability of such resources such as library resources negatively affects staff and students motivation and learning. Many users of the library see it as a place where books and other research materials are kept and made available for use.

These findings are equally affirmed by Wang and Hwang (2004) who posited that the booming of new learning methods built on an underlying foundation of computer and Information Technology (IT) over the past decades has offered various "solutions" to educational and training activities. Most of the early "solutions" were adaptations of text-based training delivered electronically. Today the "solutions" are more than duplicating non-electronic learning materials and transmitting them online. They are mainly embodied in the internet environments containing variant elements such as virtual learning environments, online mutual interaction and managed learning environments.

Suleiman et al. (2018) further supported the findings by confirming that library is meant to fulfill information needs because it is more convenient for students to collect reading materials from the school library.

Conclusion

Nigerian nation cannot be well developed without the integration of tribal difference as well as a stable educational system as education is the bedrock of development. To that extent, the federal government of Nigeria established the federal government colleges (unity schools) which have been leading lights and reference points of academic excellence in secondary education. They have produced high flyers and achievers in every sphere of human endeavor for the nation. Their alumni and alumnae are all over Nigeria and beyond as leaders of society, celebrated professionals and accomplished personalities.

In pursuance of true unity and quality assurance in education, the federal government colleges were established and equipped with standard print and non-print libraries to organize and provide access to information. This objective will never change but the format and method used will change (from print to digital library). The print library has not over lived its usefulness as many advantages still abound but the e-library exists to complement it for all round transformation of the users (teachers and students). The e-library is a solution to information explosion and its advantage of point and click functionality ensures that all the users find the information they need to upgrade their knowledge and skill so as to meet up with the 21st century demands.

Recommendation

Based on the results of the findings in the study, the following are advanced as quality is a continuous process:

1. The relevance of e-library cannot be overemphasized, however, the print library should not be relegated rather it should be upgraded from time to time to complement the e-library for quality service delivery in the unity schools in Nigeria.
2. The Federal Ministry of Education should ensure that they complete and equip all the e-libraries in the unity schools in Nigeria as planned.
3. The Inspectorate division of Federal Ministry of Education called FEQAS (Federal Quality Assurance Scheme) should inspect school facilities from time to time to meet up with contemporary demands.
4. Federal Ministry of Education should recruit more qualified ICT teachers into the unity schools (as model schools) to promote computer literacy.
5. Federal Ministry of Education should implement effective and regular capacity building in the unity schools to maintain educational standards as quality teachers produce quality students.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have not declared any conflict of interest.

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Refugee education: Refugees' perceptions of educational challenges in Uganda

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This brief report article presents the current educational challenges refugees face in Uganda based on their perceptions. The perceptions of the refugees were collected through an approach that ensured that refugee leaders, students, and non-students commented on the education of refugees in Uganda. 15 individual interviews with refugee students in Kampala in 2021 were complemented by data collected from 2 Focus Group discussions in 2020. The individual interview participants included 3 secondary school students, 10 university students, and 2 Vocational Education and Training (VET) students. Focus Group one was a group of refugee leaders in Rhino Refugee settlement area, and Focus Group two was for urban refugee youths in Arua City. This brief report article contributes to understanding the educational challenges of the refugees in Uganda through a broader focus that includes post-secondary education than concentrating on access to primary and secondary education, which are the main focus of research and policy interventions. Furthermore, the challenges presented, such as tuition fees at institutions of higher learning, the stigmatisation of refugee students, the lack of educational advice and career guidance for refugee students, and the COVID-19 effects, show that there is need to expand policy interventions to address educational challenges faced by the refugees.

Key words: Refugees, refugee challenges, educational response, refugee perceptions, Uganda.

INTRODUCTION

Africa has faced a refugee crisis for several decades. Uganda is one of the leading refugee host countries globally, with over one million refugees living in the country (Bohnet and Schmitz-Pranghe, 2019; World Bank, 2019). With the enactment of the Uganda Refugee Act 2006, Uganda has been lauded for promoting the integration of refugees in the country; refugees in Uganda have the right to work, freedom of movement, freedom to establish businesses, and are given small plots of land in the refugee settlement areas (Adepoju, 2019; Betts, 2018; Betts et al., 2019). This has made Uganda a model in addressing the refugee crisis, which aligns with the international focus that currently encourages the inclusion and integration of refugees (Betts et al., 2019; Bohnet and Schmitz-Pranghe, 2019; Crisp, 2018). In responding to the refugee crisis in Uganda, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the government of Uganda, Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and

the host communities have worked towards solving the challenges that the refugees face in their living and integration in Uganda. An educational response is one of the vital responses to the integration of refugees in different countries (van Dijk, 2021). However, refugee educational challenges remain some of the major challenges for refugees in Uganda (Dryden-Peterson, 2010; Tulibaleka et al., 2022). Bohnetand Schmitz-Pranghe (2019) reported that refugees in Uganda have limited opportunities for secondary education. Vemuru et al. (2016) stated that refugees in Uganda with secondary education are about 0.8 per cent. Kasirye-Büllesbach (2019) explained that of the estimated 1.3 million refugees residing in Uganda, 61% of refugees are minors who require education. However, data collected in eight refugee-hosting districts in Uganda showed that out of 616,000 refugee children, 57% had no access to education (Kasirye-Büllesbach, 2019). This shows how access to education is a challenge to refugees. This brief report article highlights some of the current educational challenges refugees in Uganda face based on their perceptions. This report contributes to understanding the educational challenges of the refugees in Uganda through a broader focus that includes post-secondary education than concentrating on access to primary and secondary education, which have been the main focus of research and policy interventions.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this brief report article is to present some of the persisting challenges that refugees are experiencing in access to education in Uganda. The refugees, like the nationals, have education ambitions and requires access to quality education. This article is based on the views and perceptions of the refugees. The article reports the challenges and recommendations that are a panacea to improving the refugee educational response by the government, UNHCR, and the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs).

METHODOLOGY

The data was collected through 15 individual interviews with refugee students in Kampala city in 2021 and complemented by data collected from two Focus Group discussions in 2020. The individual interviews participants included 3 secondary school students, 10 university students, and 2 students in Vocational Education and Training (VET). Focus Group one was a group of refugee leaders in Rhino Refugee settlement area, and Focus Group two was for urban refugee youths in Arua City. There are several zones, clusters, and villages in Rhino settlement area. A village is headed by a Refugee Welfare Committee 1 (RWC1), a cluster is run by a Refugee Welfare Committee 2 (RWC2), the RWC 2 reports to the Refugee Welfare Committee 3 (RWC3), which is the overall leadership committee of the settlement. A village can consist of up to 1000 or more refugees. The leaders in the focus group discussion were members of RWC 1 in Ofua Zone 3 of the settlement area; they included the Chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary of education, secretary of persons with special needs, the officer in charge of security, secretary of the environment, women's leader, and the youth leader (8 members in total). The refugee leaders were South Sudanese refugees since Ofua zone is a South Sudanese settlement area. In Arua City, the focus group of urban refugee youths was diverse as it included both South Sudanese and Congolese refugees. The refugees in Arua City were recruited through snowball sampling with the help of a research assistant from Arua City. He contacted some urban refugees who recommended other participants to take part in the focus group. These urban refugee youths included self-employed workers, students and the unemployed. In total, this focus group was also made of 8 participants. Participants in the individual interviews in Kampala (students) were recruited through snowball sampling method, a student from the Kyambogo University was the initial contact, and the first interviewee who recommended other students and the chain of referral continued until the total number of 15 students was interviewed during the data collection period. The data collected was analysed with the help of NVivo software, coding and thematic analysis were used to develop the educational challenges and recommendations presented in this article.

Justification of the methodology

Data was collected through individual interviews and focus group discussions. These were used to ensure that perceptions and experiences of the refugees were captured and understood. The Focus Group of refugee leaders and the Focus Group of urban refugee youths (a mixture of refugees working as self-employed workers, students, and unemployed) allowed the refugee leaders and the urban refugee youths to their views on the educational challenges of the refugees just as the students in the individual interviews. In other words, students and non-students (youths and elders/leaders) had the opportunity to participate in the research, which ensured that although the sample size was not big, the refugee perceptions and views were collected from a diversity of refugees within the refugee cohort.

FINDINGS

Refugee educational challenges

The government of Uganda, the UNHCR, and Non-Government Organizations are actively involved in addressing the educational challenges experienced by the refugees in Uganda. However, as presented in this section of the article, several challenges persist or have not been adequately addressed. Besides challenges like the lack of educational materials, the lack of sanitary pads for girls, the language barrier for some refugees, there are challenges that the refugees described as emerging or major problems that are hindering their access to education in Uganda which include the high tuition fees in the universities and other institutions of higher learning, the award of scholarships, stigmatisation, and discrimination, the lack of educational advice and career guidance, the effect of COVID-19, the distance of schools and the few available secondary schools in the settlement areas.

Tuition fees in the universities and other institutions of higher learning

Generally, international students pay higher tuition fees than local students in Uganda, notably in private institutions of higher learning. The refugees are affected by this trend whereby the universities hike school fees for international students (Mande, 2015). Refugees are treated like other international students in institutions where international students pay higher tuition fees than Ugandan students. This affects the ability of refugees to access higher education. In the interviews with students:

Participant #7pointed out that "In Uganda, we are treated as international students; we pay more tuition fees than the local students, especially at the universities."

In the leaders' focus group discussion, the chairperson explained the challenge of accessing higher education due to the lack of tuition fees by the refugees. He explained that:

"When our children complete primary and secondary education, [......], it would be better to push them further the education ladder because they get the same grades as the nationals, but the education ambitions of most refugees are cut short. If refugee students were given scholarships annually, it would create a difference".

Studies on refugees' education have pointed out that higher education for refugees has been ignored globally, which affects refugees in different countries (Dryden-Peterson, 2010; 2017). According to the Global Education Monitoring Report (2019), as of 2016, less than 1% of refugee youth had access to higher education. Without support to attain higher education, the number of refugees enrolled at higher learning institutions will remain low in Uganda despite the progressive policy promoting their integration. A previous study pointed out that the refugees in Uganda are limited in access to higher education in Uganda (Hakami, 2016). Limited access to higher education affects the ability to participate in the labour market even though the refugees have the right to work in Uganda. Acquiring skills through education lays the foundation for refugees to participate in the labour market.

The award of scholarships

In Uganda, the government does not award scholarships to refugees to pursue education at universities and other institutions of higher learning. This can be partly attributed to the high number of refugees in the country (Vemuru et al., 2016). Although the refugees give credit to several NGOs such as Windle International, the DAFI (Albert Einstein German Academic Refugee Initiative), and CORNERSTONE that are providing scholarships to the refugees, especially scholarships to attain university or higher education (post-secondary school education) in Uganda and outside Uganda; there is widespread discontent among the refugee students and the refugee leaders that the process of selection and award in several instances is not merit-based and is marred with unfairness and favouritism from the officials of some NGOs. These allegations were not verified, nor did the refugees point out specific organisations that practice such unfairness in selecting and awarding the scholarships. The discontent was expressed by a number of the refugee students, for example:

Participant#5 explained that "There is corruption among officials in the camps and the organisations when it comes to scholarships; many students have been denied scholarships due to the officials' interests".

The refugees blame the limited number of scholarships as one of the primary reasons the awarding and selection of refugee students for scholarship opportunities is marred with bribery and unfairness. Unfairness in the award and selection process deprives capable students of attaining education scholarships.

Stigmatisation and discrimination of refugee pupils and students in schools

The refugee leaders and students reported cases of stigmatisation and discrimination of the refugees. The stigmatisation results from being called refugees in schools, especially secondary schools and universities. There are primary schools near or within the settlement areas, but there are very few secondary schools and post-secondary education institutions of learning near the settlements. In search of secondary school education and post-secondary education, the refugees have to study in distant places away from the settlement areas. For the urban self-settled refugees, schools and institutions of higher learning are close to them, but like the refugee students from settlement areas, they experience stigmatisation while in schools. In the interview individuals, the participants explained the effects of stigmatisation, such as the loss of self-confidence and the sense of belonging to the community and the schools. These have impacts on the education and educational performance of refugee students.

Participant #1 explained that "We face stigmatisation as refugee students; we are living in hardships. The communities and in the schools, they take as different and isolated from them. They talk ill about us in this country. This causes insecurity and makes us lose self-confidence".

Some studies have explained that stigmatising refugee students affect their learning and performance in class (Morrice, 2013; Pejic et al., 2016). This requires the

stakeholders to promote inclusive learning environments and multiculturalism in the schools and communities. Uganda is a culturally diverse country, and the influx of refugees has added to the cultural diversity of the country (Tulibaleka et al., 2021B). Therefore, promoting multiculturalism and co-existence is necessary for the communities, urban areas, and even in schools.

The lack of educational advice and career guidance

The refugee students decried the lack of career guidance, counselling, and educational advice. The students reported limited knowledge and understanding of the courses in Ugandan universities and institutions of higher learning. Others reported relying on friends and acquaintances to make decisions regarding courses to pursue and the institutions to attend. In the Focus group of the refugee leaders, they noted the need for career guidance and advice on education in Uganda for the refugee students. They delineated the fact that despite being leaders, their guidance is limited, and the students need proper career guidance and educational advice. In the Focus Group of urban refugee youths, a participant explained the impact of the lack of career guidance and educational advice on the refugee students who study in the settlement areas. He explained that:

"The schools in the settlement areas do not get the chance to be visited by professionals to talk to them about career guidance, meaning that in the long run, students make wrong career choices because they do not get the chance to be informed about careers they are supposed to pursue in higher institutions of learning".

The majority of the students interviewed had lived in Uganda for over 5 years, while some were even born in Uganda. These refugee students require proper educational advice and career guidance. However, the need for career guidance is not peculiar to refugee students alone; in Uganda, career guidance and job search assistance need to be strengthened. This is because even native Ugandan students rely on informal networks such as family members for career guidance and job search assistance (Tulibaleka et al., 2021A). Educational advice and career guidance for refugees need to be strengthened for their integration in Uganda and future re-integration in their home countries.

The effect of COVID-19 on refugee students

On 20th March 2020, due to the presidential directive to contain the spread of COVID-19, schools right from primary schools to universities were closed. The government later opened up schools for candidate classes before another wave of COVID-19 led to another lockdown in the country. Some institutions and universities came up with strategies to facilitate the learning process, such as online classes (Nabukeera, 2020). COVID-19 has inflicted socio-economic, and psychosocial impacts on refugees (Bukuluki et al., 2020), which has affected their education and made them more vulnerable. The refugee students emphasized that it is hard to cope with the impact of COVID-19 because of requirements such as laptops to facilitate online learning for the students. The students pointed out that it is very difficult for refugee students to study online due to challenges like the lack of electricity in the settlement areas and overcrowding in the settlement areas, which does not offer a good study environment. The self-settled urban refugees mainly live in the slums in the urban areas (Bukuluki et al., 2020), which the students described as not conducive to attend online classes. The other effects of the COVID-19 pandemic include school dropout and unwanted pregnancies or early pregnancies due to students being idle in the slums and the congested settlement areas during the lockdown. These effects were pointed out during the interviews; for example, Participant #10 explained that:

"The effects of COVID-19 on refugee students have been devastating. When schools were closed in Uganda for almost two years, the settlement areas became more congested with idle students out of school. This resulted in unwanted and early pregnancies for the girls, and some refugee students gave up on studying".

The impact of COVID-19 on vulnerable populations cannot be underestimated. Vulnerable people such as slums dwellers in Uganda have been reported to face severe unintended socioeconomic consequences of COVID-19, such as disruptions in education and teenage pregnancies (Nuwematsiko et al., 2022). In Uganda, it was reported that Covid-19 induced lockdowns led to a high increase in teenage pregnancies, especially in the poorer rural areas (Ojulu, 2021). Refugees are among the vulnerable population because the urban self-settled refugees mainly live in the slums and in rural areas for those live in the settlement areas.

The distance of the schools and the number of secondary schools in the settlement areas

A study on girls' education in Rhino refugee settlement area pointed out the hardships in accessing education, such as long distances (Larsson, 2019). The distance that pupils and secondary school students have to travel is still a serious issue of concern for the refugees. The refugee leaders, the urban refugees in the focus group discussions, and the students during the individual interviews delineated the ordeal of long-distance travel undertaken by the refugees in accessing schools,

especially secondary schools. During the interviews, Participant#6, a student at YMCA comprehensive institute in Kampala, expressed disappointment noting that:

"Refugees face a lot of problems in the area of education; for example, refugees who are settled at Rhino Camp in West Nile region are in dire need. The places of education are very far for the children. They walk for several kilometres to be at school, yet even lunch is not provided. This has made it hard for the children to be committed to education. Another challenge that is also very serious is the inadequate number of secondary schools; for instance, there are only two secondary schools in the whole Rhino settlement, which consists of about seven clusters: one in Odubu and the other in Ocea. Students take 2 -3 hours walking to the schools".

As already explained in the methodology, a cluster contains several villages, and each village can have put to over 1000 refugees living it. The clusters make up the zones that make up the settlement area. Rhino camp, which the participant mentioned, has over 3 zones, and it is one of the oldest refugee settlement areas in Uganda. There are very few schools near or in the settlement areas, which means that students have to move longer distances in search of education, especially secondary education. With the level of refugees with secondary school education in Uganda at 0.8 per cent (Vemuru et al., 2016), increasing the number of secondary schools near or in the settlement areas is necessary for improving access to secondary school education.

DISCUSSION

Refugee education remains one of the essential needs that refugees require in their stay in the host countries in the world (Dryden-Peterson, 2016, 2017). This means that inclusive education is important for the refugees during their stay in host countries (Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). Since many refugees in Uganda can be classified as refugees living in protracted refugee situations, access to education is one of the challenges that they face (Tulibaleka et al., 2022). The tuition policy in some Ugandan universities and other institutions of higher learning (especially private institutions) requires international students to pay tuition fees higher than local students. This affects the refugees who are treated as international students and subjected to paying higher tuition fees. There is no differentiation between international students seeking education in Uganda and the refugees seeking higher education. Tuition fees limit access to higher education for refugees in Uganda. Access to higher education remains one of the major challenges to address in response to the refugee crisis in several countries (Crea, 2016; Ramsay and Baker, 2019). Affirmative action for the refugees can be a motivation

and a panacea to improve refugee enrolment in higher learning institutions and their access to education in Uganda. Subsidizing and reducing the tuition fees for refugee students in Uganda can contribute towards inclusive education that considers the presence of refugees in Uganda.

Education scholarships are important and necessary to improve access to education for the refugees, especially post-secondary education. The current scholarships provided by the NGOs are insufficient and do not offer a number of refugee students the opportunity to enrol in higher education or post-secondary school education. Uganda is struggling with the protracted refugee crisis (Tulibaleka et al., 2022), which makes it hard to provide for the refugee needs adequately. Although Scholarships by the NGOs are limited in number with allegations of bribery and unfairness in the selection and award of scholarships, the scholarships are necessary to support the refugees to attain education. Most refugees in Uganda are poor with low income (Vemuru et al., 2016); thus, acquiring education by refugee students is a challenge without scholarships and other forms of assistance. The government of Uganda does not provide scholarships to refugees to attain higher education which can be attributed to the fact that Uganda is a low-income country that cannot sufficiently handle the refugee crisis without the assistance of other countries or international Non-Government organisations.

Several previous studies in other countries have presented the effects of stigma on refugees in higher education and vocational education and training (Baranik et al., 2018; Morrice, 2013). Stigma among refugee students is also associated with exclusion both in and outside the schools (Baranik et al., 2018).Stigma affects the refugee students' confidence in class and outside the class. Integrating refugee students in the education system in Uganda should not only target enrolment in the schools but should further ensure that multiculturalism in education is promoted. Inclusive education should encourage and support multiculturalism in education (Makwinja, 2020; Tomlinson, 2009). There have been efforts to integrate refugees into the host communities (Betts et al., 2019; Vemuru et al., 2016). However, the integration into the host communities should be expanded to include integration in schools, including those that are far away from the settlement areas. Integration of refugees and nationals in schools promotes stability for refugee children (Dryden-Peterson, 2003). Multiculturalism and the teaching of multiculturalism need to be promoted in the schools or institutions of learning where there are refugee students. Awareness of multiculturalism can reduce tendencies of discrimination and stigmatisation in schools.

Career guidance and job search assistance are important for the youths to transition into the labour market from school or during the school-to-work transition. In Uganda, even local university graduates

heavily rely on informal networks such as family members for career guidance and job search assistance (Tulibaleka et al., 2021A). Informal networks such as family members and friends cannot offer sufficient career guidance and job search assistance required for the integration and transition into the labour market. Even in developed countries like Canada, with highly formal labour markets, refugees and asylum seekers are confronted with job search challenges and heavily rely on pre-existing family networks (Akkaymak, 2017). The refugees in Uganda have the right to work or search for jobs in the country (Betts et al., 2019; Davis, 2019). However, without proper career guidance and job search assistance, the refugee students are vulnerable during their transition to the labour from school as lack of career guidance and job search assistance possess challenges in navigating the labour market to seek employment or transition from school to the labour market. Therefore, a holistic approach to refugee education should cover primary education, secondary education, post-secondary education, career guidance, and job search assistance for successful entry and integration into the labour market. This can ensure that the refugees benefit from the right to work as guaranteed under the 2006 Refugee Act in Uganda.

Globally, the education of refugees has been heavily impacted because of the COVID-19 pandemic; this is because the refugees, in general, are a vulnerable group (Fujii et al., 2020). At the beginning of 2022, the government of Uganda announced the end of the world's longest disruption of schools in which, for more than 83 weeks, schools were partially or fully shut down, affecting more than 10 million learners in the country (Muhumuza, 2022). During this period, some schools and institutions switched to online teaching methods. However, such arrangements were not put in place by schools in refugee settlement areas due to the lack of the required equipment by the schools and students. In Schools or institutions where online teaching methods were used, refugee students' access and usage of computers are still limited due to factors like the low-income level of refugees. To ensure inclusive access to education, the challenges that refugee students are experiencing as a result of COVID-19 need to be addressed.

Long-distance to schools is a threat to the access of education by Ugandan refugees in the settlement areas (Larsson, 2019). Education is a basic right for refugees, and the government of Uganda and UNHCR have had a long history of supporting education for the refugees in Uganda, including the establishment of schools (Dryden-Peterson, 2003). However, the distance of schools is still a major challenge that needs to be addressed for the refugees. With the protracted refugee situations of refugees in Uganda (Tulibaleka et al., 2022), the number of refugee students or children of schooling age will keep growing, which requires the establishment of more schools and equipping the schools, shortening the distances to the schools also requires the establishment of more schools to boost refugee students' enrolment and stay in the schools.

Recommendations

Tuition policy

There is a justifiable outcry by the refugee students that they are treated as international students, especially at the universities where they pay higher tuition than Ugandan students. To promote refugees' access to education, the refugees recommended that a policy be implemented that compels universities to charge reduced tuition fees for the refugees and for the refugees to be differentiated from other international students. The latter students move to Uganda in search of education, unlike the refugees who seek asylum but desire to study like the natives. Uganda has many international students studying in Ugandan universities and serves as an educational hub for East African nations.

Providing scholarships

Although refugees in Uganda have the right to work or establish businesses, there are few employed refugees or business owners in Uganda, according to the World Bank (Vemuru et al., 2016). This undermines the ability of refugees to afford education for the children, especially university education or education at institutions of higher learning. The award of scholarships specifically for post-secondary school studies is important for refugee students. The NGOs should increase scholarships for refugee students, but there is a need to ensure fairness and transparency in the awarding process due to the allegations of bribery and unfairness.

Stakeholders collaboration to fight refugee stigmatisation

Fighting stigmatisation of the refugees, especially in schools, needs combined effort by the government and other stakeholders, for example, the schools or institutions of higher learning and NGOs. Sensitising the students about multiculturalism and appreciating that Uganda is a multicultural country is important. The presence of over one million refugees adds to the cultural diversity in Uganda (Tulibaleka et al., 2021B).Community sensitisation, sensitisation of the local students, the teachers, university lecturers, and staff members is important for creating inclusive learning environments where the refugees feel a sense of belonging. The stigmatisation of refugees affects their ability to learn due to the feeling of being excluded in the schools and

classes.

Establishing more schools in the settlement areas

The stakeholders need to establish more schools for the refugees in the settlement areas. Overcrowding and long distances to the schools are major challenges that need urgent remedies. The long distances to the schools discourage many learners from moving to the schools. The construction and equipping of schools with learning materials in the settlement areas are necessary to improve access to education and encourage children of school-going age to attend classes. The schools in the settlement areas are overcrowded, which strains the teaching staff and the infrastructure in place. The government of Uganda needs the support of other partners such as international organisations in building more schools.

The provision of cheaper hostels or boarding facilities for refugee students

Several refugee students, mostly those who are not self-settled urban refugees, move far away from the refugee settlement areas to access education, especially secondary and post-secondary education. The boarding facilities and hostels are expensive for the refugees. Most refugees do not have stable sources of income in Uganda to support the education of refugee students. In assisting refugees' education, organisations such as CORNERSTONE provide cheaper hostels for the students they sponsor. The initiative of offering cheaper hostels should be expanded for refugee students.

Educational advice and career guidance for refugee students

Earlier career guidance and educational advice are necessary for the refugee students to orient them with the education system of Uganda, the courses at universities, the different types of institutions that they can attend after secondary school education. The schools, NGOs, and government should spearhead the provision of this vital information to the refugee students.

Coping strategies to facilitate refugees' studies in the current COVID-19 situation

COVID-19 is likely to stay for a longer time. Therefore, actors and the stakeholders should assist the refugee students in coping with studies and the strategies in place; for example, refugee students in higher learning institutions need computers and laptops to facilitate their studies under the current situation. Schools in the settlement areas also need support in the prevailing COVID-19 pandemic; school dropouts and the victims of teenage pregnancies need strategies for re-integration into school and or other forms of assistance.

Conclusion

This brief report highlights some of the pronounced challenges that the refugees are facing in accessing education in Uganda. Although the refugees believe that education is vital for their integration in Uganda and their home countries upon return, the challenges that the refugee students face hinder their educational dreams and careers. The recommendations are important for improving refugees' access to education and their inclusion and integration. The self-reliance strategy promoted by the government can be achieved or be sustainable through promoting refugees' education. Uganda as a host country is a developing country that cannot sufficiently handle the country's refugee crisis. More assistance from UNHCR and other international actors such as the International Non-Government Organizations is necessary for improving the educational response strategy to the refugee crisis in Uganda. Prioritising the education of refugees is a long-term strategy that can assist the refugees even when they return to their home countries. For sustainability and self-reliance of refugees, there is a need to focus on their education besides the rights such as the freedom of movement and the right to work. The majority of refugees in Uganda are young men and women who need education for a sustainable future. In addressing the refugee educational challenges in Uganda, there is a need for combined effort and co-working between the different actors such as the Ugandan government, UNHCR, NGOs, Civil Society Organizations, institutions of higher learning, and host communities.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author has not declared any conflict of interest.

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Determinants of teachers' motivation and professional development in public secondary schools in Kenya

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Teacher motivation is by and large the major determinant of students' success during the schooling process. This is primarily because a motivated teacher is likely to be more engaged and enthusiastic in the workplace. Kenya's education sector has in the recent past experienced industrial disharmony which has been occasioned by teachers' demand for higher remuneration. This demand, however, could be a pointer to the existence of other unmet needs among teachers in the country. This is what informed the study whose overall objective was to determine whether besides compensation other factors, specifically work environment, opportunities for career progression, performance appraisal, recognition and training opportunities could also be impacting teachers' motivation in public secondary schools in the country. Additionally, the study sought to establish the relative influence of the six factors (predictor variables) on teachers' motivation (criteria variable). Data were collected through a self - delivered questionnaire from 255 teachers who were randomly selected from 752 teachers in public secondary schools in Kwale County. Data were analyzed by way of arithmetic mean and multiple regression analysis at 0.05 alpha level. The findings demonstrated that the factor that had the highest teachers' motivation impact was opportunities for career progression (mean=3.720; β=0.238), followed by compensation (mean=3.477; β=0.175), recognition (mean =2.489 β=0.0168), performance appraisal (mean =2.410;β=.120), training opportunities (mean=2.388; β=0.075) and lastly work environment (mean =2.053;β=.041).The six predictor variables accounted for 81% of total variation in teachers' motivation. These findings have important lessons and implications for teachers' motivation in the country. Specifically, teacher managers at the school and national level should rethink their approach to teachers' motivation. In particular, they need to not only focus on teacher remuneration but also the unmet needs in areas relating to work environment, performance appraisal, training opportunities and recognition.

Key words: Teachers' motivation, secondary schools, Kenya.

INTRODUCTION

Formal education is undeniably the most valuable investment in our children and youths. This is because, through the schooling process, individuals acquire skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary for personal and national development. Indeed Cohen and Soto (2007) have observed that education unleashes the potential of the human mind thereby enhancing their capacity to not only improve their own lives but also that of the entire

nation. In view of this reality, there is a need to provide quality education at all levels of education and training. Put differently, learners must be provided with an education that is pedagogically and developmentally sound so that they can become active and productive members of the society.

According to Chiuri and Kiumi (2005), education quality is highly dependent on the level of public investment in the education sector. For instance, higher government spending in the sector goes a long way in ensuring that an education system has adequate inputs such as infrastructure, teachers and teaching - learning materials. Although these inputs play a critical role in enhancing the attainment of the desired learning outcomes, studies (see for example Ifeoma and Iliya, 2015; Glass, 1982; Ofojebe and Ezugoh, 2010) have consistently indicated that teachers are the most significant factors in terms of quality assurance in an education system.

The centrality of the teacher in a country's endeavor to raise productive and responsible citizens cannot be gainsaid. Oper (2019) has for instance averred that teachers' effect is estimated to have two to three times the effect of any other school factor including facilities and leadership. This view is predicated on the fact that the role of the teacher goes beyond classroom instruction. For instance, apart from curriculum delivery, teachers act as role models which are one of the critical ingredients regarding learners' character development.

Drawing on the foregoing observations, it can rightly be reasoned that attainment of quality learning outcomes in an education system is contingent upon the extent to which the society creates conditions in which teachers can maximally operationalize their role expectations. Specifically, in order for teachers to release their maximum potential, their needs have to be met (Jesus and Conboy, 2001).These needs as implied in the Needs Hierarchy Theory and the Two –Factor Theory include but not limited to opportunities for professional growth, reasonable compensation, manageable workload, and recognition for their role within and outside the school (Han et al., 2016).

In spite of the significant role that teachers play in our children's education, it appears that threats to teacher motivation is a common feature in low - income countries (Bennel and Akyeampong, 2007; Richardson, 2014; KNUT, 2015). Since teacher motivation is closely linked to students' motivation to learn (Michaelowa, 2002), it is reasonable to conclude that students in low - income countries are more likely to experience achievement gaps including gains in other measures of school success (e.g., school attendance, retention and transition to subsequent levels of education) compared with their counterparts in high-income countries.

Teachers' demotivation in low- income countries has the implications that resources invested in education are less likely to generate the desired benefits at the individual and societal levels. For instance, these nations are likely to experience gaps in human capital formation (and by implication economic growth), the capacity of citizens to make informed livelihood choices including their willingness and capacity to exercise their democratic rights (Chiuri and Kiumi, 2005).

From a policy and practice perspective, we need empirical and theoretical based knowledge on issues surrounding teacher motivation.This will go a long way in enabling individuals and entities involved in teacher management to identify the factors that have the potential to impact teacher motivation and their relative influence on this dimension of teacher management.This is the only way the society will be able to address teacher management gaps in low – income countries so as to ensure that both individuals and the society at large get value for money invested in education.

The study focused on six factors which were constructed as potentially capable of impacting teachers' motivation. They were: compensation, work environment, opportunities for career growth, performance appraisal, recognition and openings for workplace training.In this regard, the purpose of the study is three fold. First, an attempt was made to determine the extent to which the six factors may impact teachers' motivation.Second, the study sought to find out the joint effect of the six factors on teachers' motivation. Finally, the study undertook to establish the relative influence of the six job factors on teachers' motivation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A review of literature on teachers' motivation has demonstrated that teachers' willingness and drive to engage in productive teaching is materially linked to extrinsic and extrinsic factors. The former include factors such as compensation, working conditions and feedback on performance. The latter include factors relating to recognition or simply appreciation for a job well done, opportunities for career growth and involvement in decision making.

Previous studies (Adams, 2009; Glass, 2011; Seniwoliba, 2013; Adelabu, 2005; Denmar and Marmoah, 2017; Louis et al., 1996; Javaid, 2009) demonstrated that higher pay and a favourable working environment had a positive impact on teachers' motivation. Specifically, the studies consistently showed that teachers are highly likely to be enthusiastic and engaged in the workplace if they are well remunerated. This form of teachers' behaviour is attributable to the fact that higher pay enhances teachers' capacity to meet their family obligations, thereby lowering the propensity to engage in secondary income generating activities (Mukolozi, 2015). The studies similarly proffered the view that teachers will be more than willing to maximize their performance in an environment in which they can not only work with ease and practice their skills but also meet their affiliative needs. This has the implication that in order for teachers to be motivated and committed to their instructional roles,

schools need to be well resourced and also nurture collaborative and collegial culture (Shah, 2012).

Several researchers (Asaari et al., 2019; Kumar and Hossain, 2017; Emenike, 2013; Momanyi, 2015; Haq and Islam, 2005; Kyongo, 2006) have also shown that teachers' motivation tends to increase towards schools that recognize teachers work by significant others, opportunities for career growth, including involvement in decision making and execution of school policies and programmes. Based on these observations, it can be deduced that apart from remuneration and motivating work environment, the level of teachers' inspiration to unlock learners' potential is also dependent on the extent to which their intrinsic needs are fulfilled.

Theoretical framework

In order to conceptualize how the six job factors may impact teachers' motivation, the study adopted the Needs - hierarchy theory and the two-factor theory. Postulations put forth by the two theories and their implications for teachers' motivation are discussed herein.

Needs – hierarchy Theory

The needs - hierarchy theory was put forth by Abraham Maslow (1943, 1954) in which he averred that humans are motivated to fulfill their needs and that these needs are arranged in a hierarchical order. Maslow grouped the hierarchy of needs into five categories : Physiological needs (e.g., the needs for shelter, clothing, food and water) ; security needs (e.g., the need for emotional and physical security) social related needs (for instance, the need to affiliate and be accepted by members of a group) ;esteem needs which comprise the need for power, achievements, recognition, status and respect and lastly self- actualization needs which consist of an individual's desire to accomplish everything he or she is capable of achieving. According to Aruma and Hanachor (2017), the need to self -actualize is primarily the force behind individuals effort to maximally use and exploit their talents and capabilities.

According to Maslow, the five level of needs fall into two broad categories: the low - level needs and high - level needs. The former include the physiological, security and social needs while the latter comprises the esteem and self - actualization needs. Maslow referred to the low - level needs as deficiency needs since they arise in a scenario where they are deprived. In such a situation, the affected individual will be motivated to fulfill them. The higher -order needs, according to Maslow, are the growth needs which do not stem from a lack or deprivation of something but rather the desire to grow as a person. Since the needs as averred in the theory are arranged like a ladder that must be climbed one rug at a

time, it follows that deficiency needs must be met before an individual can be motivated to fulfill the higher level needs or put differently the growth needs (Okumbe, 1998).

The need – hierarchy theory has a lot of implications for teachers' motivation. First, there is a need to create a work environment in which teachers can meet their low – level needs. For instance teachers should be offered reasonable compensation so as to satisfy their physiological needs such as food, clothing and shelter including the provision of the fundamental elements such as health and wellness, safety against injuries and monetary security. Additionally, the work environment should be characterized by a strong and healthy collegial relationship among teachers and between them and the school management (Bush, 2003). Specifically, teachers must feel accepted by their colleagues and seniors.

After the aforementioned lower - order (deficiency) needs have been taken care of, the next task should be to create conditions in which teachers will fulfill their higher - order (growth) needs, that is the esteem and self - actualization needs. The former needs can be met by respecting teachers and appreciating their work. The latter category of needs can be realized by giving teachers challenging responsibilities, task autonomy and opportunities for career advancement.

By way of conclusion, it is important to mention that both the deficiency and growth needs must be adequately addressed so as to enhance teachers' morale, motivation and satisfaction. This observation is predicated on the fact that if teachers' deficiency needs are not met, they are less likely to strive to achieve growth needs which are critical to quality teaching and students' learning achievement. A corollary to this is that even if deficiency needs are met, teachers are less likely to aspire for growth needs if the working environment lacks basic conditions for self - actualization.

Two - factor theory

The two - factor theory was proposed by Fredrick Herzberg in the late 1950s.The theory advances the view that employees have two sets of needs: Lower order needs and higher order needs. The theory further postulates that some of the factors in the workplace meet the first set of needs but not the second set of needs and vice versa. Herzberg called the first group of factors the hygiene factors or job dissatisfiers and the second group the motivators (Herzberg et al., 1959).

The hygiene factors are the job-context factors (the factors extrinsic to the job). These factors are also called maintenance factors in the job since they are necessary to maintain a reasonable level of employee satisfaction (Rozman et al., 2017).This implies that although hygiene factors do not directly motivate employees, they prevent dissatisfaction or bad feeling about work which is a

Table 1. Expected range of mean rating score by level of teacher motivation.

Mean score	Level of motivation effect
1≤ x ≤ 2	Slightly motivating
2≤ x ≤ 3	Moderately motivating
3≤ x ≤ 4	Highly motivating
4≤ x ≤ 5	Very highly motivating

critical prerequisite for employee motivation. This is because, a satisfied worker is more likely to be motivated to achieve higher level needs. Since hygiene factors are key to employees' satisfaction, they need to be taken care of so as to create a motivating work environment. This can be accomplished by offering employees' competitive remuneration, a conducive physical working environment, adopting humane supervisory practices, safeguarding employees' security and strengthening interpersonal relationships in the workplace.

Herzberg's two – factor theory has implications for teachers' motivation. First, educational management has a responsibility to create a work environment in which teachers can satisfy their needs. This can be realized by reducing job dissatisfiers and increasing opportunities for teachers to satisfy their growth or higher - order needs (Okumbe, 1998). Job dissatisfiers can be reduced to bare minimum by offering teachers a competitive salary, strengthening interpersonal (collegial) relationships in the workplace and ensuring that teachers working environ-ment is physically conducive. Regarding growth needs, teachers need to be accorded a working environment in which they will experience a feeling of accomplishment. For instance, teachers can be given an opportunity to apply their different skills and talents through job enrichment. Moreover teachers should be given clear and regular feedback on their performance and task autonomy. Added to this is the need to promote teachers and facilitate their desire for further training so that they can experience some degree of personal growth.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study adopted *ex-post facto* research design. This design was deemed ideal in light of the fact that the independent variables subsumed in the study, specifically compensation, work environment, opportunities for career progression, performance appraisal, recognition and training opportunities had already impacted teachers' motivation. This implies that the effect of the selected independent variables or put differently predictor variables on teachers' motivation could only be determined respectively (Kerlinger,1986).

In order to determine the interaction effect between the six independent variables and teacher motivation, data were collected through a self – delivered questionnaires from 255 secondary school teachers (158 males and 83 females) in Kwale County, Kenya who were randomly selected from 752 teachers. The teacher participants age ranged from 30 to 60 years. With respect to

teaching experience, a majority (85 %) had been in the teaching profession for less than 11 years while only 3% had taught for a period ranging between 21 and 30 years. Eighty six percent of the teachers had Bachelor's Degree in Education, 13% had Diploma in Education; while only 3(1%) teachers had Master's Degree in Education. The questionnaire had 41 five – point Likert scale items.

The items were distributed as follows: Compensation (5 items), work environment (8 items), performance appraisal (8 items), recognition (6 items), and training opportunities (6 items). The instrument was validated through piloting in five secondary schools in the neighbouring Kilifi County. The piloting exercise involved 56 teachers (39 males and 17 females). Changes which were deemed necessary from the trial study were effected prior to administering the instrument to the sampled respondents. The instrument's external reliability was estimated through test – retest technique using the pilot group in the five pilot schools referred above; while its level of internal consistency was tested using Cronbach's alpha technique. The generated reliability coefficients from the two reliability tests stood at r=.83 and r=.85 respectively.

Collected data were analyzed at two levels: First, respondents' mean rating scores of the motivational effect of the six predictor variables were computed. The objective of computing the mean scores was to get a general view of the level of motivational effect of the six variables on the study participants. It was presumed that the mean scores would range from a minimum of 1 to a maximum of 5. This formed the basis of interpreting the mean rating scores as shown in Table 1.

The second level of analysis involved determination of the predictive capacity of the six independent variables on teachers' motivation. This analysis was carried out using multiple regression statistic. The objective was to establish whether the six independent variables were capable of jointly predicting teachers' motivation and whether this prediction was statistically significant. Additionally, the multiple regression analysis was utilized in establishing the relative effect of each predictor variable on teachers' motivation. The multiple regression analysis was guided by the following model.

$$TM = b_0 + b_1 C_e + b_2 W_e + b_3 CP_e + b_4 P_e + b_5 Re + b_6 T_e$$

Where: TM =Teachers' Motivation; C= Compensation; W=Work Experience; CP= Career Progression; P= Performance appraisal; R= Recognition; T= Training opportunities

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The first research question sought to find out the level of influence of the six predictor variables on teachers' moti-vation. In response to this research question, teachers' mean rating scores of the six job factors predictor variables were computed. The mean scores are summarized in Table 2.

The data in Table 1 show that the generated composite mean rating of the six job factors was 2.756. Inferring from the expected mean rating scores in Table 1, it is reasonable to conclude that the overall impact of the six job factors (predictors variables) on teachers' motivation was moderate. The data further demonstrate that the job factors that had the highest motivational effect were opportunities for career progression and compensation while the factors that had the lowest motivational effect were work environment and training opportunities. Responses to the items relating to work environment revealed that the factors that tended to demotivate

Table 2. Teachers' mean rating of the motivational effect of the six predictor variables.

Job factor	Mean score
Compensation	3.477
Work environment	2.053
Career progression	3.720
Performance appraisal	2.410
Recognition	2.489
Training opportunities	2.388
Grand mean	2.756

teachers were heavy worked load, inadequate school security and non – collegial behavior in the workplace. The factors that were perceived as demotivators in regard to training included failure by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) to financially support teachers' willing to pursue further studies, challenges relating to securing of study leave and limited opportunities for in-service training.

The second and third research questions were answered through testing the formulated null hypothesis using multiple regression analysis. The hypothesis postulated that the combined effect of the six job factors had no statistically significant influence on teachers' motivation. In this analysis, the six job factors were treated as the predictor variables while teacher motivation was taken to be criterion variable. The results of the multiple regression analysis are summarized in Table 3.

A closer observation of the data captured in Table 3 demonstrates that the F – value (F=53.305;, P=.000) was statistically significant. This indicates that the predictive capacity of the earlier formulated regression model in regard to the influence of the six job factors on teachers' motivation was not only strong but also statistically significant.

The data in Table 3 further show the beta (β) coefficients (the independent contribution of a given job factor when other factors have been partitioned out) were statistically significant (p<0.05).This implies that each job factor was capable of predicting teachers' motivation. Put differently, the coefficients demonstrate that each job factor entered in the regression equation had a statis-tically significant contribution to the predictive capacity of the formulated regression model. The adjusted r^2 – value (r^2=0.808) further indicates that the six job factor jointly accounted for 81% of total variation in teachers' motivation while 19% was explained by job factors not included in the regression model. It can, therefore be concluded that an improvement of factors relating to the six predictor variables is highly likely to raise teachers' motivation by 81%. A corollary to this proposition is that if these factors are ignored or not taken care of, teachers' motivation will likely reduce by 81%.Based on the foregoing findings, the formulated null hypothesis was rejected and conclusion made that the joint effect of the

six job factors and teachers' motivation were not statically independent.

The beta coefficients further show that the job factors that had the highest contribution (the highest influence on teacher motivation) to the regression model was career progression (β =0.238) followed by compensation (β=0.175), recognition (β =0.168), performance appraisal (β =0.120), training opportunities (β=0.075) and lastly work environment (β =0.041).This implies that the best predictor of teachers' motivation was career progression while the weak predictor was work environment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings generated by the study have important lessons and implications in enhancing teachers' motivation within and outside the study locale. A major observation from the findings is that the six job factors have the capacity to account for the status of teachers' motivation in the sampled schools. For instance, it can be deduced from the findings that teachers' career progression and compensation related needs have by and large been catered for in the study area and by inference in other parts of the country. However, it appears that needs relating to work environment, performance appraisal, recognition and training opportunities are yet to be fulfilled to the satisfaction of teachers.

Since teachers' motivation is the backbone of teachers' engagement in the work place, it follows that the noted unmet needs should be addressed in order to create a happy teaching force in our schools. Specifically, policies on teachers' management in the country should capture and clearly articulate the needed teachers' motivation and professional development strategies. In order for these strategies to generate the desired outcome, they should be operationalized at the national and schools levels. For instance, Teachers Service Commission (the entity in charge of teacher management and professional development matters in the country) needs to come up with teachers' management friendly policies with a view to motivate teachers and by implication enhance their output in schools. These policies should also be operationalized at the school level. School managers, for example need to ensure that teachers are accorded a conducive working environment. This entails provision of not only security in schools but also comfortable working space. Added to this is the need to strengthen the relationship among teachers and between them and the school management. Furthermore, teachers should be sensitized on aspects of their professional expectations that will be evaluated during performance appraisal and also be provided with a clear feedback on their strong areas and aspects of their role expectations to improve on. The other equally important motivational strategy is appreciation of teachers for a job well done and offering

Table 3a. Multiple regression summary on the combined influence of the six job factors on teachers' motivation.

Dependent variable	r	r^2	Constant	df	F	P- value
Teachers' motivation	.899	.808	13.213	6,234	53.305	.000*

Table 3b. Multiple regression summary on the combined influence of the six job factors on teachers' motivation.

Independent variable	Beta (β)	Regression coefficient	t	p
Compensation	.175	.300	12.311	.000*
Work environment	.041	.065	2.875	.000*
Career progression	.238	.377	12.996	.000*
Performance appraisal	.120	.196	8.681	.000*
Recognition	.168	.235	8.903	.000*
Training opportunities	.075	.135	6.437	.000*

*Means significant at 0.05 alpha level.

them opportunities for personal growth through training and encouragement to set personal goals. These motivational strategies are highly likely to enhance teacher satisfaction and morale both of which have a huge potential for enhancing teachers' motivation and commitment in the workplace.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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Conservatism and social justice: Why do some teachers strive harder for social justice while others do not?

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Teachers are seen as change agents in the world of social justice because they embody the educational ideals of equality and fair treatment. The aim of this study is to examine the more conservative personal and social attitudes of teachers that may affect how their social justice beliefs play out in the classroom. The research findings reveal important results about the relationship between the attitudes of resistance to change and opposition to equality at the personal and social levels, which underlie conservatism, and social justice beliefs about teaching.

Keywords: Social justice, conservatism, resistance to change, opposition to equality.

INTRODUCTION

Why do some people make stronger implicit and explicit choices for fair changes, egalitarianism, and system criticism, while others prefer tradition, hierarchical social relations, and system continuity (Block and Block, 2006)? One possible answer to this question comes from the field of political psychology. Social and political preferences can be analyzed and explained on the basis of psychological causes (Jost et al., 2008). Individuals tend to align themselves with particular social judgments and thoughts by means of their own epistemic and existential motivations and then act accordingly (Haidt and Graham, 2007). Thus, an evidence-based approach can be developed to make sense of individuals' preferences on issues that are important to both that person and society in general, such as equality, justice or welfare (Jost et al., 2007). Recent studies emphasize two psychological dimensions that are the source of different

tendencies regarding political and social judgments and thoughts. The first of these is resistance to change, and the second is opposition to equality. How people tend towards these psychological dimensions affects their social and political attitudes. Conservative profile occurs when individuals oppose these two fundamental variables, namely equality and change. It should be noted that what is being done here is not a religious but a political psychological conceptualization of conservatism (Sarıbay et al., 2017; Jost et al., 2003). In opposition to equality, interpersonal equality in social and economic matters is not desired. Hierarchical relationships are considered much more plausible (Kluegel and Smith, 1986; Jost and Thompson, 2000). For conservatives, inequality is state of nature. It can even be said that they consider the demands for equality as a threat to this natural state (Jost et al., 2003; Tetlock and Mitchell, 1993;

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Jost et al., 2017). It is important to acknowledge that entrenched attitudes and beliefs are what sustain prominent institutions, and so, resistance to change and opposition to equality becomes necessary to ensure the system stays true to its current state. In essence, inequalities and injustices inherent in the existing system must be maintained in order to protect and maintain it (Jost et al., 2013). To conservatives, change comes as unpredictability and uncertainty. An egalitarian social order without hierarchies expresses chaos (Carney et al., 2008). Conservatives' interpretation of this type of social system sees results that contradict social justice standards (Jost, 2020). According to the principles of social justice, if the current system produces that which is unequal and unjust, it is not the system that should be. Egalitarian and fair change interventions should be made. Conservatives see the current system as legitimate and oppose change interventions. The reason for this preference is that they evaluate hierarchical (unequal) structures as more stable (Tyler and Huo, 2002; Skitka et al., 2009). Similarly, egalitarians will want to legitimize egalitarian systems by reflecting their own values on the system (Brandt and Reyna, 2012). Conservative personality traits are reflected in all the practices in one's daily life (Carney et al., 2008). *Opposition to equality* and *resistance to change*, which are the determinant attitudes underlying conservatism, affect the behavior of individuals in many areas of life. The interaction of individuals with conservative tendencies in a wide social network causes these attitudes to create more important social consequences. Teachers, in particular, have relationships with students and parents which allows for them and their conservative philosophy to have quite a wide area of impact.

Teachers' conservative beliefs and attitudes affect their practices in the classroom and their interactions with students (Good and Brophy, 1973; Garmon, 2004; Rochmes, 2013; Kraker-Pauw et al., 2016). If education is conducted by teachers with conservative attitudes, it can produce results that are incompatible with social justice principles. Although this is not observed formally and overtly most of the time, it continues to pervade schools (Gorski, 2006). The school community is becoming more diverse every day, with people of different cultures, religions, values and worldviews entering the once-monochrome classroom. This makes the requirements for social justice all the more important (Philpott and Dagenais, 2012). And whether they realize it or not, teachers can even perpetuate the inequalities prevailing in the society in classroom practices. Achieving social justice requires that all students are shown equal value and experience no discrimination. They must also recognize the prevailing inequalities in society and challenge the existing status quo by questioning their own role (Kaur, 2012). However, conservative ideals can cause teachers to resist change, stick to the status quo, weaken their social interactions (Tam and Cheng, 2003),

and reveal a more authoritarian and controlling philosophy of education (Biesta, 2012). It can be said that teachers with a conservative perspective have a belief that the differences in the classroom community will negatively affect their classroom learning practices (Elhoweris and Alsheikh, 2004; Brandes and Crowson, 2009). Teachers can help some groups or individuals overcome obstacles that result from family or other social reasons and that negatively affect their realization of their potential. In some cases, teachers may not even notice these obstacles. It is also possible that they prefer not to make remedial interventions despite noticing them, or they may reinforce all obstacles. In this respect, it is important to examine the beliefs of teachers that will affect their behavior towards minorities and socially and economically disadvantaged students (Rochmes, 2013). For example, Brandes and Crowson (2009) concluded in their study that conservative teacher candidates are more likely to have negative attitudes towards student differences in the classroom environment.

When a conservative enters an organization, the social domain in which they interact expands. Thus, while fulfilling organizational roles, individuals greatly increase their capacity to discriminate. Therefore, unfair and unequal practices that occur in institutions and organizations become one of the main factors that contribute to the emergence and maintenance of social inequalities and hierarchy (Feagin and Feagin, 1978). Similarly, when teachers bring their social and personal beliefs to the classroom, and ultimately to the school at large, they are invariably re-shaping the perception and manifestation of social justice within the entire educational environment (Katsarou et al., 2010). Working to create a fair learning environment where everyone has equal opportunitymeans, first of all, that educators must open their heart and mind to the perspectives and lifestyles of others (Takács, 2006). However, among the known typical characteristics of conservative people, it can be counted that they show skeptical, anxious and even hateful tendencies towards people they find different (Wilson, 2013). Such teacher attitudes may hinder equal learning opportunities for students. For this reason, it is important to investigate the personal and social tendencies of teachers reflected in their teaching practices.

According to literature on political psychology, political tendencies of individuals can be explained based on their preferences regarding equality and change. The main motivation of the research is to reveal the possible effects of the conservative profile that emerges when individuals are against these two variables. By illuminating the basic processes behind social justice violations, we can learn how to produce more realistic solutions. In the literature, There are many studies that deal with the injustices suffered by students who, according to common social acceptance, are seen as disadvantaged in terms of their social class, ethnicity or physical characteristics (Allen, 2015; Chin et al, 2020; Hanna and Linden, 2009;

Peterson et al., 2016; van den Bergh et al., 2010; Vangararai, 2008). However, studies focusing on the basic processes underlying social justice violations experienced in the educational sphere are quite limited. The aim of this research is to reveal the main reasons behind social justice violations that occur in the classroom.   Revealing problematic tendencies of instructors and the consequences they have on students can create awareness and help us push towards overcoming them. It is imperative that institutions offer humane educational conditions to all students, helping them to settle in the social positions they deserve, thereby raising the human potential to transform injustices in society. This research, therefore, aims to investigate the effects of teachers' personal and social attitudes underlying their conservative tendencies on their beliefs about providing social justice in teaching. In light of the findings, inferences can be made regarding the role of teachers in the realization of social justice in schools. In accordance with the purpose of this study, finding answers for the following questions has been our primary goal.

1. Are there relationships between teachers' personal attitudes of resistance to change and opposition to equality and their social justice beliefs?
2. Are there relationships between teachers' social attitudes of resistance to change and opposition to equality and their social justice beliefs?
3. Do teachers' personal attitudes of resistance to change and opposition to equality predict their social justice beliefs?
4. Do teachers' social attitudes of resistance to change and opposition to equality predict their social justice beliefs?

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Conservatism

Wilson (1973) defines conservatism as resisting change, prioritizing security, and preferring traditional and local forms of institutions and behaviors. Conservative attitudes can also be associated with the need for order, closedness to new experiences, and intolerance to uncertainty (Tal and Yinon, 2002; Jost, Sterling and Stern, 2018). Conservatism conceptualizations have three main emphases:

1. The preference to oppose the change of existing institutions
2. Preferring traditional institutions
3. Tendency to be prudent

When these three emphases are synthesized, it can be said that conservatives are pro-traditional and find

change dangerous in terms of security. Consequently, they prefer to attach themselves to the current order (Wilson, 2013).

The core of conservative political ideology consists of two main points: attitudes towards social stability rather than change and social hierarchy rather than equality (Mikołajczak and Becker, 2019). According to Jost et al. (2003), political conservatism is an ideological belief system that consists of two main components, resistance to change and opposition to equality, that serve to reduce uncertainty and threat. Conservatives reject risk-taking and social change, ultimately attempting to eliminate all brands of uncertainty. They resist change in order to maintain the existing order. They also perpetuate inequalities because they are considered an inherent part of system (Carney et al., 2008). Owing to their intolerance to uncertainty, conservatives prefer hierarchical structures in which the distribution of power and rights is clearly arranged (Fay and Frese, 2000). When evaluated in organizational contexts, conservatives are less innovative and less entrepreneurial in the workplace. They spend less effort to improve the organization (Frese et al., 2007). Conservatism negatively affects individuals' development of new strategies and attitudes (Mittler, 2012). According to Wilson (1993), the main reason for conservatives' tendency to avoid uncertainty is to simplify, organize and make their inner and outer worlds safer. However, these preferences hinder one's ability to be flexible or adaptable. In addition, it can be more difficult to take initiative and responsibility for one's duties, and intervene to ensure the development of themselves, the society and the institutions they work for. In short, the unequal distribution of rights and benefits may not bother conservatives, as they are more unlikely to notice and interfere with disruptions arising from these unequal distributions (Fay and Frese, 2000). This causes them to perpetuate inequalities and injustices (Jost et al., 2013; Eyerman and Jamison, 1991; Jost, 1995; Jost et al., 2013). These conservative attitudes and characteristics can best be summed up as exhibiting less tolerance towards minorities (Wilson, 1973), obedience to authority (Oyserman and Schwarz, 2017), more narrow-minded thinking (Carney et. al., 2008), less initiative and responsibility in work environments, less innovative and development-oriented attempts, preference for existing hierarchical social structures, importance to security rather than diversity and avoidance of change (Fay and Frese, 2000; Lehmiller and Schmitt, 2006),maintenance of the existing distribution of power and status, and a tendency to underestimate those who have the potential to be discriminated against (Kossowska and Hiel, 2003).

Social justice in education

Social justice requires fairness and equality as a basis in the distribution of resources and rights. It is most urgently

needed for individuals and groups who, for any reason, have suffered from inequality in the sharing of social welfare and resources, are neglected, or marginalized (Constantine et al., 2007). According to Young (1990), "Social justice refers to the elimination of institutionalized domination and oppression, and the attempt to overcome the inequality that has spread throughout the society and in many areas". Social justice requires actors with a sense of responsibility towards social issues (Adams et al., 2007). Teachers can also be considered social actors who play a role in the realization of social justice (Kaur, 2012). An educational process aiming to promote social justice requires teachers to be aware of social inequalities and to demonstrate actions and attitudes against these inequalities (Apple, 2004; Journell, 2017). Discerning whether or not one is capable of fulfilling the requirements of social justice demands that potential teachers examine their own beliefs and the origins of these beliefs and have the sensitivity to recognize the inequalities caused by the dominant culture. Ultimately, they need to be able to filter their practices at school through this awareness (Lárusdóttir and O'Connor, 2021). Those who will practice social justice should be aware of social inequalities, take a position against them, and act for a more just and equal society. However, it can be said that teachers' beliefs, behaviors, attitudes and perspectives are generally in the direction of perpetuating inequalities and injustices (kaur, 2012). Such beliefs of the teachers may lead to the negative assessment of the students' academic performances based on their social and biological backgrounds. Of course, teachers alone cannot completely eliminate the basic inequalities of society. However, they are able to contribute to the realization of social justice by raising awareness among their students and peers (Lalas, 2007).

METHODOLOGY

The research aims to examine the effects of teachers' personal and social attitudes underlying their conservative tendencies on their beliefs about providing social justice in teaching. In terms of being suitable for the purpose of the research, a quantitative approach with a relational design was preferred because it allows for an examination of bivariate or multivariate relationships and estimations.

Sample

The research population consisted of primary, secondary and high school teachers from the İstanbul Province in the 2020-2021 academic year. To determine the study group, the random sampling method was used. In random sampling, each element of the study group has an equal and independent chance of being selected (Özen and Gül, 2007). In this study, the participants were selected on a voluntary basis, and it was found appropriate that 980 teachers from the universe of 163483 teachers participated in the research at a significance level of 0.5 and a confidence level of 95% (Yamane, 2009). Demographics of the participants are presented on Table 1. Of all the participants, 58.5% (n=583) were

females and 41.5% (n=407) were males. Besides, 38% (n= 372) of the participants work in high schools, %31.9 (n=313) of the participants work in secondary schools and 30.1% (n= 295) of the participants work in primary schools.

Data collection tools

Personal attitudes and social attitudes scales developed by Sarıbay et al. (2017) were used in the research. These scales have been developed to represent the dimensions of conservatism, opposition to equality and resistance to change, both at societal/ideological and personal/psychological levels. The Personal Attitudes Scale is a 7-point Likert-type scale consisting of 29 items. The scale consists of (a) resistance to personal change (18 items) and (b) opposition to personal equality (11 items) sub-dimensions. The Cronbach-alpha coefficient of the personal attitudes scale was 0.984; 0.994 for resistance to personal change; 0.987 for opposition to personal equality. The Societal Attitudes Scale is a 7-point Likert-type scale consisting of 29 items. The scale consists of (a) resistance to societal change (9 items) and (b) opposition to societal equality (17 items) sub-dimensions. The Cronbach-alpha coefficient of the personal attitudes scale was 0.983; 0.977 for opposite to societal change; 0,990 for opposite to societal equality.

Finally, the Learning to Teach for Social Justice–Beliefs Scale, which was developed by Enterline, Cochran-Smith, Ludlow and Mitescu (2008) and adapted into Turkish by Gezer (2017), was used in the study. The scale was developed to determine teachers' social justice beliefs in teaching, and can be classified as a 5-point Likert-type scale consisting of 11 items. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient of the whole scale was .980.

Analysis of data

The quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences Windows 25.0. Numbers, averages and standard deviation were used as descriptive statistics methods for data evaluation. The results of the kurtosis and skewness analysis are presented on Table 2. Moreover, Kurtosis and Skewness values were examined to determine whether the study variables were normally distributed. Kurtosis and Skewness values between +1.5 and -1.5 (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013) or +2.0 and -2.0 (Mallery and George, 2010) are considered normal distribution. As the sampling is adequate according to the law of large numbers and the central limit theorem (N=980), the analyses were continued with the assumption that the distribution was normal (Harwiki, 2013; İnal and Günay, 1993; Johnson and Wichern, 2002). The prediction level of the independent variable to dependent variable was determined with regression analysis.

FINDINGS

In the study, first of all, the results of the arithmetic mean, standard deviation and correlation analysis regarding the answers given by the teachers to the scales are presented in Table 3. As shown in the table 3, all variables identified in the study yielded high and significant means. In addition, there are positive and significant correlations between the social justice belief, which is the dependent variable of the study, and all independent variables. Table 4 shows the results of the regression analyses of all independent variables. The

Table 1. Demographics of the participants.

Variable	*f*	%
Gender		
Female	573	58.5
Male	407	41.5
Total	980	100
Type of school		
Primary school	295	30.1
Secondary school	313	31.9
High school	372	38
Age range		
20-25	178	18.16
26-30	184	18.70
31-35	219	22.35
36-40	238	24,30
≥41	161	16.49
Total	980	100

Table 2. The results of the kurtosis and skewness analysis

Scale and sub-scales	Kurtosis	Skewness
Social justice-belief	-1.345	-0.363
Resistance to personal change	-1.324	0.286
Opposition to personal equality	-1.163	0.256
Opposition to societal equality	-1.298	0.310
Resistance to societal change	-1.297	0.198

findings provide insight into the importance of personel level conservative attitudes in social justice beliefs about teaching. Table 4 shows that teachers' social justice beliefs about teaching was significantly predicted by resistance to personal change (β=-0.313), and by oppositeto personal equity (β=-0.294), which together accounted for 57.2% of the variance (R^2=0.572, F=654.680, p<0.00). As teachers' resistance to personal change and opposite to equality attitudes increase, social justice beliefs about teaching decrease. For conservative attitudes at the social level, which is another independent variable of social justice beliefs about teaching, the results revealed that both sub-dimensions were significant. Social justice beliefs about teaching was significantly predicted by resistance to societal change (β=-0.314) and opposite to societal equity (β=-0.315), which together accounted for 61.1% of the variance (R^2= 0.611, F=769.701, p<0.00). According to the results of the regression analysis, as the teachers' against social equality and resistance to societal change attitudes increase, their belief in societal justice about teaching decreases.

DISCUSSION

Establishing a relationship between conservatism and the common psychological and ideological factors behind social injustices is important in understanding the barriers to overcoming them (Feygina, 2013). Conceptually, social justice refers to the equitable distribution of rights, benefits, and opportunities to build social solidarity. Conservatism, on the other hand, is defined by political choices and hierarchical (unequal) social systems that strengthen stability, thus reinforcing the status quo (Stoesz, 2014). When evaluated in this regard, it can be said that the conservative attitudes of individuals, especially in daily interactions, will create obstacles to the fulfillment of social justice. While designing practices in accordance with social justice principles, it is important to consider the pro-systemic motives of individuals who actualize these practices. If this is not taken into account, practices and policies regarding social justice in schools will be counterproductive and ineffective due to practitioners' attitudes (Blasi and Jost, 2012). In order to reveal these possible effects the relationship between

Table 3. Results of standard deviation, mean and correlation analysis.

Variable	M	Sd	1	2	3	4
Social justice belief	3.435	1.281				
Resistance to personal change	3.600	1.881	-0.670**			
Opposition to personal equality	3.539	1.787	-0.647**	0.516**		
Opposite to societal equality	3.550	1.903	-0.690**	0.747**	0.621**	
Resistance to societal change	3.700	1.281	-0.673**	0.549**	0.697**	0.519**

** Values significant at 0.01 level.

Table 4. Regression analysis.

Dependent variable	Independent variable	β	t	p	F	R^2
	Constant	5.60	85.286	0.000		
	Resistance to personal change	-0.313	-18.806	0.000	654.680	0.572
	Opposition to personal equality	-0.294	-16.785	0.000		
Social justice beliefs						
	Constant	5.716	89.342	0.000		
	Opposition to societal equality	-0.314	-20.010	0.000	769.701	0.611
	Resistance to societal change	-0.315	-18.461	0.000		

teachers' conservative attitudes and their social justice beliefs regarding teaching is explored in this study.

Conservatism is identified by two core attitudes: opposition to equality and resistance to change.How these two play out on the personal and social level determine the level of conservatism (Sarıbay, Ökten and Yılmaz, 2017). According to the findings, there is a significant relationship between the dimensions of resistance to change and opposition to equality of personal/psychological attitudes and teachers' social justice beliefs in education. Resisting change and opposing equality insinuates a lack of conviction regarding social justice. The dimension of resistance to personal change is associated with maintaining old habits and having difficulty adapting to new perspectives. Opposition to equality at the personal level is about individuals creating interpersonal relationships based on power, authority or superiority according to different factors. In other words, those opposed to personal equality prefer superiority or subordination rather than egalitarian and democratic relations (Sarıbay, Ökten and Yılmaz, 2017). Sharing power with students rather than simply actualizing a hierarchical relationship is a requirement of social justice (Ciechanowski, 2013). Nowadays, teachers are expected to create respectful, egalitarian, collaborative and democratic classroom dialogues (Spitzman and Balconi, 2019). However, teachers who are against this model of classroom equality have difficulty in fulfilling this expectation. On the personal level, anti-egalitarian teachers may see themselves as a hierarchical authority in the classroom. In addition, their emphasis on classroom order and

demand for students' compliance may negatively affect students' success and creativity (İci and Öksüz, 2014). Moreover, such teachers, by treating their students unequally according to qualities such as knowledge, skill, success, intelligence and competence to which they attribute great importance; may inevitably create a hierarchical class culture in which they provide advantage for some students while creating potential disadvantages for other students at the same time, which leads to dangerous favoritism (Turetsky et al., 2021). It is important for teachers to support equality in interpersonal relations and to change traditional hierarchical teaching habits for the realization of social justice in teaching (Themane and Thobejane, 2019). This assertion coincides with the results of the research. According to the findings of the study, the opposite to equality attitudes of conservatism at the personal level negatively affects teachers' beliefs in social justice in education. In other words, teachers' conservative tendencies towards equality may play a role in the manifestation of unjust results in schools.

Teachers' potential to create change in schools is rather ambiguous. For social justice to take place in the educational sphere, teachers need to understand what kinds of changes are needed at the classroom and school levels in order to ensure all are included and treated equally (Arshad, 2012). Although awareness of unequal practices that create unjust educational results is an important beginning for the realization of social justice in education, it is not sufficient. The formation of educational practices and models based on social justice is absolutely necessary, as is the development of

personal teaching practices that consist of an egalitarian and democratic approach. Promoting egalitarian teaching practices is not an easy task considering that traditional approaches are based on deep-rooted power-distance relationships. The reason for this is found in the contradiction between long-standing stereotyped traditional norms, values and habits and democratic class life (Purao, 2014). In particular, as the demographic diversity of the classroom increases, more innovations should be added to teaching practices to ensure equality and justice (Solís and Estepa, 2021). Being open to change can help individuals accept differences and adapt to them. It also prevents them from being unfair to those who struggle to conform to another's norms, acceptances and priorities. The results of the study confirm this assessment. According to the results, individuals who are open to self-change have higher social justice beliefs in education.

Conservatism is also associated with system bias and is based on a hierarchical structure of society. Changing the system is undesirable even though maintaining the status quo will inevitably lead to inequality. Therefore, addressing conservatism as both resistance to change and anti-egalitarian attitudes provides a helpful focus (Jost, 2020; Alper et al., 2021). Psychological barriers may also affect individuals' resistance to changing the status quo despite all its inequality and injustice. Conservatism is closely related to resistance toward such changes. Status quo is a term which is defined by that which already exists. In other words, it is the established order. It is what people know and have experienced. This type of familiarity can be seen as advantageous as it falls in line with social norms, cultural values, and other expectations found in the current order.At the same time, cognitive pressures and limitations tend to prevent innovative alternatives from emerging. Beliefs that contradict the status quo may not arise for emotional and cognitive reasons, as they require greater motivation, understanding, awareness, and courage (Higgins, 1996; Eidelman and Crandall, 2009; Jost, 2021; Secchi, 2011). For this reason, it can be said that the conservative tendencies of the individuals who make up that society play an important role in understanding the current social order. In the second part of the study, the relationship between teachers' social justice beliefs in education and the reflections of their conservative tendencies at the community level was discussed. One of the most important functions of education in modern societies is to contribute to the realization of social justice. In particular, education plays a decisive role in placing individuals in social positions on merit, regardless of their socio-economic background. However, some demographic variables such as ethnic origin or physical characteristics produce advantages or disadvantages for students, which undermine the function of education to realize social justice (Autin et al., 2015). Resistance to social change is related to attitudes that include seeing certain civil and minority rights as a threat to territorial integrity, accepting certain segments as privileged, and maintaining social order and acceptances in their current form. And opposition to equality is about not showing sensitivity towards meeting the needs of all segments of society equally (Sarıbay et al., 2017). These tendencies and attitudes may cause teachers to act as gatekeepers, choosing whether to accept the student or turn him/her away (Allen, 2015). Dealing with teachers' social attitudes and social justice issues together is like considering the classroom as a prototype society.

According to other findings of the study, as teachers' attitudes towards resistance to social change and opposition to equality increase, their beliefs about social justice in education decrease. In classroom practices, when teachers prioritize or trivialize students in certain social positions according to stereotyped social values, beliefs or attitudes, the education is not being provided fairly. The examples, comparisons or choices a teacher gives in the classroom based on these stereotyped norms can lead to inequality by creating consequences that hinder, trivialize, or bring unwanted attention to certain students. Evaluating students in accordance with established social norms and values is one of the most common violations of the principle of equality. Teachers' behaving in accordance with societal prejudices or attitudes regarding students' social backgrounds or origins may also cause the teacher to manipulate assessment processes during grading (Autin et al., 2015; Hachfeld et al., 2015). For example, Hanna and Linden (2009) concluded in their research that teachers tend to give lower grades to lower caste students. Allen (2015) revealed in his research that when common social perceptions regarding black students are suspended, these students achieve more successful results. Chin et al. (2020) concluded that teachers' implicit racist attitudes have negative effects on black students. Again, Vangararai (2008) concluded in his research that his teachers gave more voice to male students. In addition to the literature, this study focuses on the core causes underlying a wide variety of equality violations in teaching. According to the findings of the research, political psychological variables affect whether the teaching is taking place in an equitable manner or not. A teacher may not be able to treat students from different parts of the society equally when he or she adheres to the widespread unequal social convictions that place some segments of the society above others. He or she can also resist social change by adhering to unequal practices and understandings. In addition, giving priority to certain social segments prevents disadvantaged students from settling in the advantageous social positions they may be earning for themselves.

Each child's academic success is and should be the goal of every teacher. Furthermore, the role of the educator as a change agent constitutes an important pillar of teacher professionalism. Fundamentally, teachers

are expected to challenge the status quo, take a different stance on social justice from the injustices inherent in social practices, and support the learning of all students (Pantić and Florian, 2015; Pantić and Carr, 2017). One of the conditions for a teacher to be a change agent for social justice is to support students so that they can analyze the unfair and unequal effects of some common views, stereotypes or social mechanisms (Pantić, 2015; Styslinger et al., 2019). By applying such lessons, a teacher can protect students from these injustices and help them achieve what they deserve. Teachers should have a sensitivity to perceive who is wronged for a more just social order and to worry about it. Opposing inequalities and injustices that result from favoritism and replacing this attitude with one embodying fair practices and discourses is related to teachers' evaluation of their role towards society in a broad context. It is impossible for teachers who are discriminant against a particular ethnic identity, physical characteristic or economic situation to show agency in fulfilling the requirements of social justice. According to the results as the conservative attitude of the participants related resistance to change at the social level increases, social justice beliefs to education decrease.

This research sheds light on the main reasons behind social justice violations, which can occur in different ways in teaching practices, from a political psychological perspective. As the research findings reveal, teachers' personal political tendencies can be counted among the obstacles to the realization of social justice in education. Therefore, the teaching implications of the political and ideological preferences and tendencies of teachers, which determine their personal and social perspectives, should be addressed in future research. This is because the current study shows that the tendencies towards change and equality, which are considered as the two main variables underlying political tendencies, are determinative in terms of social justice in education. According to political psychology literature, attitudes towards equality and change affect how individuals evaluate social issues. A conservative profile is ascribed when an individual opposes equality and change in personal and social matters. Such an ideology certainly contains internal obstacles to fulfilling the requirements of social justice. The findings offer a unique and intriguing political psychological argumentation for why some are more sensitive than others to social justice issues.

Inequality and injustice can be analyzed at all levels, from the individual to the social. They continue by intertwining and reinforcing each other in various dimensions, which include individual, organizational, institutional and social arenas (Adams and Zúñiga, 2016). Equitable and inclusive classroom experiences positively affect students' self-image and increase their sense of confidence and autonomy. Helping them overcome obstacles created by social prejudices or pressures is an important means of educational support provided to them in terms of the formation of successful social identities

(Veliz, 2021). Subjecting individuals to evaluations such as normal, good, superior, acceptable or vice versa leads to feelings of inequality. For social justice to occur in education, it is important for teachers to discover how oppression is learned, internalized and produced in socialization processes. For example, it is important for the realization of social justice for teachers to be aware of the common social-false consciousness of women's roles and to design classroom dialogues or practices to rein in these social pressures. According to Jost (2020), some of the cases of perpetuating injustice and inequalities result from individuals' failure to grasp the true nature of social structures. Dialogue processes that analyze the nature of social systems in terms of cause-and-effect relationships can help change misunderstandings. Another recommendation in this regard is related to teacher education. In order to implement educational values and commitments related to social justice and equality in schools, teacher education programs must reflect a sensitivity that will disrupt power-knowledge hierarchies (Zeichner, 2020). They should also provide teachers with a set of conceptual tools that help them develop a realistic understanding of both the individual and the society and deal with ethical dilemmas (Pantić and Carr, 2017). It is an important condition for social justice in education that teachers consider issues such as justice, equality and ethics and develop responsibility. In this sense, the findings of this research offer important implications.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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