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CONSIDERING THE DETERMINANTS OF SELECTING GEOGRAPHY AS A DISCIPLINE: THE CASE OF SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ILORIN, NIGERIA

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Abstract: Owing to the observed drop in students' enrollment in geography, the study examined some of the factors that possibly influence the choice of Geography in secondary schools in Ilorin, Nigeria. Literatures were reviewed to buttress the findings of the study. The study is basically a descriptive survey; with questionnaire constructed and administered to respondents, who were students in secondary schools. Frequency counts and percentages were used in analyzing the data. Prominent findings indicate that out of the 200 students who took the survey, only 96 (48%) of the respondents offered geography because it is related to their future career. While 40% of the geography students did not like the teacher's method of teaching while 64.0 % affirmed that the teachers do not make use of teaching aids in teaching geography. Only 35.0 % of the students however agreed that their choice was muted because they enjoyed the geography lessons and that the teacher's attitude was significant in their decision. If teachers are well trained, encouraged and motivated, proper guidance and counseling is put in place and the geography curriculum is given a proper review, then the choice of geography by students will not be negatively skewed. Geography needs to be promoted by all geographers that the society might not suffer from its absent or inadequate representation in the field of advancement.

Key Words: geography curriculum, secondary school,

INTRODUCTION

The survey of students' choice of subjects at school certificate level in Ilorin became necessary due to the fact that early introduction of Geography education into the curricular in schools in Ilorin town, Nigeria received very low turn up. Such dampened enrollment was due to the non-conducive economic and religious factors. People from this area are engaged predominantly in weaving and so wanted their children to take after them doing the same work they do. It was those who were not strong enough for the weaving that had the opportunity of being sent to school.

Educational disparity was sharply observed with religious inclination. Parents thought that education would enhance conversion into Christianity and in view of this, western education was not embraced. Coupled with these a sharp decline in the number of students that offer geography at the senior secondary level in Ilorin was noted, despite the importance of Geography knowledge generally in school curriculum.

Although the over-all philosophy and objectives of education in Nigeria states among others that: the integration of the individual into a sound and effective citizen and equal education opportunities for all citizens of the nation at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels (Fed. Rep. of Nig, 1981, p. 7) several factors however influence individual decision and choices. This term “influence” refers to the ability to produce an effect that affects the character of a person and “choice” refers to the right to choose and or the ability to select out of a number of things and take a decision. In consequence therefore, the choice of geography by students is influenced by the dynamics of socio-economic and some related personal factors.

The senior secondary school education (S.S.S.) represents the third stage in the current educational system known as 6-3-3-4. This system of education that was designed by the National Policy on Education in 1981, exposes the learner to as many disciplines as possible in the junior secondary school (J.S.S) and then allows them to make choices of subjects in the senior secondary school level (S.S.S). The core school subjects for senior secondary school education are as follows:

1. Mathematics
2. English
3. One Nigerian language
4. One of Physics, Chemistry and Biology
5. One of Literature in English, History and Geography
6. Agricultural science as a vocational subject.

Optional subjects include:- Economics, Bible Knowledge, Arabic Studies, Art, Commerce, Book-Keeping, French, Government, Home-Economics, Islamic Studies, Typewriting, Music, Technical Drawing, Physical Education, Health Science, Wood work and Shorthand.

Geography as a school subject is one of the most important subjects in secondary school education. Geography is relevant for both the students who are likely to continue to tertiary level and those who will not proceed. It equips students with a body of knowledge to make them functional and socially relevant in the fast changing world. Geography is a distinct and dynamic science and or social science discipline that deals with the study of man and his physical environment. It therefore helps young people to appreciate the value of their environment and its vast natural resources. As a subject, it is versatile, expressive and intellectually stimulating. It exhibits a correlation with all other school subjects. It instills in the students the need to appreciate and develop a sense of responsibility towards their own society.

Geography is a very wide but interesting subject, which touches on most other subjects such as the social studies or the social environmental studies. It calls for a lot of hard work to master and enjoy it at the S.S.S level but with the right attitude and approach it is usually a pleasure to learn it. Despite this, there has been an observable sharp decline in the number of students that offer geography at the senior secondary level in Ilorin. This was quite unlike Adeyemi (2010) who observed that more students opt for geography from the list of available optional subjects in Botswana. The various variables suspected to be responsible for this decline are explored in this paper: Teacher’s attitude and relationship with pupils has a very significant impact on the student’s attitude towards the subject. As Bajah (1975) said, it is an educational truism that a teacher graduate or non-graduate can only teach what he or she knows. Therefore it is very important that a secondary school teacher should be academically articulate in his area of specialization. The way he/she relates to the students and passes across his instructions goes a long way to affect the student’s responds and attitude towards the subject.

Student’s attitude and the peer group influence also have either positive or negative impacts on the subjects they offer. The student’s personal attitude towards education and learning and that of their peers do affect their performance and interest and hence what they end up doing. Parental influence on the choice of subject as parents especially the educated ones are known to dictate which subjects their children should take regardless of the student’s interest or potentials. Previous studies have indicated that home background

as well as the socio-economic status of parents are equally contributory factors that impact on the learners' choice on geography as a school subject. Bajah (1975) said "teaching science subjects in a developing country presupposes that students who study the subjects come in with some entry behaviour which to a large extent is dictated by the socio-economic and technological environment in which the students grew up".

The job prospect of geography related professions is closely related to why parents influence some of their children choices. This to a large extent may be due to the ignorance about how wide and how far geography knowledge could facilitate academic performance in different fields and professions. The role of guidance and counseling in the choice of school subject cannot be over emphasized. And this, in most cases is found lacking or not properly done.

In their twelfth year, students take the Senior School Certificate Examination (SSCE). They are required to register for a minimum of seven and a maximum of nine subjects including English Language and mathematics which are two mandatory school subjects. Many of the subjects taken at the JSS level are offered in SSS, except in more depth. Students are streamed through testing and counseling into one of the three areas of concentration: academic (science or humanities), technical/commercial, or teacher education. The core of required courses for all students includes English language, a Nigerian language, mathematics, science (physics, chemistry, and biology), humanities (literature, history, or geography), and either an agricultural science or a vocational subject. Students also select three more subjects from a wide range of electives depending on each school's resources. The more common electives are Christian or Islamic religion; business subjects such as economics, commerce, and accounting; foreign languages; computer science; fine arts; physical education; food and nutrition; home management; clothing and textile; applied electricity; auto mechanics technical drawing, woodwork and metalwork. Thus this study is intended to cover students of senior secondary school level and how the mentioned variables have influenced the student's choice of geography. A decline in the yearly number of students' enrolment for geography at the senior secondary certificate examination level as observed by the researcher and their lack of keen interest in geography as a school subject were the motivation for the study.

Statement of the Problem

Students are faced with the problem of indecision when they are about to choose a subject, as a result of differences in opinion from various angles. This problem has plagued many Nigerian secondary school students for quite sometime. It is such a problem that must be looked into, knowing fully well that the place of secondary education cannot be over emphasized in the educational development of a nation. With good background, students still need to develop themselves on the subject areas they are keenly interested in and particularly that he has potentiality for. Lots of students have been found choosing subjects for senior school certificate examination not minding the aspect of their potentiality and the directive of the school counselor (where available). Hence the study was carried out to find out the factors influencing the choice of geography as a subject within the various school curricular in secondary schools in Ilorin, Nigeria.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are two folds and are to:

- 1) Identify from students the reasons behind their choice of Geography as a school subject over other optional subjects in the same category;
- 2) Explore the implications of the findings in this study for teacher education.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of the study was to find out the factors affecting the choice of geography in senior secondary school students in Ilorin. Specifically it examined the following factors that influence the choice of geography among secondary school students.

1. The student's attitude and aptitude towards offering geography in the study area.

2. Teacher's attitude/relationship to students as it influences choice of geography
3. The influence of students' peer groups.
4. The availability of instructional materials in geography
5. The wideness of the syllabus
6. Gender influence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Studies into the factors that influence students into making choice of school subject can be traced back to 1930s. Student's choice of subject according to Sellart (1983) has three main constraints, namely:

- Potential university aspirants were generally expected to take eight or more subjects, which led to the learners choosing subjects for which they have no distinct preference for.
- University entrance requirement often demands particularly for West African Examination Certificate (WAEC) at ordinary level or General Certificate of Education (GCE) and now the Senior Secondary Examination (NECO) which is presently been discriminated against.
- Optional subjects were time tabled against each other.

In the National concord (1993), it was discovered that factors such as the non-challant attitude of students to school work, students' lack of understanding of the subjects' basic concept and high student-teacher ratio, teachers' competence, past performance of students in the subject at the school certificate examination among others, influenced students' choice and performance. Other factors that determine student's choice of subjects are school setting, teacher-students relationship, interest and attitude and individuals in particular subjects, socio-cultural factors and attitude of parents and guardians and the influence of peer group on students

Geography generally helps children as well as adults to understand the concept of man versus his environment in his struggle to survive and overcome the problems militating against his progress. It also helps people appreciate the value of their natural resources which, when developed with care and diligence often help to improve their standard of living. Geography has a large role in government at the local, state and national levels. Such ministries and departments where geographers are highly needed include; works and transport, geological survey, water Corporation, mining, agriculture, civil aviation and a host of others. Ignorance about the opportunities that are available to geography students at the end of their training is very rampant. Many of the students who even offer geography do not know the future utility of the subject. As a result such questions as what are the geography related professions are asked or what is the current demand in the labour market.

Okediji (1983) holds that students in the fifth grade or form do select subjects on the basis of which and how prestigious and demanding the occupation the subject leads to is. Okediji thus concluded that students' choice of subject at ordinary level was largely felt to be influenced by intending future occupation. Owing to the nature of the subject matter, it falls within science subject, social science and even environmental science subjects, which actually places it as multidimensional. Except proper control is exercised, it is impossible to cover the scope of geography, no matter the length of the course. This has contributed to the poor perception of geography as a school subject by students hence, their (students) not wanting to offer the subject.

Some students act more from ignorance than self appraised shortcomings. Many of them do not know the relevance/importance of education to their lives. The attitude of students to school work influence the student's choice and performance on the long run and according to Okunrotifa (2008) apart from the inadequate academic background of pupils and the limited resources for geography teaching, the studies are a sad reflection on the quality of teaching offered in our schools. Peer groups according to Hayes (1981) have strong band wagon effect on the decision to select subjects by students. Of course "pupils subject

choice were more influenced by the peer group influence than by any other factor". The reason for this is not far fetched. Students have a strong feeling that once their friends offer a given subject, they should be able to offer the subject without any consideration being given to their innate capabilities

Dainton (1998) says the major factor responsible for the inability of students to offer geography rises from poor teacher-pupil relationship as the attractiveness and relevance of the subject were not being properly presented in the early stage of secondary education. Studies carried out by Alimi and Balogun (2010) showed positive relationship between teachers' attributes and students academic performance in Geography.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

This study was a descriptive survey type where questionnaires were administered to the respondents. The population for this study was made up of students of senior secondary schools (SS1 – SSIII) in Ilorin Kwara State. The study covered five secondary schools in Ilorin which were randomly selected, because of the size of the study area. In selecting the sampled schools, the author used purposive sampling method and geography students of senior secondary classes (SSI – SSIII) were considered random sampling technique was employed to select forty (40) students from each of the five schools sampled. Hence a total of two hundred students were sampled for the study.

Respondents were randomly selected during the course of questionnaire administration just to give equal chance of being selected to each student. A questionnaire with fifteen (15) items was constructed and used in the study. The questionnaire was divided into two sections (section A and B). Section A was on personal information of the respondent, while section B was designed to get information on factors that influence student's choice of geography. The author personally administered the questionnaires to the students, with the assistance of the teachers. This encouraged quick feedback with a 100% return of questionnaire administered.

In analyzing the data collected frequency counts and percentages were the statistical methods used. The simple percentage was computed for all items.

RESULT

Table 1 shows the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondent. It indicated that 53 % of the respondents were male while 47% were female. The distribution of the respondents according to the class of subject that they offer shows that 16% of the respondents were pure Science students, 23.5 % were Arts students and 28.5 % took the Social science subjects while the remaining 32 % offered Commercial subjects.

Table 1: Participants' Distribution

Sex	Frequency	%
Male	106	53
Female	94	47
Total	200	100
Class of Subject		
Science	32	16
Arts	47	23.5
Social Sciences	57	38.5
Commercial	64	32
Total	200	100

Table 2: General Attitude of Respondents to Each Item on the Questionnaire

S/N	ITEMS	AGREED %	DISAGREED %
1.	I don't like the method the geography teacher uses	80 (40.0%)	120 (60.0%)
2.	Our geography teacher does not make use of teaching aids.	128 (64.0%)	36 (36.0%)
3.	I choose geography because I enjoy the lessons	70 (35.0%)	65 (65.0%)
4.	My geography teacher's attitude towards student is good	88 (44.0%)	56 (56.0%)
5.	Geography lessons are not regular so I decided not to offer it.	102 (51.0%)	49 (49.0%)
6.	My career teacher has a lot of influence on my choice of geography	146 (73.0%)	54 (27.0%)
7.	I offer geography because my friends also offer it	120 (70.0%)	60 (30.0%)
8.	Other students look down on those offering geography	34 (17.0%)	166 (83.0%)
9.	My friends do not offer geography so I don't	62 (31.0%)	138 (69.0%)
10.	I choose geography because I love and understand it Geography is easy to pass	90 (45.0%)	110 (55.0%)
11.	Geography is too abstract to understand	136 (68.0%)	64 (32.0%)
12.	The scope of geography is too wide so I didn't chose it	83 (42.0%)	117 (58.0%)
13.	There is too much to learn and read and I don't have time so I don't offer geography	138 (69.0%)	62 (31.0%)
14.	I like the diversity and scope of geography that is why I choose it.	102 (51.0%)	98 (49.0%)
15.	It is related to my future career	84 42.0%)	116 (58.0%)

DISCUSSION

One of the findings of this research showed that there was no significant difference in the attitudes of male and female students towards the offering of geography in the study area. Therefore the attitude of the students towards offering geography was not gender biased. It was also found that students' attitudes towards the offering of geography was greatly influenced by teachers poor teaching methods during the teaching and learning process along with the teachers attitude towards the students. This was similar to the findings of Okunrotifa (2008). According to Adeyemi (2010) Students look up to their teachers to provide role models and so might want to choose the subjects being taught by the teachers. In boosting the learners' adequate career choice especially in geography as a subject, Okunrotifa (2008) then opined that geography teachers should under go a study in career counseling technique in their teacher education programmes with the aim of efficiently guiding their students.

The scope of the geography syllabus which a lot of students agreed was too wide is another major finding of this research work. This was similar to the finding of Faniran (1980) that "one major criticism against geography is the wide scope and lack of proper focus of its curriculum/syllabus. This factor he further iterated had contributed to the low number of students registering for the geography subject in Nigerian high schools. Furthermore, it was identified was that the Career Counselor's role equally impact positively on student's potential to select courses, when the benefits of counselling services are adequately provided. It showed that the career teacher had a lot of influence on the student's choice of subject and geography as a school subject. This might be because more light is been shed on the importance of geography and its relevance to several professions, therefore frequent workshops for students on career choice is necessary. It is highly imperative that students are promptly and adequately guided on the relationship between their intended future careers and the subjects to choose from at school. This dimension was corroborated by Lazarowitz and Lazarowitz (2006) who opined that students' subjects' selection at school can be affected by personal factors.

CONCLUSION

From the research findings, it was established that difference in the attitude of senior secondary students towards offering geography is a significant factor that affects learners in their choices. This was equally the case with the learners' attitudes towards geography teachers and vice versa. To boost the potential that geography would be adequately selected by learners especially majoring in science-based disciplines, teachers' choice and application of teaching methods must so commensurate while learners are to be encouraged and motivated along with proper guidance and counseling perspectives. It is important to emphasis that geography curriculum should regularly be reviewed while simultaneous, the strategies for improving the learners' emotionality for adequate stimulation should be put in place.

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NEED FOR A GLOBALLY AGREED UPON DEFINITION OF TERRORISM

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Abstract: Globally, terrorism is known to involve the use of violence and threats to intimidate or coerce, especially for political purposes; it is a criminal act that influences an audience beyond the immediate victim. It is out of place that despite the destructiveness of this cruel and evil crime, there is yet to be a globally agreed upon definition for it and this poses a problem for the entire international community. This paper states different definitions of terrorism as given by international organisations, states and individuals. It goes further to analyse the different features common to the various definitions of terrorism. Further to this, the paper highlights the obstacles to having a globally agreed upon definition of terrorism and finally states the benefits of having such an agreed upon definition of terrorism.

Keywords: Terrorism, Globally Agreed Upon Definition, Violence

INTRODUCTION

Modern terrorism has become an increasingly visible and disturbing feature of the contemporary international scene. On every single day, acts of terrorism take place around the world for a variety of motives, whether the terrorists style themselves as separatists, anarchists, dissidents, nationalists, Marxist revolutionaries or religious true believers; what marks them as terrorists is that they direct violence against persons and property with the goal of terrorizing the wider audience than the immediate victims, thereby attempting to gain political influence over the larger audience. An expert in radical Islamic activity, Jason Burke states that there are multiple ways of defining terrorism, and all are subjective. Burke goes ahead to state that most define terrorism as 'the use or threat of serious violence' to advance some kind of 'cause'; some state clearly the kinds of group ('sub-national', 'non-state') or cause (political, ideological, religious) to which they refer; others merely rely on the instinct of most people when confronted with innocent civilians being killed or maimed by men armed with explosives, firearms or other weapons. None is satisfactory, and grave problems with the use of the term persist (Burke 2004: 22).

Absence of a globally agreed upon definition of terrorism makes nonsense of the term as 'the meaning of terrorism is embedded in a person's or nation's philosophy. Thus, the determination of the 'right' definition of terrorism is subjective (Griset and Mahan, 2007: xiii). Accordingly, the peculiar semantic power of the term, beyond its literal

signification, is its capacity to stigmatize, delegitimize, denigrate, and dehumanize those at whom it is directed, including political opponents. The term is ideologically and politically loaded; pejorative; implies moral, social, and value judgment; and is "slippery and much-abused." In the absence of a definition of terrorism, the struggle over the representation of a violent act is a struggle over its legitimacy. The more confused a concept, the more it lends itself to opportunistic appropriation (Saul, 2006: 3). So, if this is all the term "terrorism" could be used to represent by different people and groups, then, there is need to have a globally agreed upon definition of terrorism.

This paper is divided into four segments. The first segment states different definitions of terrorism as given by international organisations, states and individuals; the second segment analyses the different features common to the various definitions of terrorism; the third segment highlights the obstacles to having a globally agreed upon definition of terrorism; and the final segment states the benefits of having such an agreed upon definition of terrorism.

Definitions of Terrorism

As at present, there is yet to be either an academic or an international legal consensus regarding the proper definition of the term "terrorism" (Williamson, 2009: 38; Schmid, 2011: 39). The international community has been slow to formulate a universally agreed upon, legally binding definition of this crime against humanity. The definitional problem of terrorism is not new; it arose since the laws of war that bothers on 'lawful and unlawful combatants' were first codified in 1899 (Rupert, 1997). The 1977 Protocol Additional to Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, as the 1899 one, contains many ambiguities that cloud the issue of who is or is not a legitimate combatant (Gardam, 1993: 91). It then follows that labeling a resistance movement a terrorist group depends on the perspective of the state as to whether the members of a resistance movement are considered lawful or unlawful combatants and their right to resist occupation is recognized (Khan, 1987).

Different definitions are used by various government agencies and legal systems. The term 'terrorism' as it were is used to refer to violence or other harmful acts. In 1999, Walter Zeev Lanqueur, an expert in terrorism succeeded in counting up to a hundred definitions of terrorism and thus concluded that the 'only characteristic generally agreed upon is that terrorism involves violence'. Along the same line, Record (2003: 6) reports that one 1988 study by the United States Army found more than one hundred definitions of the word "terrorism" exist and have been used.

Very many definitions of terrorism include only those acts which are intended to create fear or terror; which are perpetrated for an ideological goal (as opposed to a madman attack), and deliberately target non-combatants. For avoidance of doubt about the above position, it is pertinent at this very point to cite some definitions of terrorism. Though, the United Nations is yet to agree on a definition of terrorism but its short legal definition, as proposed by Schmid refers to an act of terrorism as the 'peacetime equivalent of a war crime'(United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2005). A United Nations panel in March 2005 described terrorism as any act 'intended to cause death or serious bodily harm to civilians or non-combatants with the purpose of intimidating a population or compelling a government or an international organization to do or abstain from doing any act' (UNIFEED, 2005). The General Assembly resolution 49/60 adopted on December 9, 1994, contains a provision describing terrorism as criminal acts intended or calculated to provoke a state of terror in the general public, a group of persons or particular persons for political purposes are in any circumstance unjustifiable, whatever the considerations of a political, philosophical, ideological, racial, ethnic, religious or any other nature that may be invoked to justify them (UN General Assembly, 1994). This definition according to Cassese (2002: 449) contains a provision which 'sets out an acceptable definition of terrorism'. The European Union employs a definition of terrorism for legal and official purposes. This is set out in Article 1 of the Framework Decision on Combating Terrorism of 2002. This provides that terrorist offences are certain criminal offences set out in a list comprised largely of serious offences against persons and property that given their nature or context, may seriously damage a country or an international organisation where committed with the aim of seriously intimidating a population; or unduly compelling a government or international organisation to perform or abstain from performing any act; or seriously destabilising or destroying the fundamental political, constitutional, economic or social structures of a country or an international organisation.

There are other definitions of terrorism by countries and individuals. The United States has defined terrorism under the Federal Criminal Code. Chapter 113B of Part I of Title 18 of the United States Code) defines terrorism as 'activities that involve violent or life-threatening acts that are a violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any State and appear to be intended to intimidate or coerce a civilian population; to influence the policy of a

government by intimidation or coercion; or (to affect the conduct of a government by mass destruction, assassination, or kidnapping; and which occur primarily within the territorial jurisdiction of the United States if domestic and which occur primarily outside the territorial jurisdiction of the United States if international (Findlaw Guide: Title 18). In the United Kingdom, acts of terrorism is defined by the Terrorism Act 2000 as the use of threat of action where the action falls within subsection (2); where the use or threat is designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public; and where the use or threat is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause. According to the Act, an action falls within this subsection if it involves serious violence against a person; if it involves serious damage to property; if it endangers a person's life, other than that of the person committing the action; if it creates a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public; or if it is designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system. This Act defines terrorism so as to include not only violent offences against persons and physical damage to property, but also acts 'designed seriously to interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system.' This latter consideration would include shutting down a website whose views one dislikes. However this and any of the other acts covered by the definition would also need to be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public or a section of the public, and be done for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause. The latter three terms are not defined in the Act.

Coming to the definitions of terrorism by individuals, Zagraevsky (2011) characterizes terrorism as 'the dirtiest weapon of weak against the strong.' In the words of Meisels (2008), terrorism is 'the intentional random murder of defenceless non-combatants, with the intent of instilling fear of mortal danger amidst a civilian population as a strategy designed to advocate political ends.' According to Ganor (2005), terrorism is 'the deliberate use of violence aimed against civilians in order to achieve political ends.' Khan (1987: 945) simply refers to terrorism as 'sprouts from the existence of aggrieved groups.' As for Schmid and Jongman (1988: 28), terrorism is 'an anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent action, employed by semi-clandestine individual, group, or state actors, for idiosyncratic, criminal, or political reasons, whereby in contrast to assassination, the direct targets of violence are not the main targets. The immediate human victims of violence are generally chosen randomly (targets of opportunity) or selectively (representative or symbolic targets) from a target population, and serve as message generators. Threat and violence-based communication processes between terrorist (organization), (imperilled) victims, and main targets are used to manipulate the main target (audience(s), turning it into a target of terror, a target of demands, or a target of attention, depending on whether intimidation, coercion, or propaganda is primarily sought.' Gibbs (1989: 330) defines terrorism as 'illegal violence or threatened violence directed against human or nonhuman objects, provided that it was undertaken or ordered with a view to altering or maintaining at least one putative norm in at least one particular territorial unit or population; it had secretive, furtive, and/or clandestine features that were expected by the participants to conceal their personal identity and/or their future location; it was not undertaken or ordered to further the permanent defence of some area; it was not conventional warfare and because of their concealed personal identity, concealment of their future location, their threats, and/or their spatial mobility, the participants perceived themselves as less vulnerable to conventional military action; and it was perceived by the participants as contributing to the normative goal previously described by inculcating fear of violence in persons (perhaps an indefinite category of them) other than the immediate target of the actual or threatened violence and/or by publicizing some cause. Definitions of terrorism are almost endless and citing more would make this paper longer than necessary.

The Common Features of the Definitions of Terrorism

Common to the definitions of terrorism are violence; psychological impact and fear; political goal characteristic; deliberate target of non-combatants; and unlawfulness or illegitimacy.

As regards violence, Laqueur (2003: 151) argues that 'the only general characteristic of terrorism generally agreed upon is that terrorism involves violence and the threat of violence.' However, the criterion of violence alone does not produce a useful definition, as it includes many acts not usually considered terrorism such as war, riot, organized crime or even a simple assault. Laqueur goes ahead to state that property destruction that does not endanger life is not usually considered a violent crime but some have described property destruction by the Earth Liberation Front and Animal Liberation as terrorism. For violence to qualify as terrorism, it must affect a target audience beyond the immediate audiences as part of the attempt to gain political objectives of the organization involved (Lutz and Lutz 2004: 11).

As per psychological impact and fear, definitions of terrorism points to a fact that a terrorist attack is carried out in such a way as to maximize the severity and length of the psychological impact. Each act of terrorism is a "performance," a product of internal logic, devised to have an impact on many large audiences and that terrorists attack national symbols to show their power and to shake the foundation of the country or society they are opposed to. This may negatively affect a government's legitimacy, while increasing the legitimacy of the given terrorist organization and/or ideology behind a terrorist act (Juergensmeyer 2000: 125-135).

In relation to the political goal feature of terrorism, Juergensmeyer goes ahead to note that something all terrorist attacks have in common is their perpetration for a political purpose. Terrorism is a political tactic, not unlike letter writing or protesting, that is used by activists when they believe no other means will affect the kind of change they desire. The change is desired so badly that failure is seen as a worse outcome than the deaths of civilians. This is often where the interrelationship between terrorism and religion occurs. When a political struggle is integrated into the framework of a religious or "cosmic" struggle, such as over the control of an ancestral homeland or holy site such as Israel and Jerusalem, failing in the political goal (nationalism) becomes equated with spiritual failure, which, for the highly committed, is worse than their own death or the deaths of innocent civilians.

Also common to the definitions of terrorism is the deliberate targeting of non-combatants. This is commonly held as the distinctive nature of terrorism as it lies in its intentional and specific selection of civilians as direct targets. Much of the time, the victims of terrorism are targeted not because they are threats, but because they are specific "symbols, tools, animals or corrupt beings" that tie into a specific view of the world that the terrorist possess. Their suffering accomplishes the terrorists' goals of instilling fear, getting a message out to an audience, or otherwise accomplishing their political end (Juergensmeyer 2000: 125-135).

As per unlawfulness or illegitimacy, a number of the definitions of terrorism, particular official ones by governments is characterized by a criterion of unlawfulness or illegitimacy (US Department of Justice, 1999). This is to distinguish between actions authorized by a "legitimate" government (and thus "lawful") and those of other actors, including individuals and small groups. Using this criterion, actions that would otherwise qualify as terrorism would not be considered terrorism if they were government sanctioned. For example, firebombing a city, which is designed to affect civilian support for a cause, would not be considered terrorism if it were authorized by a "legitimate" government (FindLaw Guide: Title 18). This criterion is inherently problematic and is not universally accepted, because it denies the existence of state terrorism, the same act may or may not be classed as terrorism depending on whether its sponsorship is traced to a "legitimate" government; "legitimacy" and "lawfulness" are subjective, depending on the perspective of one government or another; and it diverges from the historically accepted meaning and origin of the term. For these reasons this criterion is not universally accepted.

In a nutshell, Hoffman (1998: 32) observes that on one point, at least, everyone agrees that terrorism is a pejorative term. It is a word with intrinsically negative connotations that is generally applied to one's enemies and opponents, or to those with whom one disagrees and would otherwise prefer to ignore. 'What is called terrorism,' Brian Jenkins has written, 'thus seems to depend on one's point of view. Use of the term implies a moral judgment; and if one party can successfully attach the label terrorist to its opponent, then it has indirectly persuaded others to adopt its moral viewpoint.' Hence the decision to call someone or label some organization 'terrorist' becomes almost unavoidably subjective, depending largely on whether one sympathizes with or opposes the person or group or cause concerned. If one identifies with the victim of the violence, for example, then the act is terrorism. If however, one identifies with the perpetrator, the violent act is regarded in a more sympathetic, if not positive (or, at the worst, an ambivalent) light; and it is not terrorism.

Obstacles to a Globally Agreed Upon Definition of Terrorism

There is no doubt that there is yet to be an agreed upon definition of terrorism, and that having one still looks elusive. Difficulties arise from the fact that the term "terrorism" is politically and emotionally charged (Hoffman, 1998); difficulties arise also as a result of the fact in an aphorism "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter." This is reflected when a group that uses irregular military methods is an ally of a state against a mutual enemy, but later falls out with the state and starts to use the same methods against its former ally. For example, during World War II, the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army was allied with the British, but during the Malayan Emergency, members of its successor, the Malayan Races Liberation were branded terrorists by the British (Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army, 2007). The former president of the United States, Ronald Reagan and

others in the American administration like the CIA frequently called the Afghan Mujahideen (the Taliban and Osama bin Laden recently killed by the US Navy Seals in Pakistan) freedom fighters during their fight against the Soviet Union (The National Archive Learning Curve, Zeidan, 2004). And just twenty years later when a new generation of Afghan men were fighting against what they perceived to be a regime installed by foreign powers, their attacks were labelled terrorism by the then president of the United States, George Bush (The White House-Presidential News and Speeches). Today, the Taliban is on top of the international terrorist lists (Zeidan, 2004). Groups accused of terrorism usually prefer terms that reflect legitimate military or ideological action (Ramachandran 2004, Perry 2005). In the National Post published in January, 2006, Humphrey Adrian writes that a leading terrorism researcher Professor Martin Rudner, director of the Canadian Centre of Intelligence and Security Studies at Ottawa's Carleton University was quoted as defining "terrorist acts" as attacks against civilians for political or other ideological goals, and in line with the above assertion goes on to say that there is the famous statement: 'One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter.' But that is grossly misleading. It assesses the validity of the cause when terrorism is an act. One can have a perfectly beautiful cause and yet if one commits terrorist acts, it is terrorism regardless. Another argument in support of the above aphorism is that, when some groups are involved in a "liberation" struggle, they are labelled terrorist by the Western governments or media. Later, these same persons, as leaders of the liberated nations, are called statesmen by the same Western governments or media organizations. Quick examples that come to mind are Nobel Peace Prize Laureates Menachem Begin and Nelson Mandela (Seto, 2002). Recently, Julian Assange, the Wikileaks whistle blower was referred to as a terrorist by Joe Biden, the current vice president of the US, the story may change in no distant time as it did in the cases of Begin and Mandela. Sometimes, states that are close allies, for reasons of history, culture and politics, can disagree over whether members of a certain organization are terrorists. For example for many years some branches of the United States government refused to label members of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) as terrorists, while it was using methods against one of the United States closest allies, Britain, that Britain branded as terrorist attacks. Currently, the Palestinians are viewed as freedom fighters by the United Nations, struggling against the unlawful occupation of their land by Israel, and engaged in a long-established legitimate resistance, but Israel sees them as terrorists. Also while Israel also regards the Hizbullah of Lebanon as a terrorist group, most of the international community sees it as a legitimate resistance group, fighting Israel's occupation of Southern Lebanon (Zeidan, 2004).

The definitional problem of terrorism is equally due to a fact that many times, the term "terrorism" is confused with such term as "extremism" and as such is mistakenly interchangeably used. However, there is a significant difference between the two. Terrorism essentially, is threat or act of physical violence; extremism involves using non-physical instruments to mobilise minds to achieve political or ideological ends. For instance, Al Qaeda is involved in terrorism while the Iranian revolution of 1979 is a case of extremism. In 2007, a global research report known as An Inclusive World asserts that extremism poses a more serious threat than terrorism in the decades to come. As a result of this, media outlets wishing to preserve a reputation for impartiality are extremely careful in their use of the term. Further to this, a global agreed upon definition of terrorism that is all-inclusive and unambiguous is almost impossible because of the difficulties that lie in the fundamental values at stake in the acceptance or rejection of terror-inspiring violence as means of accomplishing a given goal. The obvious and well known range of views on these issues are what makes an internationally accepted specific definition of what is loosely called "terrorism," a largely impossible undertaking. That is why the search for and internationally agreed upon definition may well be a futile and unnecessary effort (Bassiouni, 1988)

The above highlighted points are some of the main obstacles to a globally agreed upon definition of terrorism.

Benefits of Having a Globally Agreed Definition of Terrorism

According to Paniagua and Fernando (2008), for an effective legal regime to be created against terrorism, there would be a need to formulate a comprehensive definition of that crime that, on the one hand, provides the strongest moral condemnation to terrorist activities while, on the other hand, has enough precision to permit the prosecution of criminal activities without condemning acts that should be deemed to be legitimate.

A globally agreed upon definition of terrorism would protect the state and deliberative politics; differentiate public and private violence; and ensure international peace and security law (Saul, 2008: 1). A definitional problem of terrorism does not allow for consensus adiem, that is, the meeting of the minds among the global actors as per what makes terrorism. Without a definition, what pays one actor will continue being deprivation to the other. Without a definition, any definition that is agreed upon in, say, English-speaking countries would be biased towards countries that do not share their ideas. Virtually all serious attempts to define the term have been sponsored by governments

who instinctively attempt to draw a definition which excludes bodies like themselves and because of this; most groups called terrorists deny such accusations. Virtually no organisation openly calls itself terrorist. Many groups call all their enemies terrorists and the word is very loosely applied and very difficult to challenge when it is being used appropriately, for example in war situations or against non-violent persons. The definitional problem allows governments to apply a different standard of law to that of ordinary criminal law on the basis of unilateral decision.

Also, a globally agreed upon definition of terrorism would officially criminalize the act globally; this would declare that the conduct is forbidden, must be prevented, and would express society's condemnation for the wrongful acts. This global criminalization of the act of terrorism would invoke social censure and shame, and would further stigmatize those who commit them; it may further serve, in the long run, as a deterrent to terrorism across the globe. To globally prevent, condemn an act like terrorism and to punish terrorist activities, a precise global definition is required (Paniagua and Carlos, 2008: 46).

One other benefit of having a globally agreed definition of terrorism is that it helps states to enact domestic legislation to criminalize terrorism and punish terrorists. The principle of *nullum crimen sine lege* requires, in particular, that states define precisely which acts are prohibited before anyone can be prosecuted or punished for committing those same acts. This would undoubtedly provide an inter-subjective basis for the homogeneous application of the treaty's obligations on judicial and police cooperation and would be of particular importance in extradition treaties because, to grant an extradition, most legal systems require that the crime be punishable both in the requesting state and the requested state (Paniagua and Carlos, 2008: 47).

Finally, having a globally agreed definition of terrorism would make war against terrorism less costly. The war against terrorism is costly because of the current preponderance of the political over the legal value; and the major cause of this is that terrorism has no agreed upon definition, it leaves the war against terrorism selective, incomplete and ineffective (Zeiden, 2004).

CONCLUSION

In view of the preceding arguments, it can be simply concluded that seeking an agreed definition of terrorism is necessary at this point in time when different actors see it from different perspectives and when their minds are not likely to meet on what terrorism really is. It would not be adequate to leave definition of terrorism to the unilateral interpretations of states. There is no doubt a globally agreed upon definition of terrorism can plausibly retrieve terrorism from the ideological quagmire. Anywhere in the world, for to law to admit a term, an advance definition of the term is essential on grounds of fairness; so also is the term "terrorism."

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CULTURE & IDENTITY CHANGE AMONG IRANIAN EFL TEACHERS

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Abstract: Learning English means crossing the boundaries of one's home culture into a foreign culture – a challenging cross-cultural experience influencing one's home culture attachment. Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL teachers) are products of degrees of identity conflict experienced while learning English. The major aims of this study were to investigate, firstly, to what extent EFL teachers have preserved their home culture, and secondly, whether and how six demographic factors, namely, age, length of being bilingual, knowing other languages, length of teaching experience, gender, and marital status can influence their home culture attachment. To this end, a previously constructed and validated home culture dependency questionnaire was administered to a sample of 342 Iranian EFL teachers from more than 25 private language schools in Mashhad, a city in the northeast of Iran. Finally, the statistical results were discussed and implications were provided in the context of English language teaching.

Key Words: Culture; EFL learners; EFL teachers; Home culture attachment; Identity change

INTRODUCTION

English is a global lingua franca recognized as the language of progress, development, science, technology, and the world news. In Iranian sociocultural context, English is not a language for daily communication within the families or communities; it is mainly encountered as a school subject. However, it is not too foreign and irrelevant to the students' lives. The spread of English-based media, particularly television, the Internet, and the motion picture industry, provides students with ready access to, enhanced interest in, and genuine need for English even in a so-called isolated EFL setting (Brown, 2007). Thus, there has been an ever-increasing interest in English in a way that lots of students have been attracted to private language schools due to the fact that they cannot develop a high level of English communicative competence in school curriculum. Persian is the language to represent themselves in the immediate community they are engaged in and English is the language they use to expand who they are and who they want to be – their imagined identity in their imagined community (Kanno & Norton, 2003).

English has become much more than a school subject to its learners. It has become a tool to enrich and expand their sociocultural horizons, a tool to give them more freedom to express all their difficult emotions and experiences, and a tool to interchange experience and information through travel, email, phone and video-conferencing. English has become something they want to master, own, and feel competent and comfortable in so that they no longer consider it as a foreign language. They imagine entering the elite group of English-conversant Iranians, their imagined community, where English is theirs. English is regarded as one of the significant means of embracing the desirable imagined future. As Norton and Gao (2008) stated an *imagined community* presupposes an *imagined identity*, and learners *invest* money, time and energy in the target language (TL) in such a context.

Along with learning a second language, a second identity is internalized; that is, the learner's worldview, self-identity, and ways of thinking, feeling, acting, and communicating can be disorganized by a new culture contact (Brown, 2007). Though, in EFL learning, the identity conflict is not as severe as in English as a second language (ESL) learning, it still gives learners a chance to critically examine their home culture. Language learning, as a reflexive process, intends to help students achieve new perspective on their own society (Osler & Starkey, 2000) and look at different aspects of their home culture with fresh eyes (Gao, 2008) and helps them critically discover what was previously taken for granted as good or bad, interesting or boring in their society. This is the point where individuals' different historical, social and cultural backgrounds determine the strength of their home culture dependency (Pishghadam & Sadeghi, 2011). They may appreciate or depreciate their own cultural values after such a cultural contact and subsequent reflection.

The role of EFL teachers and textbooks is of high importance in shaping EFL learners' perspectives on their home culture and language, their views of the target culture and language, and their stances on the continuum between the two points. Canagarajah (1999) insightfully warned EFL teachers of imposing a foreign value system on their learners at the cost of bringing them a common language. In our study, we addressed EFL teachers who are products of degrees of identity conflict experienced while learning English. We have attempted to extend the recent conceptual and empirical work in this area by investigating the extent of EFL teachers' home culture attachment, and examining six demographic factors' influences on their home culture attachment in the context of private language schools.

Theoretical Framework

Language teachers' attitudes towards culture have sharply changed since 1950 (Nostrand, 1988), from cultural sterility (Allen, 1985) to an organized and systematic understanding and appreciation of the foreign culture incorporated both in class activities and tests (Chastain, 1988) which could be regarded as the fifth dimension of language learning (Damen, 1987; Larsen-Freeman, 2001; Tomalin & Stempleski, 1994). Advances in pragmatics and sociolinguistics (Levinson, 1983) resulted in bridging the cultural gaps in language teaching in 1980's and 1990's (Valdes, 1986). Rosaldo (1984) noted that personhood, identity, culture, and language are interwoven constructs in the social setting. Recognizing the inseparable link between language and culture led language teachers to believe that one will not teach language without implicitly teaching culture (Higgs, 1990).

Robinson-Stuart and Nocon (1996, cited in Brown, 2007, p. 194) observed some people wrongly suppose that culture learning can be achieved automatically alongside language learning as a "magic carpet ride to another culture". Although culture is "always in the background, right from day one" (Kramsch, 1993, p.1), what could be implicitly learned is merely several target language (TL) cultural features without acquiring sensitivity and awareness or even how to behave in certain situations. Kramsch, Cain, and Murphy-Lejeune (1996, cited in Lessard-Clouston, 1997) have stated several reasons why bother focusing on culture overtly in classroom when it is covertly interwoven with language. Explicit culture teaching enables learners to understand how to use TL to accept difference, to be flexible and tolerant of ways of doing things which might be different to theirs. It is an attitudinal change expressed through the use of language.

Languages develop in a cultural setting. In the case of the English language which is spoken as the native language in many countries, the problem arises whose culture EFL educators should be prepared to teach and to what extent. Even in one country there is a variety of cultures let alone in so many countries of "the inner circle" and "the outer

circle” (Kachru, 1985), all claiming English – “World Englishes” (Kachru, 1992,1985; Kachru, 2005; Kachru & Nelson, 1996; McArthur, 2001; McKay, 2002). However, in the context of globalization, English is increasingly associated with a global identity, rather than that of a target nation. In this regard, “L2 learning and identity work is freed from integration in the target culture” (Gao, 2010, p. 7).

Interest in identity and language learning extends to the early 1980s (Norton, 2008). Norton (1997, 2000) considers language learning as an identity construction process – that is, whenever language learners speak, they exchange information and at the same time organize and reorganize a sense of who they are and how they are socially related to the world around them. Thus, they construct and negotiate their identity. Following West (1992), Norton (1997) has asserted that who a person is (one’s identity) is related to one’s desires for recognition, affiliation, and security which are, in turn, related to one’s access to material resources in society, and hence, to one’s access to social power and privileges, and eventually to what one can do (future possibilities). While West (1992) relates a person’s identity changes with changing material relations of power, and Bourdieu (1977) relates identity and symbolic power, Weeden (1987) relates language, individual experience, and social power in a theory of subjectivity. Subjectivity and language are considered as fundamental to the nature of each other (Norton, 1997).

The sociocultural view (Hinkel, 2005, p.891) reveals how language helps “the formation of identity and culture within the social contexts and the politics of power” as well as “how cultural identity is continually threatened by economic, political, and power-balance insecurities”. Bourdieu (1977) mentioned that there is a relationship between identity and symbolic power and that an “expanded definition of competence” should include the “right to speak” or “the power to impose reception” (p. 75), which is exactly the point where language learners do not feel comfortable, because while being taught English, their inferior position as an English speaker has been pointed out, though often implicitly. If learners of English cannot claim ownership of the language, they might never consider themselves as legitimate speakers of it (Bourdieu, 1977). They might always confront “with processes of Othering , ... feel like an ‘imposter’, an illegitimate speaker of English, mainly because of their local ‘accent’ - their voice not being heard as an ‘authentic English voice’” (Bourdieu, 1991, cited in Lin, Wang, Akamatsu, and Riazi, 2002, p. 310).

The notion of “investment” (Norton Peirce, 1995), inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1977), represents learner’s desire and commitment to learn a language, which is socially and historically influenced by the relationship of learners to the speakers of the TL. Investing in the TL, learners look for a wider range of symbolic and material resources to further increase the value of their cultural capital (Norton Peirce, 1995). Notion of instrumental motivation assumes learners to have unitary, fixed, and ahistorical personalities, while the notion of investment assumes them to have complex identities, changing across time and space, and reproduced in social interaction; thus, investing in the TL is investing in the learner’s own identity (Norton & Gao, 2008). While learners make attempts to develop the command of a new language/culture, they simultaneously develop their own new identities.

Among the three ways of belonging to a community (engagement, imagination, and alignment) (Wenger, 1998), those who belong to the same community through “imagined community” are “groups of people, not immediately tangible and accessible, with whom we connect through the power of the imagination” (cited in Kanno & Norton, 2003, p. 241). Norton (2001, 2006; Norton Pierce, 1995) stated that language learners belong to their desired community through “imagination” (Wenger,1998) where their future dreams may come true and they can gain L2/FL mastery as a kind of “cultural capital” to provide them with the “symbolic capital” (Bourdieu,1977) required to realize their “imagined identity”. The pain required for such a gain is to “invest” efforts (Norton Peirce, 1995), in learning English in order to achieve an internationally impressive career without wishing to become members in British or American culture – no integration in the target culture (Gao, 2010). Kanno & Norton (2003) suggested that these imagined communities are quite real and probably even more effective on learners’ present investment than communities immediately accessible (engagement). Although the empirical support of Norton’s theory is mostly from ESL contexts, the idea of “imagined community” can also explain EFL learning and identity in the context of globalization (Gao, 2010). Since English is the language of globalization, EFL learners desire the membership of an “imagined global community” rather than the integration with a target culture community (Ryan, 2006). Approvingly, Dornyei, Csizer and Nemeth (2006) have asserted that bicultural identity is derived from local culture and global culture associated with English.

In traditional models on language learning and identity, identity changes are limited to the result of interaction between identities of the “native culture” and “target culture”; however, this dichotomy encounters challenges in the context of globalization and postmodernism. To meet these challenges, Gao (2010)’s revisited models have

suggested certain types of *relations* between different group identities associated with different *linguistic varieties*. The linguistic varieties in identity work include dialects, styles, registers, etc. in communicative practice (discourses); they are not limited to “language” as narrowly defined (Gao, 2010). She has emphasized that from a constructivist perspective, imagined identities do have psychological reality involving stable behavioral investment. In other words, cultures may exist as imagined communities, in learners’ subjective apprehension actually influencing their conducts. The culture cores and distinct cultural boundaries are recognized in the subjective domain of identity formation; nevertheless, complexity, fluidity, and dynamism are also believed in (Gao, 2010). In this regard, bilingual/multilingual identities are dynamic processes.

The major theoretical models of bilingual identities are presented below together with their reframed and expanded versions in the context of globalisation:

Traditional Model: Subtractive bilingualism – L2/FL is learned at the cost of L1, and target culture (C2) assimilation threatens to substitute values and life styles of the native culture (C1) (Lambert, 1974).

Revisited Model: Subtractive Identity Change (1-1=1) – One identity associated with a certain linguistic variety is replaced by another identity associated with a different linguistic variety (Gao, 2010).

Although subtractive change is often found among immigrants in a country where the L2 is the country’s native language, it may also occur when, for instance, an Iranian student from a remote village goes to a big city and replaces his/her dialect and identity with those of a young metropolitan individual. Furthermore, subtractive bilingualism is the very type of bilingualism which leads to destroying native languages and cultures by the imperialistic effect of the spread of English (Brown, 2007; Canagarajah, 1999). Similarly, Pishghadam and Navari (2009) warned of Iranian EFL learners’ “cultural derichment”, a coined term which means that teaching English language and culture could lead to Iranian learners’ gradual loss of home culture due to lack of mutual respect as an essential prerequisite for the dialog between the cultures (Bakhtin, 1986). Seemingly, mutual respect between the two cultures is absent in some Iranian EFL teachers’ classrooms, where Iranian culture is depreciated by appreciating English culture. Pishghadam and Kamyabi (2009) noted that the more native-like accent EFL learners try to acquire, the less home culture attachment they preserve. Approvingly, both in TESOL and the broader educational community, a frequently asked question has been whether TESOL educators are unintentionally strengthening Western cultural hegemony, and weakening the cultural and linguistic resources of people in different parts of the world (Kachru, 1990; Lowenberg, 1993; MacPherson, 1997; Ndebele, 1987; Ngugi wa Thiong’o, 1986; Peirce, 1989; Pennycook, 1994; Phillipson & Skutnabb Kangas, 1996; Swales, 1997; Tollefson, 1991; Widdowson, 1994).

Traditional Model: Additive bilingualism – L1 and C1 identity are maintained while L2 and C2 identity are acquired. The two co-exist and function in different communicative situations (Lambert, 1974).

Revisited Model: Additive Identity Change (1+1=1/2+1/2) – Two (or more) identities associated with different linguistic varieties co-exist in one’s linguistic and identity repertoire, and have respective roles to play in different communicative situations or for different purposes (Gao, 2010). This is the case with Iranians whose mother tongues are minority languages in the country, namely, Turkish, Kurdish, Arabic, Balouchi, Gilaki, Turkamani, or strong dialects of Persian not understandable by the majority. They do speak different linguistic varieties in different communicative situations: they speak their own linguistic variety to family members, relatives, and the peers whom they regard as insiders; however, they switch codes as soon as they speak to an outsider, namely a classmate, a teacher, a colleague, a client, or a customer who speaks another linguistic variety in the outer society, at school or at work. For an Iranian EFL teacher whose mother tongue is Turkish, for instance, three identities associated with Turkish (mother tongue), Persian (the official language of Iran), and English (the international language) co-exist and are used for different purposes. All FL teachers develop a specific case of FL identity, which may further cause an identity crisis (Demirezen, 2007). Bilingual teachers sometimes doubt if they have two personalities since they feel that they change their personalities when they change from their mother tongue to the target language. In response to such doubts, Roberts and Penfield (1964, cited in Demirezen, 2007) stated that the so-called change in

personality is simply a code shift in emotional attitudes and social roles or behaviors due to a shift in the socio-psychological situation.

Traditional Model: Productive bilingualism – In publications from her doctoral dissertation completed in 1992, drawing upon “productive orientation” of Fromm (1948, cited in Gao, 2010), Gao (1994, 2001, 2002) proposed the concept of “productive bilingualism” in which the command of L2 and that of L1 positively reinforce each other and deeper understanding and appreciation of C2 goes hand in hand with that of C1. The learner benefits from a vertical progression of general cognitive and affective growth and increased creativity instead of the horizontal progression along the continuum of target culture assimilation in the case of subtractive bilingualism (Gao, 2008).

Revisited Model: Productive Identity Change (1+1>2) – The two linguistic and community identities reinforce each other. Deeper understanding, appreciation, and empathy with one community go hand in hand with that of the other. The original identities are kept as a “whole” while interacting with each other (Gao, 2010). In a general overview of Turkish prospective EFL teachers’ experiences as language learners, Atay and Ece (2009) have reported a specific cultural difference that affected a prospective teacher’s behavior positively, namely, Eastern societies do not encourage people to speak up in public, but Western societies do. For instance, in an interview with a female participant in their study, she declared that it was her English teacher who made her a self-confident person by letting her express herself without being afraid, because it was easier to criticize each other in the Western identity which she had acquired in her English class. Encountering different Western norms and practices made them think about their own personalities and behaviors, and encouraged them to express their views openly in public and to be more tolerant while judging others. Atay and Ece (2009) have regarded this broadening process of their worldview as “cultural enrichment” effective in shaping their new identities.

Hybrid Identity Change (1+1+...1=1): A Newly Added Model to the Traditional Ones – Elements from different linguistic varieties are mixed to form a new variety, which is associated with a distinct identity. Hybrid identity change is different from productive identity change in the sense that in productive identity change, the original identities are kept as separate wholes interacting with one another, but in hybrid identity change, pieces from original identities are assembled in a mosaic manner to make a new distinct whole (Gao, 2010). The individual may not be highly proficient in each of the blended languages and cultures (often more than two), a case which is beyond strictly defined bilingualism. The blended linguistic variety is not a language, but it is a discourse type, like hip hop fans’ distinct discourse with mixed codes to name a good example of hybrid identity in the context of globalization (Pennycook, 2007).

Gao (2010) has pointed out that it is wrong to label one group as subtractive bilinguals or another group as productive bilinguals, because subtractive, additive, productive, and hybrid are not personality traits and individuals are not permanently one type of bilinguals. Therefore, bilingual/multilingual identity work is a dynamic process and L2/FL users may change their orientations in different moments or situations. They may experience, namely, subtractive or productive moments or events.

It seems that Gao (2010)’s notion of “productive identity change” is in line with Bakhtin (1986)’s concept of “mutual cultural enrichment” of the two cultures in contact; however, Gao (2010) seems to be more realistic. Bakhtin (1986), as a postmodernist, claimed that interaction between two cultures is a vital condition of their existence and that cultural contact leads to cultural enrichment and awareness, which proved to be an optimistic generalization in this study. Gao, Cheng, Zhao, and Zhou (2005, p. 44) have empirically indicated that “productive bilingualism” does not exclusively belong to some recognized “best foreign language learners” since it *was* a reality within their participants’ reach in their study on 2278 ordinary Chinese undergraduates: “about 30% to 50% of the students reported ‘productive self-identity change,’ higher than the percentage of the students who did not perceive such change, though there were still about a third who were uncertain about this issue.” However, in their study, Pishghadam and Navari (2009) noticed that exposing students to English culture in Iran, seemingly still in the modernist era, led to students’ alienation from their home culture. As a result, they suggested that the age, location, and attitudes of Iranian language learners be taken into account before highlighting English culture in EFL classrooms. Brown (2007) has warned that English as an international language (EIL) is like a two-edged sword both breaking down barriers of communication throughout the world and risking the imperialistic devastation of a

global ecology of languages and cultures. In this regard, it seems quite a challenging job to teach English and help learners stop seeing English as only a subject, a barrier, a difficult task in their life, but as a friend who would open up new spaces, new challenges, and new lands for them, both sociologically and intellectually and at the same time try to guide learners to be critically aware of the imperialists' linguistic and cultural hegemony.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The authors of this study are interested in identity changes of learners of a new language, especially when it comes to the impact of their identities as proficient bilinguals in the role of the teachers of that language on their learners' identities. Therefore, a survey has been conducted among EFL teachers in private language schools. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the strength of home culture attachment of EFL teachers who have had contact with foreign culture since their school days, the time they were EFL learners themselves.

Therefore, in this study we attempt to answer the following two questions:

Q1: Are Iranian EFL teachers attached to their home culture?

Q2: Do demographic factors such as age, length of teaching experience, length of being bilingual, knowing other languages, gender, and marital status play any significant roles in home culture attachment of Iranian EFL teachers?

METHODOLOGY

Participants and Setting

This study was conducted on 342 EFL teachers: 231 females, and 111 males, aged between 19 and 58, their length of being bilingual ranging from 2 to 46 years, 164 married/174 single/4 missing, family number ranging between 1 and 10, having different lengths of teaching experience (ranging from 3 months to 32 years), and teaching English to students of different levels of proficiency in private language schools in Mashhad, a city in the northeast of Iran. The participants' average teaching hours ranged from 3 to 72 hours a week (including their private teaching). Most teachers held degrees in English but there were a few who had degrees and/or other jobs irrelevant to teaching English, e.g. engineering, dentistry, theology, French, even a retired pilot. The participants held degrees ranging from High School Diploma to PhD: High School Diploma (N=12 teachers); Associate Degree or BA/BS student (N=21); BA/BS Degree (N=216); MA/MS student (N=23); MA/MS Degree (N=61); Above MA/MS: PhD student/PhD Degree/MD (N=4); missing (N=5).

Almost half of the participants (N=173) knew at least one Asian or European language in addition to Persian and English, 155 participants knew no other languages, 6 participants knew an Iranian minority language as their mother tongue (e.g. Turkish, Arabic), 5 participants knew both an Iranian minority language and an Asian or a European language in addition to Persian and English, and 3 participants had missing information.

Private language schools were preferred as our context of study for several reasons: First, in Iran, lots of EFL teaching goes on outside the government school sector in private language schools. Second, they can provide an informal setting on which the government does not exert strict monitoring regarding their teacher recruitment, course books, teaching methodology, class time, arrangements, and so forth. Third, teachers have to work under competitive conditions due to the fact that none of them are permanently employed. Fourth, they teach the commercial EFL textbooks available in the global market without any modification, except for 2 or 3 language schools in our study, which either had some sort of eclectically chosen materials or some sort of censorship or omission of a few lessons or pictures. Finally, private language schools are in constant competition with each other

for attracting more English learners. As such, private language schools' teachers would teach according to more up-to-date EFL teaching methodology and also would/could reveal their cultural or social achievements/biases more openly than those in public schools.

Instrumentation

The participants were required to answer a questionnaire (Pishghadam & Kamyabi, 2009) consisting of 36 items concerning "home culture attachment/dependency" in about 15 minutes according to a four-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree", assigning 4 points for the choice showing "strong home culture attachment", 3 points for "moderate home culture attachment", 2 points for "moderate foreign culture attachment", and 1 point for "strong foreign culture attachment". The questionnaire consists of both positive and negative phrasing to make sure the participants pay close attention while answering. The scale has been validated through Rasch measurement and its reliability has been reported to be 0.85 utilizing Cronbach alpha. While in our study, Home Culture Attachment Questionnaire's reliability is 0.87.

Procedure

To detect home culture attachment, the questionnaire (Pishghadam & Kamyabi, 2009) was administered to EFL teachers in October, November, and December of 2010. Some answered them in the break between their classes and some in their free time at home spending about 15 minutes. Despite the overt openness in private language schools, we faced some "red band" during data collection, e.g., there were the directors of four private language schools who prohibited distribution of our questionnaires among their teachers as well as several teachers (more often the older ones as breadwinners of their families) who themselves avoided participating in our study accusing our questionnaires to investigate into their private lives, actually being afraid of the probable political or social consequences, although participants were not asked to reveal their names. After collecting the data, they were entered into and processed with SPSS 16 program. The correlation between the computed scores of home culture attachment questionnaire and several demographic factors were calculated using Pearson product-moment correlation. To further analyze the data, t-test was also used. To use t-test, the participants were divided into two groups as "High" and "Low" based on their demographic variables.

RESULTS

As Table 1 suggests, the mean, median, and mode have almost the same value showing that our sample population has a normal distribution. There are 36 items in the questionnaire according to a four-point Likert-scale assigning 4 points for the choice showing "strong home culture attachment", 3 points for "moderate home culture attachment", 2 points for "moderate foreign culture attachment", and 1 point for "strong foreign culture attachment". Therefore, the maximum possible score of the questionnaire could be 144 and the minimum possible score might be 36, yielding the average score of the questionnaire (90). Thus, the mean acquired by EFL teachers (99.13) is just a bit higher than the average score of the questionnaire (90).

Table 1: Mean, Median, Mode, Standard Deviation (SD), Lowest & Highest Achieved scores (Min & Max) as well as those of Possible Sores

Variable	N	Mean	Median	Mode	SD	Achieved Min & Max	Possible Min & Max
Home Culture Attachment	336	99.13	99.00	100	14.22	57 & 136	36 & 144

To measure the relationship between “Home Culture Attachment” and four demographic factors, we employed Pearson product-moment correlation. The results of the correlational analysis are summarized in Table 2. The findings indicate that only one of them is not associated with Home Culture Attachment: Length of Teaching Experience ($r=.094$, $p>.05$). However, Age, and Length of Being Bilingual are associated with Home Culture Attachment: Age ($r=.139$, $p<.05$), Length of Being Bilingual ($r=.160$, $p<.05$). These findings reveal that the older the EFL teachers are and the longer they have been bilingual, the more home culture they maintain. In other words, the younger bilinguals (younger generation) are less strongly attached to their home culture.

Table2: Results of Correlation between Home Culture Attachment and Age, Length of Being Bilingual, Length of Teaching Experience

Variables		Age	Length of Being Bilingual	Length of Teaching Experience
Home Culture Attachment	Pearson Correlation	.139	.160	.094
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	.004	.091
	N	332	328	325

Since the correlation between Age and Home Culture Attachment, though significant, was not so high ($r=.139$), t-test was run and further investigated their relationship. As Table 3 demonstrates, there is a significant difference between Home Culture Attachment and Age groups (High and Low) in general ($t= 16.642$, $p<.05$); that is, the High group (teachers over 26 years old) were more strongly attached to their home culture ($\bar{x}_H = 34.16$) than the Low group (teachers under 27) ($\bar{x}_L = 23.83$).

Table 3: Independent Samples t-test for Home Culture Attachment among EFL Teachers over 26 years old & those Under 27

Variables (Age)	N	Mean	T	df	Sig(2-tailed)
High (27-58 years)	165	34.16	16.642	330	.000
Low (19-26 years)	167	23.83			

Similarly, the correlation between Length of Being Bilingual and Home Culture Attachment, though significant, was not so high ($r=.160$); therefore, t-test was run and further investigated their relationship. As Table 4 shows, there is a significant difference between Home Culture Attachment and bilingual groups (High and Low) in general ($t=17.169$, $p<.05$); that is, the High group (bilinguals from 16 to 46 years of length) were more strongly attached to their home culture ($\bar{x} = 22.91$) than the Low group (bilinguals from 2 to 15 years of length) ($\bar{x} = 12.34$).

Table 4: Independent Samples t-test for Home Culture Attachment among EFL Teachers with Length of Being Bilingual (LOBB) over 15 years & those under 16 years

Variables (LOBB)	N	Mean	T	df	Sig (2-tailed)
High (16-46y)	164	22.91	17.169	326	.000
Low (2-15 y)	164	12.34			

As Table 5 indicates, there is a significant difference between Home Culture Attachment and Knowing Other Languages groups in general ($t=3.504$, $p<.05$); that is, the teachers knowing no language other than Persian and English were more strongly attached to their home culture ($\bar{x} = 101.93$) than the European or Asian Languages group (teachers knowing at least one more language) ($\bar{x} = 96.5896$). This shows that multilinguals are less strongly attached to their home culture than bilinguals.

Table 5: Independent Samples t-test for Home Culture Attachment among Individuals Knowing Asian /European Languages and Knowing No Other Language/None (in addition to English and Persian)

Variables (Knowing Other Languages)	N	Mean	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
No other languages	155	1.0193E2	3.504	326	.001
European/ Asian Languages	173	96.5896			

The correlation between Length of Teaching Experience and Home Culture Attachment was not significant ($r=.094$, $p>.05$); however, as Table 6 suggests, the t-test further indicated that High group (EFL teachers with teaching

experience from 5 to 32 years) were more strongly attached to their home culture ($\bar{x} = 9.2212$) than Low group (teachers with teaching experience from 3 months to 4.5 years) ($\bar{x} = 2.3626$).

Table 6: Independent Samples t-test for Home Culture Attachment among EFL Teachers with Length of Teaching Experience (LOTE) over 4.5 years & those with LOTE under 5 years

Variables (LOTE)	N	Mean	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
High (5-32 years)	165	9.2212	16.566	323	.000
Low(0.25-4.5 years)	160	2.3626			

As Table 7 reveals there is no significant difference between male and female EFL teachers in their home culture dependency ($t = -.798, p > .05$). In other words, gender plays no significant role in EFL teachers' home culture attachment.

Table 7: Independent Samples t-test for Home Culture Attachment between Males and Females (Gender)

Variables (Gender)	N	Mean	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Male	111	98.2432	-.798	340	.426
Female	231	99.5541			

According to Table 8, t-test reveals that there is a significant difference between Home Culture Attachment and Marital Status groups (Married and Single) in general ($t = -4.229, p < .05$); that is, the Married were more strongly attached to their home culture ($\bar{x} = 102.23$) than the Single ($\bar{x} = 95.8793$).

Table 8: Independent Samples t-test for Home Culture Attachment between the Married and the Single

Variables (Marital Status)	N	Mean	T	Df	Sig (2-tailed)
Single	174	95.8793	-4.229	336	.000
Married	164	1.0223E2			

DISCUSSION

The two goals put forward by this study were, in the first place, to investigate the degree of EFL teachers' home culture attachment, and in the second place, to examine whether some demographic factors, namely, age, length of being bilingual, knowing other languages (in addition to Persian and English), length of teaching experience, gender, and marital status had any role in their home culture attachment.

With regard to the first goal, our findings reveal that our sample population has a normal distribution; that is, it is not negatively skewed to the right side of the mean. Thus, the perfect home-culture-maintenance status has not been achieved by Iranian EFL teachers. Undesirably, EFL teachers, who experience more foreign culture contact, are just moderately attached to their home culture. This might be due to different issues discussed separately under each of the demographic factors' associations with home culture attachment.

With regard to the second goal, the role of the first demographic factor, "Age", in "Home Culture Attachment," was investigated. Correlation and t-test results indicated that the younger EFL teachers are less strongly attached to their home culture than the older EFL teachers. This could be interpreted at three levels: individual, national, and global levels. First, at the individual level, the older EFL teachers might have respected, understood and appreciated their home culture more and more in the course of time and their lived experience as bilinguals undergoing productive identity change (Gao, 2010); that is, the older EFL teachers who have experienced longer contact with the foreign culture might have been able to look at their home culture with fresh eyes and might have valued aspects of their home culture they had undervalued when they were younger. Second, at the national level, the younger EFL teachers might have distanced from their immediately accessible community and its culture and might have desired for an ideal imagined identity in an imagined community to psychologically avoid the insecurities they feel in life, which they see no reason to put up with as the older do. Socioculturally speaking, cultural identity is "continually threatened by economic, political, and power-balance insecurities" (Hinkel, 2005, p.891) and the young are obviously more vulnerable than the old. Imagined identities do have psychological reality involving stable behavioral investment (Gao, 2010) and imagined communities might even have a stronger effect on individuals' present actions than the communities they are daily engaged in (Kanno & Norton, 2003). Individuals imagine themselves as they would like to be, doing what they would prefer to do. Then each day, they take one step toward their dream. Though at times, it may seem too difficult to continue, they hold on to their dreams.

Third, at the global level, the younger teachers, or better to say, younger generation could have been more and more influenced by Western culture due to Westernization globally highlighted in the media. As Nye (2010) has asserted the country whose culture, values, and institutions incite admiration and respect in other parts of the world enjoys more "soft power" among them. That is why US first priority is to expand English language and to make American culture popular all over the world by glamorized American lifestyles presented in Hollywood movies, heavy US flavor of the internet, the ballyhooed freedoms of their government style, etc. In his study including several interviews with Iranian EFL teachers and EFL learners, Pishghadam (2007) noticed that the participants generally undermine the idea of World Englishes, and underline the idea of perfect American and/or British English and that some EFL teachers centralize the English culture in class while marginalizing their home culture. Based on a modification of matched guise technique, Pishghadam and Sabouri (2011) concluded Iranian EFL learners consider American accent of English to be quite superior to the British, Persian, and Arabic accents of English; moreover, they consider those with American accent to be better teachers. This study confirms the major tenets of postcolonialists who believe that ideology is conveyed through language leading to cultural hegemony (Pishghadam & Mirzaee, 2008).

Examining the role of the second demographic factor, "Length of Being Bilingual" in "Home Culture Attachment," the authors realized that the longer EFL teachers have been bilingual, the more home culture they have maintained. In other words, the younger bilinguals are less strongly attached to their home culture. This seems to confirm the positive relationship between age and home culture attachment. According to Bakhtin (1986), in order to appreciate one's own culture, one needs to be in contact with another culture, which is foreign to it. It implies that bilinguals are more liable to be aware of the peculiarities of their own culture than monolinguals (Atay & Ece, 2009).

The role of the third demographic factor, "Knowing Other Languages" in "Home Culture Attachment," was also studied. It indicated that EFL teachers who know at least one more language (an Asian or a European language) in addition to Persian and English are less strongly attached to Iranian home culture. In other words, those who know more languages are less strongly attached to their home culture. This finding is against the claims made by Bakhtin

(1986), which might be simply because of the absence of mutual respect, the prerequisite for cultural enrichment, in the dialog between the dominant and the dominated cultures. Since learner's investment to learn a target language is socially and historically influenced by the relationship of learners to the TL (Norton Peirce, 1995), their commitment and desire to learn the TL depends on whether, based on social/historical contexts, they look up to the TL speakers, or the speakers of the source language and target language have mutual respect towards each other. Inevitably, in the case of an unbalanced respect between the two languages/cultures, language learning results in "subtractive identity change" among multilinguals in this study.

Exploring the fourth demographic factor, "Length of Teaching Experience," the researchers noticed that, at the first sight, there was no significant relationship between "Home Culture Attachment" and "Length of Teaching Experience." However, as the t-test further indicated, the High Group depended more strongly on their home culture than the Low Group. It means that the longer EFL teachers teach English, the more they develop home culture dependency. This also seems to confirm the positive relationship between age and home culture attachment and the resulting possible "productive identity change" (Gao, 2010).

Considering the fifth factor, "Gender" there is no significant difference between male and female EFL teachers in their home culture dependency. In other words, gender plays no significant role in EFL teachers' home culture attachment. This finding is in contrast with a quantitative study on college undergraduates in the Chinese EFL context where Gao, Cheng, Zhao, and Zhou (2005) explored their participants' self-identity changes associated with English learning and reported that female students' self-identity changes were generally higher than males', and that female students scored higher than male students particularly on self-confidence and productive identity changes.

Inquiring into the sixth factor, "Marital Status," the authors found out that the married were more strongly attached to their home culture than the single. This means that stronger family bonds keeps the individual within the home culture. Getting married provides an individual with new links in one's social network, namely, one's spouse, in-laws, children, etc. Those who have more social links with family members, peers, etc. are not easily stripped away from their collective beliefs and values called their home culture (Pishghadam & Sadeghi, 2011).

Based on the results of our study, some implications are presented: first, the most important result of this study is bringing about awareness for EFL teachers, EFL learners, EFL syllabus designers, teacher educators and policy makers of the fact that cultural dimension of language learning is an important dimension of foreign language studies, and that teaching the culture of a foreign language should be an integral part of the curriculum, but not at the expense of their home culture. Second, language teachers should become aware of cultural studies and the conditions under which individuals acquire or lose social, cultural, and historical identities (their home culture) through the use of various symbolic systems, including language. Blindly following the "teacher-proof textbooks" can change the EFL teachers to slaves of cultural/linguistic imperialism (Richards, 1993). "The measurement of language attitudes provides information which is useful in language teaching and language planning" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p.286). If EFL teachers are fascinated by a certain version of the English language as a more dominant or more prestigious one, they may convey this impression consciously/unconsciously to their EFL learners simply because students follow their teachers' language attitudes. They should also be aware of the importance of the cultural goods they choose to help them in their profession. Thus, the global EFL textbooks should be taught after they are cautiously supervised and localized. Third, learners should be taught to have critical thinking. Questioning and challenge should be encouraged in teaching and learning process, especially in EFL classes where acquisition of a new language, a new culture, and a new identity takes place. In an overlapping of language, culture, society and power relations, EFL learners should gain sociolinguistic competency by discussing the TL usage in classes. They should be warned not to gain intercultural competence at the expense of their own cultural identity. Fourth, the syllabus designers' challenging job is to offer language learners materials which acknowledge their norms and values as well as materials which include aspects of local culture to be discussed and compared with the parallel aspects of the target culture.

All in all, English teaching should *not* be banned in schools in order to preserve heritage languages and cultures, but "our zeal for spreading English needs to be accompanied by concurrent efforts to value home languages and cultures" (Brown, 2007, p. 207). As thus, it seems quite a challenging job to teach English and help learners love English as a friend who would open up new horizons of knowledge, new identities, and new lands to embrace the world, and simultaneously try to guide learners to beware of English as imperialism's means of linguistic and cultural hegemony. Ironically, the challenging, if not overwhelming, job of EFL learners is to beware of not being hostilely squeezed while warmly embracing English as a friend.

A potential limitation of this study is that it was based on correlational data, and therefore the results cannot support casual claims. A further limitation of our study is the unwillingness of some participants to fill out demographic characteristics section. In the end, a longitudinal study design among EFL learners is recommended to investigate their home culture attachment at different stages of their bilingualism qualitatively and quantitatively. It is also recommended that home culture attachment of holders of different jobs other than EFL teaching be investigated as a control group. The replication of our study in the context of another Iranian city or another country and comparison of their results with ours may further investigate the role of the different demographic factors in home culture attachment.

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QUALITY OF TEACHERS AND STUDENTS PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM SCHOOLS IN IBADAN METROPOLIS IN NIGERIA.

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Abstract: The dramatic effects that teachers have on students' achievement are largely undisputed. Empirically, a number of studies have shown that the quality of teachers is strongly related to students' performance. This study presents evidence on this issue with a sample of 400 students and 200 teachers from 40 purposively selected secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis in Nigeria. These schools were categorized into four as public elite schools; public non-elite schools; private elite schools and private non-elite schools. A composite measure of the quality of the teachers covering qualification, experience, patience, creativity, and communication skills was utilized. The students' performance was measured by their scores in the two compulsory subjects of English Language and Mathematics in the general school leaving certificate examination. The empirical methodology combined descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The results suggest that the observed variations in the students' performance across the four categories of the schools are significantly explained by the differences in the quality of the teachers.

Keywords: Quality; Teachers; Students; Performance; Schools; Nigeria.

INTRODUCTION

Education is the compilation and product of many and varied resources. Among these, teachers stand out as a key to realizing the high standards that are increasingly emphasized in schools and school systems across countries (Rice, 2003). There is a general agreement about the importance of high-quality teachers among researchers, practitioners, and policy makers. According to Leigh and Mead (2005), teacher quality matters a lot because teachers' knowledge and skills are the most vital in-school factors influencing children's learning. And, for children from disadvantaged backgrounds or troubled home environments, quality teaching is even more important. This explains why the dramatic effects that teachers have on students' achievement are largely undisputed (Dee and Keys, 2004). Empirically, a number of studies have shown that the quality of teachers is strongly related to students' performance (examples include Mrozowski, 2002; Fryer et al, 2002; Rivkin et al., 2005; and Goldhaber and Brewer, 2002 etc.).

However, most of these studies have focused on developed countries particularly the United States of America. No study in this area has been conducted for Nigeria. This fact provides the motivation for this study. The primary objective of this paper therefore is to examine the effects of the quality of teachers on students' performance in Nigeria. In particular, the aim is to contribute to the existing body of knowledge and evidence in the literature.

Our examination shows that there are expectedly differences in the quality of teachers and students performance across the schools sampled and that the differences in the quality of the teachers significantly account for the variations in the students' performance.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section two reviews the literature on the measures of teacher quality as well as documents some previous studies. The research methodology is laid out in section three. Section four is devoted to data analysis, while section five concludes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Measures of Teacher Quality

Unlike students performance that has a standardized measure- examination score, measures of teachers quality is a highly devise and controversial exercise. This is because, despite general agreement about the importance of high-quality teachers, researchers, practitioners, policy makers, and the public have been unable to reach a consensus about what specific qualities and characteristics make a good teacher. As such several measures of teachers quality abounds. These include qualification and certificate, experience, attributes-patience, creativity and communication skills, and cognitive ability, particularly, verbal ability scores. In the literature, these measures are broadly classified into observed and unobserved characteristics. The observed characteristics/measures are qualification and certificate, and experience. While attributes like patience, creativity, communication skills and cognitive ability are the unobserved characteristics/measures. However, the unobserved measures are difficult to measure and are often not used (Concoran, et. al., 2004). But, the studies by Hanushek et al. (1998) and Rockoff (2004) indicate that the unobserved characteristics or measures of teachers quality are perhaps more important for students performance than most observed characteristics/measures.

In this regards, Rice (2003) documents a number of studies that found that measures of cognitive ability –teachers' verbal ability scores are among the most important measures of students' achievement. One of these studies is by Ehrenberg and Brewer (1995) that reported that a one-half standard deviation increase in the verbal aptitude score of white female teachers would have raised the synthetic gain scores of white elementary students in the 1996 Coleman report data by 4 to 8.5 per cent. Similarly, Ferguson and Ladd (1996) reported that a one standard deviation increase in teachers ACT composite scores (in the state of Alabama) almost resulted in a one-tenth standard deviation increase in students reading scores from 3rd to 4th grade (comparable to about one-half the black-white test score gap in urban areas during the this time period).

These literature suggest that students of teachers who score higher in the distribution of standardized tests takers tend to perform better than students with teachers who ranked lower in the distribution (Corcoran et.al, 2004). They noted further that though what the teacher's relative score measures is less clear, nevertheless these studies well illustrate that these scores do indeed capture something, either specific skills or general intelligence or both that is important in explaining academic achievement of their students.

In consideration of the fact that standardized test scores are a measure of relative quality and not absolute quality, Corcoran et.al. (2004) advised that teacher quality be measured using a multi-dimensional vector of these characteristics that are positively associated with the output of the educational process.

Previous Studies

Mrozowski (2002) reports a linkage between teacher quality and student progress in a study of students and teachers in grades 3-8 under the Cincinnati Public Schools' teacher evaluation system. According to her, the study showed that students of teachers rated "unsatisfactory," the lowest rating for teachers, scored as much as 13 points below what they would be expected to score on science proficiency tests, based on predicted averages. Math test scores for students of those same teachers were 9 points below expected outcomes. And for students of teachers rated "distinguished," the highest rating for teachers, science scores were 3 points above expected averages. Math scores were also 3 points higher than predicted. In summary, teachers who rate highest under Cincinnati Public Schools' teacher evaluation system also show the greatest gains, on average, in their students' achievement on proficiency tests.

The study by Fryer et al (2002) on understanding the black –white test score gap in the first two years of school reported that on the average, black 12th graders score at about the same level as white eighth graders on the National Assessment of Education Progress—a difference roughly equivalent to one standard deviation. Because difference in the quality of the teachers was discovered, they considered how improved teacher quality might affect this large and troubling gap between white and black students in academic achievements.

The research by Rivkin et al. (2005), (using data from Texas), and by Rockoff (2004), using data from New Jersey have found large gaps between the best and worst teachers, and shown that this variation has significant consequences for student achievement. Switching from an average teacher to a teacher at the 90th percentile raises test scores by about one-eighth of a standard deviation on the national distribution. To put this into perspective, the benefit from this switch is twice as large as a 10 percent cut in class size (and some studies suggest that class size cuts have even smaller benefits than this).

Goldhaber and Brewer (2002) observed that students do better in math if taught by a teacher with a bachelor's or master's degree in mathematics. They also found that, although advanced degrees in general were not associated with higher student achievement, an advanced degree that was specific to the subject area that a teacher taught was associated with higher achievement. In contrast, other studies did not indicate that teachers with graduate-level training in a content area performed better than did teachers having an undergraduate degree in their content area (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005; Ferguson & Ladd, 1996).

A comprehensive analysis by Greenwald, Hedges, and Laine (1996) examined data from 60 studies and found a positive relationship between years of teacher experience and student test scores. Similarly, the UTD Texas Schools Project data showed that students of experienced teachers attained significantly higher levels of achievement than did students of new teachers (those with one to three years of experience) (Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). Schools with more inexperienced teachers have higher dropout rates. In a related finding, an analysis of math achievement and dropout rates in a sample of California high schools (Fetler, 2001) found that schools whose dropout rates were in the highest 10 percent had 50 percent more new teachers than did schools in the lowest 10 percent.

Fuller and Alexander's (2004) analysis identified similar students who were taught by Texas math teachers who were also similar except that some were certified and others were not. The study found that the students taught by certified teachers scored better on the state math achievement test. Similarly, Laczko-Kerr and Berliner (2002) examined the math achievement of elementary students and reported that students taught by new, uncertified teachers did significantly worse on achievement tests than did those taught by new, certified teachers. Likewise, Darling-Hammond (1999) found a significant positive association between achievement and teacher certification; she also found a significant negative association between achievement and the presence of a high proportion of new or uncertified teachers in the school. And Fetler (1999) found that teachers with emergency teaching certificates did not perform as well as teachers who were fully certified, even when controlling for the amount of teaching experience.

METHODOLOGY

The Data

The data come from forty (40) purposefully selected secondary schools in Ibadan metropolis¹. The 40 schools were evenly distributed among the four categories of schools namely public elite schools (PES); public non-elite schools (PNES); private elite schools (PRES); and private non-elite schools (PRNES). From each category of the schools we randomly sampled five (5) teachers that teach English language and mathematics, the two compulsory subjects at the secondary school and school leaving certificate examination. This gives a total sample of two hundred (200) teachers. A total of four hundred (400) students were sampled. This comprises of ten (10) students from each of the ten (10) selected schools in the four categories of schools.

The systematic random sampling technique was adopted in the selection of the students. This selection process involves the following procedures: (i) we obtained the total number of students who sat for the school leaving certificate examination in the school in the last exam, i.e. the population size (N); (ii) note the number of students to be sampled i.e. the sample size (n)-10 in our case; (iii) obtained the sampling interval by dividing the population size (N) by the sample size (n); (iv) obtained the sampling frame of the population; (v) used the simple random sampling technique to select the first number of the sample from among the sampling interval observations in the sampling frame i.e. the random start; (vi) for subsequent numbers of the sample, we add sampling interval repeatedly to the random start; (vii) the members of the sample are those whose positions are as determined in step (vi).

The students' performance was measured by the results of the sampled students' results in the common senior secondary terminal certificate examination. These results were available in each of the schools sampled. From the sampled students results we came up with a synthesized measure of performance as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Synthesized Measure of Sampled Students Performance

Performance Classification	Level of Performance	Score Scale
Very Good	Passed both subjects with distinction	5
Good	Passed one of the subjects with distinction and the other at credit level	4
Average	Passed both subjects at credit level	3
Below Average	Passed at one of the subjects at below credit level	2
Poor	Failed one or both subjects	1

In measuring the quality of the teachers, a composite measure was utilized. This includes the teachers' qualification, experience, patience, creativity, and communication skills. The qualifications and experience (measured by the number of years the teachers have on the job) of the teachers were obtained from the file records. Patience, creativity and communication skills of the teachers were judged by observing the teachers while teaching. Patience of the teachers' was adjudged by the coolness and composure of the teachers while teaching. Creativity was assessed by the appropriateness and innovativeness with illustrations in explaining the key concepts and ideas to the students. Communication skills was measured by the used of appropriate language and good grammatical and verbal expressions. The quality score of the teachers was then based on the average score on all of these measures (see appendix for the detailed scoring scale). Table 2 shows the quality of the teachers' classification and the corresponding score scale that we constructed.

¹ Our purposeful selection of the schools followed from the observation of Leigh and Mead (2005) that there are huge teacher quality disparities between poor and affluent schools.

Table 2: Quality of Teachers Classification and the Score Scale

Quality of Teacher Classification	Score Scale
Very High	4.5-5.0
High	3.5-4.4
Fair	2.5-3.4
Low	1.5-2.4
Poor	1.0-1.4

METHOD OF ANALYSIS

The analysis of our data combines the use of both descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. The descriptive statistical analysis is to allow us make precise statements about the data as it is used to characterize the quality of the teachers and the students’ performance across the four categories of the schools as well as establish a link between the quality of the teachers and the students’ performance. The inferential statistical analysis is used to ascertain the significance of the differences in the quality of the teachers and the students’ performance across the four categories of the schools. It is also used to evaluate how much of the variations in the students’ performance is explained by the differences in the quality of the teachers.

For our inferential statistical analysis we explored the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics and the simple regression analysis. The ANOVA is used to test for the significance of the differences in the quality of the teachers and the students’ performance across the schools. The regression analysis is used to explain the extent to which the differences in the quality of the teachers account for variations in the students’ performance. Our regression equation is therefore specified as:

$$STP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 QT + \beta_t \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

where:

STP = Student Performance

QT = Quality of the Teachers

β_t = The Error Term

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 presents some descriptive statistics for the five measures of the quality of the teachers sampled. Beginning with their qualifications, the table shows that overall majority (47 %) of the total sampled teachers hold 1st degree, followed by 43 per cent master’s degree holders. The remaining 11 per cent are holders of the National Certificate of Education (NCE). Among the four categories of schools, the private elite schools have the highest number of qualified teachers, followed by public elite schools and then the private non-elite schools. The public non-elite schools come last.

Coming to experience, on the average the public elite schools have the most experienced teachers. Next in rank are the private elite schools. The public and private and non-elite schools come in the third and fourth position, respectively. Generally, teachers with between 5-10 years experience constitute the majority at 41 per cent, while those with just 1-5 years experience trailed behind with 35 per cent. Teachers with longer years of experience, 10 years and above are in the minority, representing just 25 percent.

The larger proportion (54 per cent) of the teachers is moderately patient while teaching. Another 25 per cent have patience while those that exhibit high level of patience while teaching account for the outstanding 22 per cent. Comparatively, teachers in the public elite schools rated highest. Teachers in the private elite schools come next and closely followed by those private non-elite schools. Teachers in the public non-elite schools rated lowest.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of the Quality of the Sampled Teachers

1. Qualification	PES F (%)	PNES F (%)	PRES F (%)	PRNES F (%)	TOTAL F (%)
Master's Degree	22 (44)	14 (28)	32 (64)	18 (36)	86 (43)
1 st Degree	28 (46)	20 (40)	18 (36)	27 (54)	93 (47)
NCE	0 (0)	16 (32)	0 (0)	5 (10)	21 (11)
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200
2. Experience	PES F (%)	PNES F (%)	PRES F (%)	PRNES F (%)	TOTAL F (%)
> 10 years	12 (24)	15 (30)	13 (26)	9 (18)	49 (25)
5-10 years	30 (60)	15 (30)	23 (46)	14 (28)	82 (41)
< 5 years	8 (16)	20 (40)	14 (28)	27 (54)	69 (35)
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200
3. Patience	PES F (%)	PNES F (%)	PRES F (%)	PRNES F (%)	TOTAL F (%)
High	15 (30)	8 (16)	10 (20)	10 (20)	43 (22)
Moderate	25 (50)	25 (50)	30 (60)	28 (56)	108 (54)
Low	10 (20)	17 (34)	10 (20)	12 (24)	49 (25)
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200
4. Creativity	PES F (%)	PNES F (%)	PRES F (%)	PRNES F (%)	TOTAL F (%)
High	14 (28)	5 (10)	16 (32)	10 (20)	45 (23)
Moderate	19 (38)	17 (34)	24 (48)	20 (40)	80 (40)
Low	17 (34)	28 (56)	10 (20)	20 (40)	75 (38)
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200
5. Communication Skills	PES F (%)	PNES F (%)	PRES F (%)	PRNES F (%)	TOTAL F (%)
Very Good	20 (40)	15 (30)	24 (48)	14 (28)	73 (37)
Good	20 (40)	18 (36)	20 (40)	24 (48)	82 (41)
Average	10 (20)	17 (34)	6 (12)	13 (26)	46 (23)
TOTAL	50	50	50	50	200

Source: Field Survey, 2011

In a reversal of pattern, teachers of the private elite schools are most creative and with marked difference from those of the public elite schools that take the second position. Teachers of the private non-elite schools come in the third position while those of the public non-elite schools are the least creative. On the whole, teachers with moderate

creativity are more in number (80) followed by 75 with low creativity. The 45 with high creativity constitute the minority. In a similar pattern, communication skills of the teachers are generally better in the private elite schools. Teachers of the public elite schools come next, then those of the private non-elite schools and lastly those of public non-elite schools. Taking all the teachers irrespective of the schools shows that a total of 73 of them representing 37 per cent are very good in their communication skills. Another 82 amounting to 41 per cent got rated as having good communication skills, while the rest 46 (23 per cent) communicate averagely well.

The summary statistics of the quality of the teachers that have been described is presented in table 4. From the table, 29 (about 15 per cent) of the total 200 sampled teachers got classified as high quality teachers. A group of 84, 55 and 32 of them are classified as good, low and poor quality teachers, respectively. In the public elite schools, 15 teachers (30 per cent) make the group of high quality teachers. 32 others and as a matter of fact the majority, representing about 64 per cent passed for good quality teachers. A balancing figure of 3 teachers (6 per cent) is low quality teachers. It is very striking that no teacher of the public elite school got classified as poor teacher. Six teachers of the public non-elite schools is a high quality teacher. Eleven others make the good quality list. Majority twenty-three (23) are low quality teachers with the remaining 10 passing for poor quality teachers.

There are no low and poor quality teachers in the private elite schools. 37 of the 50 teachers are good quality teachers while the remaining 13 got high quality teachers ratings. The private non-elite schools have no teacher making the high quality teacher list. 9 are classified as good quality teachers and 29 others as low quality teachers. The remaining 12 teachers are of poor quality.

By way of ranking, on the average we rank first the private schools first on the quality of the teachers. Public elite schools come second. The third position goes to the public non-elite schools while the private non-elite schools come fourth and last.

Table 4: Summary Statistics of the Quality of the Sampled Teachers across the Four Categories of Schools

Quality Classification/ Category of Schools	PES	PN ES	PR ES	PRN ES	TOT AL
Very High	-	-	-	-	-
High	15	6	13	0	29
Good	32	11	37	9	84
Low	3	23	0	29	55
Poor	0	10	0	12	32
Total	50	50	50	50	200

Source: Field Survey, 2011

Coming to the sampled students performance, table 5 shows that 74 students by our performance scale are very good students. 37 of them representing 50 per cent are students of private elite schools. Public elite schools accounted for about 32 per cent; followed by private non-elite schools with about 16 per cent, which is exactly half of that of the public elite schools. Public non-elite schools had only 1 student, which also represents about 1 per cent. A similar pattern of distribution is observed in the distribution of the 117 (about 29 per cent of the total sample) with good performance score. Private elite schools accounted for the highest percentage of about 38 per cent. Public elite schools accounted for about 32 per cent. Private non-elite schools and public non-elite schools accounted for about 26 per cent and 3 per cent, respectively.

Across the four categories of the schools, students with average performance totaled 93. 30 of them are of the private non-elite schools. Public elite schools followed closely with 29 students. Public non-elite schools and private elite schools had equal numbers of 17 students. Not surprisingly, the highest number of students with fair and poor performance scores was observed in the public non-elite schools. They had about 59 percent and 76 per cent of the total fairly and poorly performed students. Private non-elite schools followed at a distance with a percentage share of 24 and 22 per cent for fair and poor performance, respectively. The public elite schools that came next had 8 fair students and 1 poor student. These figures constitute about 14 and 2 per cent of the total 58 students in both instances. No student of the private elite schools had poor performance while only 2 students made fair performances.

From the forgoing discussions on the performance of the students across the four categories of the sampled schools, the obvious conclusion is that students performed best in the private elite schools. Students of the public elite schools followed. Next are those of the private non-elite schools while students of the public non-elite schools had the least performance.

Table 5: Summary Statistics of the Sampled Students Performance across the Four Categories of Schools

Performance Classifications/ Category of Schools	P E S	PNE S	PRE S	PRNE S	TOTAL
Very Good	24	1	37	12	74
Good	38	4	44	31	117
Average	29	17	17	30	93
Fair	8	34	2	14	58
Poor	1	44	0	13	58
Total	100	100	100	100	400

Source: Field Survey, 2011

The average statistics of the teachers' quality and students' performance are contained in table 6. In the public elite schools, the mean score for the teacher quality is 3.31 with maximum and minimum scores of 3.48 and 3.12, respectively. The average student performance was highest at 4.30 and lowest of 3.30, with a mean score of 3.76. The mean teacher quality score in the public non-elite schools is 2.34. The maximum score being 3.12 and the lowest 1.80. The student performance score ranges between 2.20 and 1.50 with a mean score of 1.84. Among the private elite schools, teachers' quality and students performance scores averaged 3.41 and 4.15, respectively. The maximum teacher quality score is 3.76 and the lowest 3.16, while that of the students performance score is 3.60 lowest and 4.60 highest. Lastly, in the private non-elite schools the school with best quality teachers scores 2.96 while the school with the least quality teachers scored 1.36. Similarly, the school with the best student performance record scored 4.00 while the school the worst student performance record scored 1.70. Teacher quality and student performance scores averaged 2.11 and 3.14, respectively.

From these descriptions, it is obvious that the private elite schools that scored highest in teachers' quality also had the best student performance record. The public elite schools come next. Although, the public non-elite schools scored higher on the average than private elite schools on teachers' quality, however, the private elite schools had better student performance record than the public non-elite schools. On the whole, the picture suggests a positive link between the teacher quality and the students' performance (see figure 1). From the figure, it can be seen that the students' performance closely mirrored the teachers' quality in that higher teacher quality scores are associated with greater student performance (score) and vice versa.

Table 6: Average Statistics of the Sampled Teachers Quality and Students Performance across the Four Categories of Schools

Statistics/Category of Schools	PES	PNES	PRES	PRNES						
	QT	STP	QT	STP	QT	STP	QT	STP	QT	STP
Mean	3.31	3.76	2.34	1.84	3.41	4.15	2.11	3.14		
Median	3.30	3.75	2.14	1.85	3.39	4.20	20.6	3.15		
Maximum	3.48	4.30	3.12	2.20	3.76	4.60	2.96	4.00		
Minimum	3.12	3.30	1.80	1.50	3.16	3.60	1.36	1.70		
Stand.Dev	0.11	0.34	0.52	0.23	0.17	0.30	0.54	0.68		

Source: Calculated by Authors.

Figure 1: Teacher Quality and Students Performance across the Sampled Schools.

In summary, our descriptive analyses have shown that there are differences in the quality of the teachers and students performance across the four categories of the schools sampled. The descriptive analyses also imply that the differences in the quality of the teachers account for the variations in the students' performance. These revelations as a matter of fact raise two pertinent questions. These questions are (i) how strong or significant are the differences in the quality of the teachers and the performance of the students across the four categories of the school? and (ii) does the differences in the quality of the teachers sufficiently explain the variations in the students' performance. The results from our inferential statistical analyses provide the answers to these questions.

Inferential Statistical Analyses

The results for our inferential statistical analyses are presented in tables 6, 7 and 8. Tables 6 and 7 present the results of the one-way analysis of variance of the teachers' quality and students' performance, respectively among the four categories of the schools sampled. The results contained in both tables indicate that there exist significant differences (at 5 % and 1 % level of significance) in the quality of teachers and performance of students among the four categories of the schools sampled. However, the difference in the student performance is stronger or of greater significance.

Table 6: ANOVA Results for the Quality of Teachers.

Source of Variation	Degree of Freedom	Variation; Sum of Squares	Variance; Mean Sum of Squares	F Cal
Between Schools	3	13.15	6.58	43.87
Within Schools	36	5.45	0.15	-
Total	39	18.60	-	-

Table 7: ANOVA Results for the Students Performance

Source of Variation	Degree of Freedom	Variation; Sum of Squares	Variance; Mean Sum of Squares	F Cal
Between Schools	3	30.69	15.35	85.28
Within Schools	36	6.46	0.18	-
Total	39	37.15	-	-

The results of the evaluation of the explanatory power of the quality of the teachers on the students' performance are presented in table 8. From the table, the teacher quality positively and significantly explains the differences in the students' performance records. From the coefficient linking student performance to the quality of the teachers, it is suggestive that a one per cent improvement in the teachers' quality will result in 1.04 per cent i.e. about one per cent improvement also in the students' performance. Expressed in simple terms, it means that any improvement in the teachers' quality will bring about a corresponding increase in the students' performance.

Apart from that the teachers' quality positively and significantly explains the student's performance, the regression results also indicate that the teachers' quality is the most important factor affecting students' performance. This is because the coefficient of determination, otherwise, called the R^2 shows that more than half, about 54 per cent, of the total variation in the students' performance is accounted for by the quality of the teachers. This therefore implies that the teachers' quality sufficiently explains the observed significant variations or differences in the students' performance

Table 8: Regression Results of the Effect of Teacher Quality on Students Performance

Estimation Technique: OLS Dependent Variable: Student Performance		
Variable	Coefficient	t-statistics
Constant	0.32	0.72
Teachers Quality	1.04	6.70*
R^2 0.54; Adjusted R^2 0.53; F-statistics 44.87		

* Significant at 1% level of significance

CONCLUSION

A number of studies have shown that the quality of teachers is strongly related to students' performance. This study presents new evidence on this issue with a sample of 400 students and 200 teachers from 40 purposively selected secondary schools from in Ibadan metropolis in Nigeria. These schools are categorized into four as public elite schools; public non-elite schools; private elite schools; and private non-elite schools. A composite measure of the quality of the teachers covering qualification, experience, patience, creativity and communication skills was utilized. The students' performance was measured by their scores in the in two compulsory subjects of English Language and Mathematics in the general school leaving certificate examination.

The empirical methodology combined descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. The descriptive analysis is used to characterize the quality of the teachers and the students' performance as well as establish a link between the quality of the teachers and the students' performance. The inferential analysis is used to ascertain the significance of the differences in the quality of the teachers and the students' performance. It is also used to evaluate how much of the variations in the students' performance is explained by the differences in the quality of the teachers. The set of inferential statistics explored include the one analysis of variance and regression analysis.

The results from the descriptive analyses show expectedly that there are differences in the quality of the teachers and students performance across the four categories of the schools sampled. The descriptive analyses also imply that the differences in the quality of the teachers account for the variations in the students' performance. The inferential statistical analyses results show the observed differences in the quality of the teachers and the performances of the students across the four categories of the school are strong and/or significant. It also shows that the differences in the quality of the teachers sufficiently explain the variations in the students' performance. The conclusion and policy lesson of this paper therefore, is that the quality of teachers matters for student performance in schools.

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Appendix: Teacher Quality Scoring Scale

Qualification	
Masters Degree	5 Marks
1 st Degree	2 marks
National Certificate of Education (NCE)	1 mark
Experience	
> 10 years	5 mark
5-10 years	3mark
< 5years	1 mark
Patience	
High	5 mark
Moderate	3 mark
Low	1 mark
Poor	0 mark
Creativity	
High	5 mark
Moderate	3 mark
Low	1 mark
Poor	0 mark
Communication Skill	
Very Good	5 mark
Good	3 mark
Average	1 mark
Poor	0 mark

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDERS ON THE INSTITUTIONAL TRANSACTIONAL PRESENCE AND LEARNING ACHIEVEMENT AMONG DISTANCE EDUCATION LEARNERS

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Abstract: This study looks at the effect of the institutional transactional presence on the learning achievement of the two genders. A total of 615 learners at the School of Distance Education, University Sains Malaysia at the ratio of 40.8% males and 59.2% females, were involved as the respondents in the study. An analysis on gender differences using the one-way ANOVA analysis showed that there was a significant difference on the overall effect of the institutional transactional presence between the genders with higher means recorded by male students. When the learning achievement was considered, the results showed that there was also a significant difference between the genders with higher means again achieved by male students. The implications of the study will be discussed, particularly the role played by the institution in providing the appropriate and relevant support system to cater to the needs of the distance education learners regardless of their gender.

Keywords: transactional presence, gender, learning achievement

INTRODUCTION

The transactional presence refers to the degree to which a distance learner senses the availability of, and connectedness with, people in his/her educational setting (Shin, 2002). Shin (2003) proposes that there are three dimensions of transactional presence, namely, the lecturer transactional presence, the peer transactional presence and the institutional transactional presence.

The institutional transactional presence, in turn, may be defined as the degree of connectedness or sense of belonging of the students to the institution. In other words, it is a measure of the availability of the institution to the distance education learners. Such availability refers to the belief or feeling that there is a co-relationship existing between two or more parties or expanding involvement of the parties concerned (Shin, 2003).

There are many ways in which the institutional transactional presence can be created and developed among the distance education learners. Among others, there is the physical presence of the faculty in the live video conferencing sessions of the course delivery. The higher the degree of availability of the lecturers to the students in

the course delivery, the greater will be the connectedness the students perceive with the institution. Similarly, interaction and assistance provided by the institution via internet-based collaborative tools and academic aspects (access to the library, laboratory, print-based learning materials, course guide books, multimedia resources) as well as non-academic assistance in the support system (access to guidance, counselling, motivation, social gathering, etc.) could also enhance the institutional transactional presence among students. The importance of the institutional transactional presence has been highlighted in many studies. For instance, several studies have revealed that there is a close relationship between the institutional transactional presence and student learning (Rashid et al., 1993; Sewart, 1993; Peter, 1983).

In distance education, the educational transaction occurs between the lecturer and students. Moore (1990) used the term "dialogue" as a parameter to overcome the transactional distance between the lecturer and students. Munro (1998) emphasised that the establishment of the transactional presence among distance education learners is imperative as the "dialogue" provides the links between the lecturer and the students and the extent of this link determines and affects student learning achievement. Apart from minimising the transactional distance via collaboration, the physical support system as well as the social support system also affect student learning (Rashid et al., 1993). The academic support system, such as the provision of learning resources in the form of learning materials and internet and multimedia-based materials, must also be adequately provided. With an efficient academic support system in place, the aspect of isolation and the disconnectedness of the distance education learners can be overcome and positive learning outcomes achieved.

The importance of the institutional transactional presence and its effect towards the students' learning achievement cannot be overemphasised. However, another aspect of equal importance is the gender difference. This difference on issues related to the use of technology has received immense interest among researchers (Margolis & Fisher, 2002). Many studies have reported that female students exhibit negative views on the use of technology especially in terms of their attitude, the extent of use and self-perceived computer experience (Houtz & Gupta, 2001; Broos, 2005); they also exhibit lower confidence than males when using technology in learning (Shashaani and Khalili, 2001). However, there are also studies which show no gender differences. For instance, Chen (1985) found that female and male students responded with similar levels of interest when using the technology in learning and both genders possess the same amount of experience. Studies by Shashaani (1997) and Su & Atan (2007) also revealed that both male and female students exhibit similarity especially in terms of attitude towards ICT.

However, few studies have been undertaken to look into the issue of gender differences in terms of the institutional transactional presence and learning achievement among distance education learners. Taking into consideration the importance of the transactional presence and learning achievement among the genders, this study seeks to explore the difference between the genders in these two parameters. In particular, the aims of the study are:

- i. What is the extent of the existence of the institutional transactional presence among distance education learners?
- ii. Are there gender differences in terms of the institutional transactional presence among distance education learners?
- iii. What is the extent of the learning achievement as perceived by the distance education learners?
- iv. Are there gender differences in learning achievement among distance education learners?

METHODOLOGY

The results presented here are a small part of a larger study that looks at the relationship of the transactional presence and the learning achievement of students at the School of Distance Education, University Sains Malaysia in Penang, Malaysia. The conceptual approach of the study is based on the transactional presence concept of Shin (2002) and the students' learning model of Gibson (1991). Shin (2002) proposes three dimensions of transactional presence, namely, the lecturer transactional presence, the peer transactional presence and the institutional presence.

On the other hand, the learning model of Gibson (1991) proposes three dimensions of learning, namely, the satisfaction in learning, learning achievement and learning persistence.

This study only focuses on the institutional transactional presence and learning achievement and the different effects exhibited by the two genders. The main questionnaire consisted of two sections, Section A and Section B. Section A covered the demographic variables while Section B had a list of 57 items. Eight items related to the institutional transactional presence measured on the Likert scale 1-5, where 1 was the least agreeable and 5 was the most agreeable.

The sample of the study consisted of distance education students enrolled at the School of Distance Education for the 2006/07 academic session. A total of 992 questionnaires were distributed during the annual three-week residential course where all students gathered at the main campus to undertake the face-to-face tutorials, laboratory sessions and tests. Out of the total number of questionnaires distributed, 615 questionnaires were returned representing the rate of return of 62%.

Before the analysis was undertaken, the data were investigated for normality and this was carried out using the normal Q-Q plot analysis. The plot showed a linear relationship indicating that the data distribution was normal. The independent samples, t-tests and ANOVA analysis at 5% confidence level were subsequently carried out to investigate whether there were significant differences between genders on the factors of the institutional transactional presence and learning achievement.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic results

Figure 1 shows the distribution of the genders of the sample. There was a higher proportion of female learners with 364 students (59.2%) compared to male learners of 251 students (40.8%) in the sample taken.

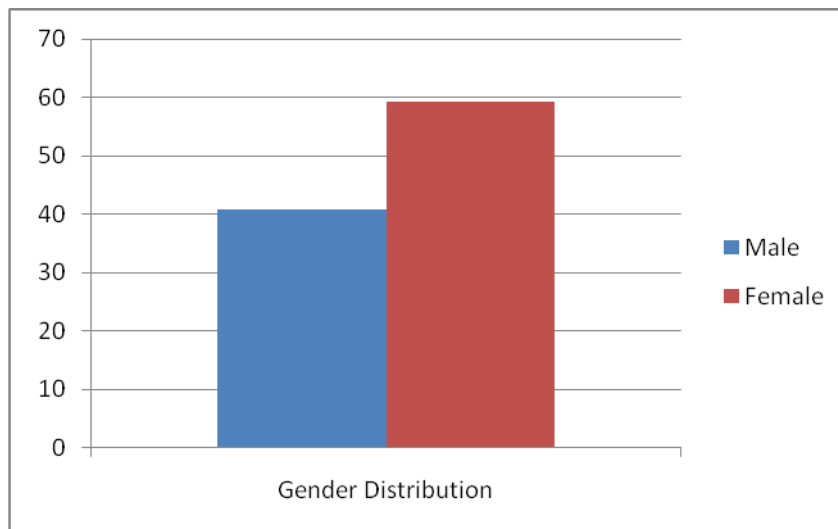


Figure 1: Gender distribution

When the academic programmes they enrolled in were considered, the data showed that in the humanities programme, the enrolment was the highest, at 52.9% for male students and 57.4% for female students. See Figure 2.

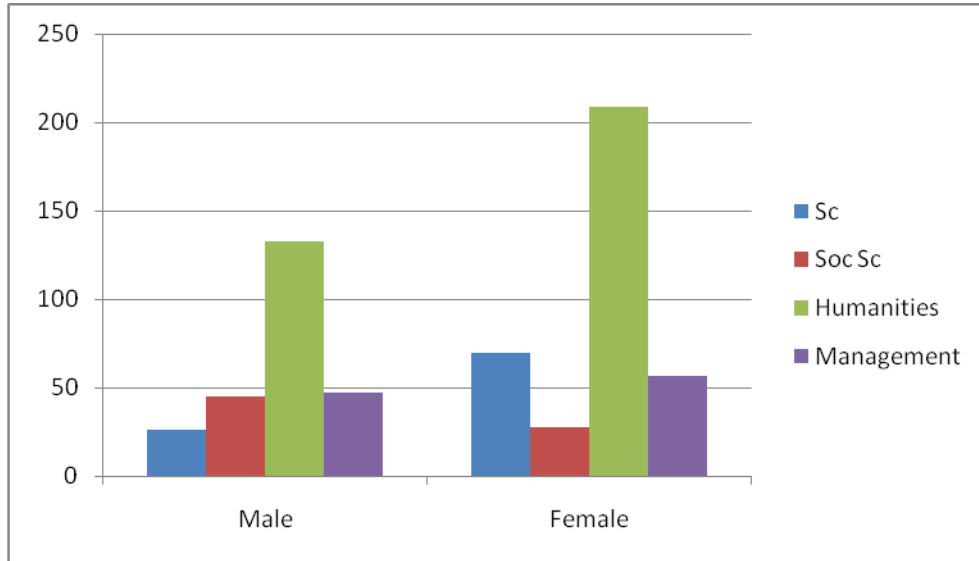


Figure 2: The gender distribution in the programmes enrolled

The Institutional Transactional Presence

The overall mean for the institutional transactional presence (as shown in Table 1) was $\bar{x}=4.05$ which was very high and when each item was considered, the results showed that Items No. 2, No.3 and No. 5 (which related to the sense of belonging to the institution) recorded the highest means. These results indicate a very high level of psychological belief that the learners hold toward the presence, availability and connectedness of the institution.

Table 1: The mean and standard deviation of items related to institutional transactional presence (items adapted from Shin,2003)

No.	Item	Mean	Std.
1.	I find it easy to contact the academic staff of the School of Distance Education, USM.	3.62	0.76
2.	I feel proud when I see the USM logo.	4.33	0.66
3.	I have a strong sense of being a student of the School of Distance Education, USM.	4.38	0.69
4.	I believe that the academic staff is willing to help whenever I encounter difficulties in my studies.	3.94	0.73
5.	I am very proud to be a member of USM.	4.26	0.69
6.	I believe that the support staff is very helpful when I encounter difficulties in course registration, payment of fees, etc.	3.99	0.70
7.	I find it easy to obtain information about the courses offered by the School of Distance Education, USM.	3.98	0.72
8.	I feel attached to USM.	3.91	0.73
	Total Mean	4.05	0.71

The Learning Achievement

The overall mean for the learning achievement was $\bar{x}=4.19$ which was also very high; as can be seen in the Table 2, Items No. 5 and No. 10 (which relate the personal growth and learning ability) recorded the highest means. These results indicate a very high positive perception towards learning achievement and affirm that the institution has provided a conducive academic programme and support system that enable the students to excel.

Table 2: The mean and standard deviations for items related to learning achievement (adapted from Shin, 2003)

No.	Item	Mean	Std.
1.	I gained practical ideas to be applied to my work.	4.00	0.65
2.	The courses provided me with professional knowledge for work.	4.10	0.67
3.	The courses provided me with an opportunity to develop time management skills for learning.	4.17	0.63
4.	The courses enhanced my thinking skills.	4.34	0.58
5.	The courses helped me in my intellectual growth.	4.37	0.58
6.	My views of work were enriched with insight gained from the courses.	4.15	0.67
7.	The courses allowed me to look at things at different ways.	4.17	0.63
8.	The courses provided me with knowledge on how to work more effectively.	4.15	0.66
9.	From the courses, I gained new perspectives of my work.	4.12	0.67
10.	The courses enabled me to enhance my learning ability.	4.25	0.65
11.	I learnt extensively from my courses.	4.24	0.66
	Total Mean	4.19	0.65

A comparative analysis between genders

The comparative analysis in Table 3 showed that there was a significant difference on the overall effect of the institutional transactional presence between the genders with higher means recorded for male students ($\bar{x}=4.15$) compared to female students ($\bar{x}=3.99$). The male students perceived that they were more connected with the institution than the female learners. The probable reasons are that male students engage in collaborative activities with the faculties such as collaboration in live video conferencing, participate in the forum board in the LMS or make personal contact more than the female learners. Chen (1997) revealed that the presence of the faculty in the live video conferencing influences the participation rate of students. This in turn enhances the level of connectedness between the students and the institution.

Table 3: The comparative analysis for the institutional transactional presence and learning achievement between genders

	Male			Female		
	N	mean	std	N	mean	std
Institutional transactional presence	247	4.15	0.52	355	3.99	0.52
Learning achievement	248	4.25	0.47	361	4.15	0.52

* significant at 5% confidence level

When the learning achievement was considered, the results showed that there was also a significant difference between the genders with higher means achieved by male students ($x=4.25$) compared to female students ($x=4.15$). There are many possible reasons attributed to these results. The most plausible reason would be that male students are able to solve problems related to the course contents more than female students. They obtain more help and assistance from peers as well as from the faculty in solving the problems they encounter. There is also a possibility that male learners are more proficient in using the ICT tools in learning compared to female learners. They enjoy using technology in learning and this leads to a higher learning achievement.

Other reasons that can be attributed to the results obtained would be that the male students are more technically minded than the female students. As such, the male students could solve technical problems such as those related to the use of the Learning Management System (LMS) via the support they receive from peers as well as from the institution more readily than the female students. In this way, male students benefit more in terms of learning than the female learners. Kirkup (1988) reported that more male students access the computer at home or workplace than female students. The experience in computer classes at the school level also contributed more obstacles to an equal participation of female students in ICT related learning activities at the university level. The negative image that the ICT related devices or tools are "male toys" also provides a barrier to female learners' participation and as a result, the female learners possess less experience and confidence in using the ICT related tools in teaching and learning (Von Primmer & Rossie, 1988).

CONCLUSION

This article reported on the comparative study between genders in terms of the institutional transactional presence and learning achievement. At a 5% confidence level, the results show that male students perceive that they are more connected with the institution, learn more and have more access to the faculty than the female learners. This in turn empowers the male learners with a higher level of belief of connectedness to the institution and a higher learning achievement than the female learners. Appropriate action has to be taken to narrow the gap by providing more access to the faculty to the female learners. This includes making personal contacts by the faculty as well as allocating more time for the female learners when meeting them face-to-face during tutorials/lectures at the time of the annual intensive course.

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A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR CUSTOMER VALUE WITHIN A DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

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Abstract: This paper reviews the concept of customer value and applies it to distribution strategy. There is a difficulty in defining customer value due to its subjectivity yet it is imperative for long term productivity and profitability. Marketers thus, must make maximizing customer value an explicit and measured business goal. Stemming from value chain analyses, distributions' objective is to determine appropriate customer service levels, and to manage effectively the cost/service tradeoffs. Distribution decisions are more enduring than the other marketing mix variables. Management needs to search for distribution economics in inventory control, warehouse locations, and transportation modes. The paper conceptualizes customer value in a distribution system as the interactions among customer service, order cycle time, inventory, warehouses, transport and customer complaints. Requisite hypotheses are proposed based on the conceptual framework and a study proposed to empirically investigate the robustness of the hypotheses. The conceptual framework is a tool that can focus managers in designing distribution strategies within value-bases domains. The model can guide management thinking in configuring customer value in a distribution system.

Key words: customer value; distribution system; customer service; order cycle time; inventory; warehouses; customer complaints.

INTRODUCTION

Many authors acknowledge the difficulties involved in defining customer value (Piercy & Morgan, 1997; Woodruff, 1997). These difficulties stem from the subjectivity and ambiguity of value, which is compounded by the fact that customer value being a dynamic concept, evolves over time (Jaworski & Kohli, 1993; Naumann, 1995). There is general agreement that customer value is determined by customers' perception not by suppliers' assumptions or intentions (Belasco & Stayer, 1993; Anderson & Narus, 1998; Woodruff & Gardial, 1996; Zeithaml, 1988). Value is

defined by the customer in the marketplace not by the supplier in the factory (Webster, 1994); it is “not what the producer puts in, but what the customer gets out” (Doyle, 1989). The role of customers in generating ideas has already been recognized by many authors (e.g., Möller, 2006; Yakhlef, 2005; Gibbert, Leibold & Probst, 2002). It is a widely accepted fact that in knowledge economies, customers are not simply passive audiences but they are active knowledge partners (Leibold, et al., 2005). Gibbert, et al. (2002) point out that customers’ input about their contexts and perception of services are substantial and valuable to organizations; and yet only a few organizations actually manage well “their perhaps most precious resource: their clients’ knowledge.”

Definitions of customer value can be grouped into three categories, with some variations within each category. These include value component models, utilitarian or benefits/cost ratio models, and means-ends models. According to Evans (2002) customer value management (CVM) aims to improve the productivity of marketing activity and the profitability of business by identifying the value of different customer segments and aligning marketing strategies, plans and resourcing accordingly. Customer value management is the next buzz word for marketers after concepts like relationship marketing have gained solid footing in enterprises. Loyal customers are both a scarce resource and a source of value. How can business managers nurture this crucial asset? For a start, companies must make maximizing customer value an explicit and measured business goal. This is no mean task for many brick and mortar companies. Customer value is highly intangible and has no specific pointer to its execution. Customer value management (CVM) may be seen as managing each customer relationship with the goal of achieving maximum lifetime profit from the entire customer base. CVM enables companies to take full advantage of the economics of loyalty by increasing retention, reducing risk, and amortizing acquisition costs over a longer and more profitable period of engagement. It shifts the focus of the enterprise from managing products or marketing campaigns to managing the profitability of each individual customer over the entire life of the relationship (Gebert et al, 2003). It is customers that have the business and not the programs we so often are keen to manage. An understanding of this unique concept will definitely alter our perception of the business processes and the kind of training offered to prospective managers.

Economic value to the customer is the fundamental premise underlying value-based strategies. As such, it is the starting point for a careful analysis of customer value. Marketers need to evaluate all of the customers’ costs related to buying a product or service. The selling price of the vendor’s product then is compared to that of a reference product offered by competitors. Through a comparison of the incremental value of both products, the marketer can establish a price that reflects the relative value of the product to the customer. A product whose relative value is higher than the reference product will occupy a larger and probably more important section in the customer’s mind. The converse is true for products whose relative value seem lower than the reference product. Such goods are seen to be inferior in the eyes of the customer. It is important to note that the customer is a strategic element in a company’s downstream supply chain (Xu, Kaye, & Duan, 2003). She is in the layer closest to the organization’s task environment that has direct transaction with it. Changes in the type of customers, behavior and patterns of customers have direct impact on the firm’s future strategy and prosperity (Xu & Walton, 2005). Satisfying customers is pre-eminent in differentiating a company’s product from its competitors’ and probably the central role of marketing. Indeed it is the basis for advocating for the marketing concept and must not escape the eye of any keen marketing strategist. A clear understanding of the concept of value becomes essential for the success of the value-based strategies (Woodruff, 1997).

Customers are value maximizers within the bounds of search costs, limited knowledge, mobility and income (Lilien, Kotler, & Moorthy, 2003). They form an expectation of value and act on it. A workable tactic here is to aid the customer in forming this expectation through a careful study of the market and aptly communicating those items in the product offering that point to that value. Customers will buy from the firm that they perceive offers the highest customer delivered value. This analysis may be executed speedily especially when the customer is highly involved purchase situation or over long periods of time when there is no time pressure. Marketers must be weary of what messages target customers are consuming long before their offering is in place for attention and action. Customer value is a ratio between what the customer gets and what she gives. She gets benefits and assumes costs. The benefits include both functional and emotional benefits. Functional benefits are attributable to the product in question whereas emotional benefits, hedonic value, are largely dependent on the customer. The costs include monetary costs, time costs, energy costs and psychic costs. Thus customer value is a combination of quality, service and price (Kotler & Armstrong, 1994). Reichheld and Sasser (1990) showed that, on average, a five percentage point’s increase in customer retention leads to between 40-50 percent increase in the net present value profits. Reichheld (1994) found that customers who describe themselves as satisfied are not necessarily loyal. He reported that 60-80 percent defecting customers reported they had been “satisfied” or “very satisfied” on the last satisfaction

survey prior to their defection. Reichheld & Sasser (1990) reported that Xerox found that its completely satisfied customers were six times more likely to repurchase a Xerox product or service than its merely satisfied customers. The literature shows that loyalty and profits are strongly linked to value created to customers (Khalifa, 2004).

CUSTOMER VALUE IN A DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Porter (1985) proposed the value chain analysis as a tool for identifying ways to create more customer value. He asserted that every firm is a collection of activities that are performed to design, produce, market, deliver, and support its products. He contended that successful firms needed to look for competitive advantages beyond their own operations, into the value chains of their suppliers, distributors and customers. And if his analysis was true, many companies have partnered with specific suppliers and distributors to create superior value-delivery networks (Kotler, 2001). Customer value is becoming increasingly used in strategy and marketing literature in recent years. Needless to say, it is considered central to competitive advantage and long-term success of business organizations (Khalifa, 2004). Consequently, a great importance is attached to this concept by both practitioners and theorists.

The notion of 'value-based business strategy' has become a central feature of strategy and economics as taught in business schools (Saloner, Shepard & Podolny, 2001; Besanko, Dranove, Shanley & Schaefer, 2004; Gans, MacDonald & Ryall, 2005). It is a term coined in a highly influential paper by Brandenburger and Stuart (1996) and popularized by Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996). Brandenburger and Stuart (1996) offer an exact definition of the value that can be created by firms transacting with suppliers and buyers. This naturally leads to the notion of 'added value,' a measure of a firm's contribution to the aggregate value produced in a given market. As Brandenburger and Stuart (1996) argue, a firm's added value imposes an upper bound on the value it can appropriate.

Distribution objectives seek to determine appropriate customer service levels, and to manage effectively the cost/service tradeoffs (Bookbinder & Lynch, 1997). The importance of superior customer value is acknowledged in most business strategy models (Cravens et al., 1997). Walters and Lancaster (1999) explored the notion of what is meant by customer value and summarized in terms of its involvement in delivering the product/service attributes, considered necessary to create customer satisfaction. They suggested that value delivery comprises all those activities involved in delivering the product-service attributes that are considered to be necessary to create customer satisfaction and maintain an ongoing, long-term relationship with customers and in so doing build a competitive advantage.

Distribution decisions are more enduring than the other marketing mix variables. Management needs to search for distribution economics in inventory control, warehouse locations, and transportation modes (Kotler, 2001). Senge (1990) described a situation in which a strong sales surge causes the company to fall behind in meeting delivery dates. Management needs to identify the real bottlenecks and invest in more production and distribution capacity. Stimulating channel members to top performance must start with understanding their needs and wants. Producers vary in skill in managing distributors. This is a clear opportunity for differentiation. Producers can draw either coercive, reward, legitimate, expert or referent power to elicit cooperation. Intermediaries can aim for a relationship based on cooperation, partnership, or distributor programming (Kotler, 2001; Rosenbloom, 1995).

Narus and Anderson (1987) identified four ways distributors strengthened their relationships with manufacturers. These included obtaining a clear agreement with their manufacturers about their expected functions in the marketing channel; gaining insight into the manufacturers' requirements by visiting their plants and attending manufacturer association conventions and trade shows; fulfilling their commitments to the manufacturer by meeting the volume targets, paying bills promptly, and feeding back customer information to their manufacturers; and identifying and offering value-added services to help their suppliers.

Casado, Sellers and Más (2004) offer two propositions on customer loyalty. Firstly, less customer loyalty implies a lower probability of continuing to purchase from the same provider (Fornell, 1992), which will be reflected by lower company returns, as less loyalty jeopardizes a steady stream of future cash flow (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990; Rust & Zahorik, 1993; Rust, Zahorik, & Keiningham, 1994, 1995). Secondly, lower customer retention should increase a company's future transaction costs as it will no longer benefit from the purchase of other goods and services

(offered by the firm) by satisfied customers, or the price premiums which satisfied customers are willing to pay (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990). Moreover, the company needs to spend heavily (advertising, promotions and sales costs) to gain new customers (Zeithaml, 1988). Additionally, dissatisfied customers are most likely to engage in negative word-of-mouth (Reichheld & Sasser, 1990), which could reduce the effectiveness of advertising and the attractiveness of warranties (Anderson, Fornell, & Lehman, 1994).

THE RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN CUSTOMER VALUE AND DISTRIBUTION

We can conceptualize customer value in a distribution system as the interactions among customer service, order cycle time, inventory, warehouses, transport and customer complaints (Aila, 2007). The interactions are depicted in Figure 1 below. A linear relationship is proposed to interact between the respective variables. We thereafter discuss each of the variables.

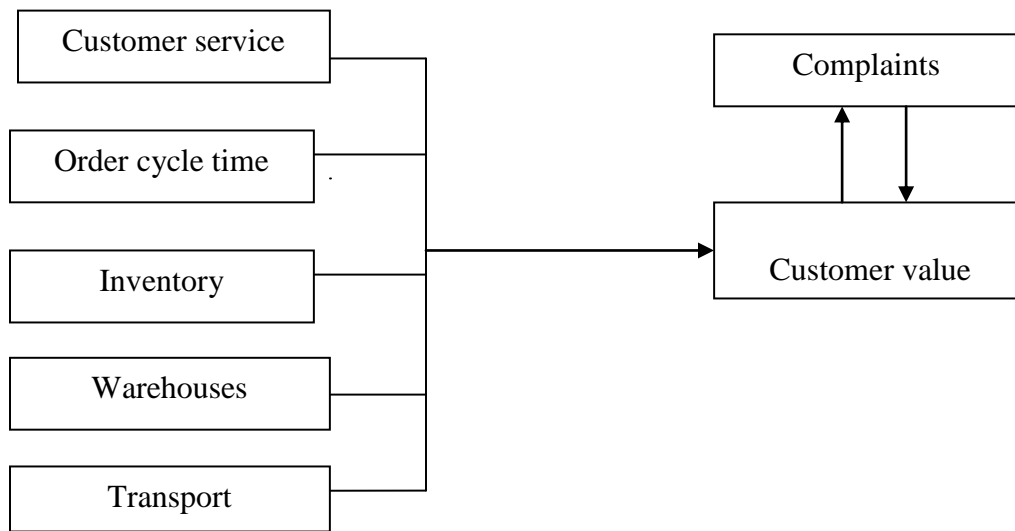


Figure 1: *Conceptual framework for customer value in a distribution system.*

Customer service

Customer service is here conceptualized as the service offered by the producer to his distributors. A firm’s middlemen are downstream customers immediately within its control domain. Distributors include all intermediaries that intervene between the producer and his ultimate customers. The functions that both the producer and distributor perform are altogether regarded as service and are the basis for determining long-term profitability. The quality of services offered impacts on perceived customer value. Service quality is big business (Sylvester, Tate & Johnstone, 2009). It can be a major differentiator between competitors (Davenport et al., 2001; Porter, 1980). Delivering quality service is an essential component of customer retention.

An additional driver comes from customer expectations (Burn & Robins, 2001). Customers now have far greater access to information and demand personalized experiences as opposed to simply acquiring goods and services. A customer driven organization is one that maintains a focus on the needs and expectations of customers both spoken and unspoken in the creation and/or improvement of the product or service provided. Successful firms have recognized that developing customer focus is an absolute necessity (Cavanagh & Livingston 1997; Schoeniger, 2000). Customer service can thus be hypothesized as:

$$H_1 : \text{As customer service increases so does customer value.}$$

H₂ : High service quality leads to high customer service.

H₃ : High customer expectations demands high customer service.

Order cycle time

Order cycle time is time lapsed between placing an order and receipt of delivery. It is critical to the customer. This cycle involves many steps, including order transmission by salesperson, order entry and customer credit check, inventory and production scheduling, order and invoice shipment, and receipt payment. Companies today greatly attempt to shorten this cycle (Kotler, 2001). A long order cycle time often lowers customer's satisfaction. This in turn lowers the company's profit levels. A shorter order cycle time on the contrary is the most envisages and tends to increase customer satisfaction. Increased customer satisfaction is one sure way to increase a firm's profitability level. Time and transportation costs seem to be inversely related (Keh & Teo, 2001). In other words, as the company attempts to meet time demands, the transportation mode chosen for faster delivery will tend to be more expensive than ordinary means of transportation. Consequently, when time is not critical, cheaper means of transportation can be afforded. Companies currently use interventions in computer technologies to speed these processes (Sheridan, 1999).

Other important concepts here include order cycle consistency, which is the extent to which order cycle time varies. Consistency promises predictability and allows exploitation of opportunities (demand) as they arise. Suppliers who deliver products consistently over periods of time are creating an advantage to themselves. Consistency reduces amount of worry for the purchaser and aids timely execution of programs. Order accuracy is the degree to which items shipped meet order specifications. Accuracy is a critical element of the order especially where the distributor amalgamates the consignment for transshipment. Inaccurate orders are seldom accepted and is a recipe for complaints. Order completeness is the extent that items ordered are totally filled when the order is assembled for shipment. And order condition, the damage level at the receipt time (Gross, Banting, Meredith & Ford, 2000). All these five concepts affect the quality of service rendered to the distributors. They either limit or enhance his sales hence profits. Order cycle time can thus be conceptualized as:

H₄ : Order cycle time is inversely related to customer value

H₅ : Order cycle consistency increases customer value

H₆ : Order accuracy, completeness, and condition vary as customer value

Inventory

Stock levels represent a major distribution strategy decision. Stocks are held so that sufficient goods are available to meet anticipated demand, to absorb variations in demand and production, to take advantage of bulk purchasing discounts, to meet possible shortages in the future, to absorb seasonal fluctuations in usage or demand, and to enable production processes to flow smoothly and efficiently. Sub-optimization and other inefficiencies may result in large stocks or in stock outs (Lucey, 2002).

Storage costs reflect the opportunity cost of tying up capital in inventory and allocating physical storage cost to it. Storage cost is considered a part of physical input in that customers have to sacrifice their own tangibles (Keh and Teo, 2001) for instance warehouses and route trucks. Stocks represent an investment that must be available to produce sales, thus directly linked sales.

Salespeople desire their companies to carry sufficient stocks to fulfill all customer orders immediately. However, this is not cost effective. Inventory costs increase at an increasing rate as the customer service level approaches 100 percent. Management desires to know by how much sales and profit would increase as a result of carrying larger inventories and promising faster order fulfillment times, and then make a decision. Management must know when to order-the reorder level. How much to order is equally important decision. The firm needs to balance order-processing costs and inventory-carrying costs. Marketing managers who want their companies to carry larger inventories need to show that the larger inventories would produce incremental gross profit to exceed incremental

inventory-carrying costs. Optimal order quantity can be obtained by observing how order-processing costs and inventory-carrying costs sum up at different order levels (Kotler, 2001). Inventory can be hypothesized as:

H₇ : Increasing inventory will increase customer value until an optimal level is reached.

Warehouses

Warehousing function concerns the physical holding of finished products before they are dispatched to vendors. Public warehouses, bonded warehouses or privately owned warehouses may be used for such functions. Several storage facilities may be used especially for transit goods. These include containers, transit sheds, in-transit storage, hold-on-dock storage.

Warehouses represent sizeable investments that a producer must be cognizant of. They resolve time and place utilities. (Coyle, Bardi & Langley, 1992). Proximity of warehouses to customer bases builds on the marketing concept and increases customer value (Aila, 2007). Customers are the reason for the firm's existence and thus must be satisfied timely. Geographic locations of warehouses and their sizes are important decisions for logisticians. A firm must examine location in a trade-off perspective (Coyle, Bardi & Langley, 1992). The firm must achieve a desired customer service level at the least total distribution cost. The chosen locations reflect a company's overt intent to serve the respective markets in a consistent fashion. The decisions here are however more enduring and may be very costly to change. Management must thus make proper consideration of all relevant factors.

H₈ : Warehouse proximity to customers determines customer value.

H₉ : Distribution costs increase with increase in geographic locations.

Transportation

Coyle, Bardi and Langley (1992) indicate that a major focus in logistics is upon the physical movement or flow of goods, or upon the network that moves the product. This network is composed of transportation agencies that provide the service for the firm. The transportation area is usually responsible for selecting the mode or modes of transportation used in moving the firms finished goods or for developing private transportation as an alternative. Companies can usually trade off increased transportation costs against decreased lost sales costs (Coyle, Bardi and Langley 1992). Companies however often spend more for inventory and transportation almost simultaneously to reduce the cost of lost sales. Transportation can be hypothesized as :

H₁₀ : Transportation mode choice varies with customer value

H₁₁ : There is a trade off between increased transportation costs and lost sales costs.

Customer complaints

Complaints should be recognized as integral and necessary part of the business environment (Wagner, 1994). They are opportunities to maintain past accounts and to secure new ones. They should not be treated as problems as such (Aila, 2007). Wagner (1994) considered several prerequisites to the development of effective customer complaint management in distribution. He provided a sequential approach to handling complaints and presented a programme for transforming the theory into practice. A customer-centric organization makes it easy for its customers to deliver suggestions and complaints. These information flows provide companies with many good ideas and enable them to act quickly to resolve problems (Kotler, 2001).

H₁₂ : Customer complaints do not affect customer value

Customer value

Occasionally, within the marketing literature, customer value is represented by the word ‘value’ alone and is given a demand-side orientation by the context in which it is used. For example, when Bolton, Kannan and Bramlett (2000:97) state, “Customers make repatronage decisions on the basis of their predictions concerning the value of a future product/service ...”; or where Heskett, et al (1994:166) claim “Value drives customer satisfaction”; or when Hallowell (1996:28) suggests “satisfaction is the customer’s perception of the value received in a transaction or relationship ...”, each appears to be addressing a similar concept, customer value.

H₁₃: Customers perceive value and express it in terms of satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

A study needs to be designed taking into account the tenets of exploratory research and scale development (Churchill 1979; Nunnally, 1978) utilizing qualitative investigation techniques including literature review, observation of existing practices, focus groups, and in-depth interviews. This qualitative investigation may be designed to verify the potential variables functioning as antecedents, moderators, and outcomes of successful customer value management in a distribution system as already hypothesized. A set of distributors attached to specified producers may be studied to test the hypotheses empirically and ground the conceptual framework as described here.

CONCLUSIONS

Brownlie and Saren (1997); however, argue that “Customer value is a dynamic and transformational higher level construct which should not be reduced to a low-level operational measurement” (p. 13). Such criticism would bring about a robust exchange from Anderson and Narus (1998) for whom customer value is stated simply in terms of dollars and hours, but would align more easily with a Woodruff and Gardial (1996) perspective that relies on excavatory means-end laddering techniques to unfold evidence of consumers’ deepest desires (Woodall, 2003).

Future research studies and implications for management

The conceptual framework stated here has not been tested. It thus needs empirical investigation to ascertain its soundness and robustness. Scales need to be developed and tested to ensure they measure the desired variables. Presently, the conceptual framework is a tool that can focus managers in designing distribution strategies within value-bases domains. The tested model can guide management thinking in configuring customer value in a distribution system.

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NIGERIA'S 1999 CONSTITUTIONS AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS (IGR): NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT

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Abstract: Intergovernmental Relations (IGR) describes the gamut of activities or interactions that takes place between or among the different levels of government within a country. It covers the combinations and permutations of relationship among them. Events over the years in Nigeria's federation have shown the over-dominance of the federal government in relation to IGR, which is not proper, the existing mechanisms and institutions for intergovernmental policy coordination are very weak and need to be improved and strengthened. This paper analyses the concept of IGR in relation to its meaning, kinds and approaches to it; the paper discusses the IGR with respect to Nigeria's 1999 Constitution; and finally, the paper proffers suggestions towards an improved IGR in Nigeria.

Keyword: intergovernmental relations; 1999 constitution; federalism/federation; Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The term 'intergovernmental relations' or 'IGR' is 'commonly used to refer to relations between central, regional and local governments, as well as governments between any one level, that facilitate the attainment of common goals through co-operation' (Opeskin 2001 : 1). The term is 'commonly used to describe the interactions between the different levels of government within the state' (Adamolekun 2002: 60).

Basically, IGR refers to the communication of orders of government in a federation; it assumes the need for interdependence among or between the orders of government. However, the patterns of IGR vary markedly among federal countries (Simeon, 2004). Federalism is a result of a contract or agreement among the federating units, and the coordination among them is expedient for the smooth running of the federation. Federalism reflects the characteristics of a system that is a dynamic whole and made up of various parts. For efficiency and viability, each and every part must work co-ordinately, otherwise, the system collapses; this is true of a federation. No component part should work at cross purpose against the idea of federalism. Thus, for coordination to exist, interrelationship among the federating units is a necessity among the three levels of government of federations including Nigeria. According to Cameron (2004), the operation and practice of IGR may differ along the following lines, the degree of formal institutionalization, the extent to which they are decision-making in character, and the degree of transparency that exist in their operations.

Historical experiments in Nigeria have revealed that there exists the over-dominance of the federal government at the expense of the other levels of government regarding IGR; this is improper in an ideal federalism. Nigeria's 1999 Constitution slits the main public sector responsibilities across various government levels. Each level of government 'is required to operate within its area of jurisdiction, and any action to the contrary is null and void to the extent of its inconsistency with the law' (Okafor 2010: 127). Thus, no sole government could deliver radical improvements in service delivery on its own, which means that coordination and cooperation are pre-requisites. This notwithstanding, the existing mechanisms and institutions for intergovernmental policy coordination are very weak and need to be strengthened (Freinkman, 2007).

This paper is divided into three sections. The first section analyzes the concept of intergovernmental Relations (IGR) in relation to its meaning, kinds and approaches to it. The second section analyzes same in relation to Nigeria's 1999 Constitution while the last section proffers suggestions towards an improved intergovernmental Relations (IGR) in Nigeria.

Intergovernmental Relations (IGR): An Analysis

Cameron (1994: 23) refers to intergovernmental relations (IGR) as 'the geographical division of powers among the various spheres of government in the nation-state.' He goes further to state that the division of powers implies that each structure has a unique and independent role to play in the intergovernmental domain. In the words of Wright (1988: 1), intergovernmental relations (IGR) is 'an interacting network of institutions at national, provincial and local levels, created and refined to enable the various parts of government to cohere in a manner which is appropriate to its institutional arrangements.' According to Ogunna (1996: 350), intergovernmental relations (IGR) refers to 'the complex pattern of interactions, cooperation and inter-dependence between two or more levels of government.' From these definitions, it can be inferred that IGR refers to the gamut activities or interactions which takes place between and among the different levels of government within a country. Also covered by IGR are the combinations and permutations of relationships among these levels of government within a country. It is important to state that in IGR, each level of government has an independent and unique role to play; for example, the local level has an independent role to play with the view to achieving common goals to the benefit and well-being of the entire country.

There are four major approaches to IGR and they are the democratic approach; constitutional/legal approach; financial approach; and the normative-operational approach. The first approach to the study of IGR which is the democratic approach stresses provincial and local government's right to self determination to the extent of regarding such governmental bodies as independent institutions. In view of this, 'advocates of this approach do not support centralization of authority; rather they are stoutly in favour of greater devolution to subordinate authorities' (Hattingh 1998: 11-12). The views held by these advocates are separatist-inclined as they stress the autonomous right of existence of every level of government in itself as they emphasize, even at sacrificing community values, a regional uniqueness. This stance of 'stressing of a single value, that is, democratic principles at the expense of other values contradicts the basis of participation within a total governmental hierarchy' (Roux et al 1997: 171). As for second approach which is the constitutional/legal approach, it was historically advocated by the federalist movement in the United States in the 18th and 19th centuries; 'the movement equally accepted the existing hierarchy of governments as a constitutional fact and the Constitution which was considered as an instrument for achieving harmony, was seen as the basis for the determination of intergovernmental relations' (Roux et al 1997: 171). The democratic approach simply suggests that the Constitution and other legislative provisions of a country may be used as a point of departure in studying IGR. Corroborating this, Hattingh (1998: 11) states that 'the democratic approach accepts the factual information contained in legislation as a constant until amended by subsequent legislation; and also accepts that relations between governmental bodies exist exclusively within the framework of clauses permitting such relations.'

The third approach to IGR is the financial approach; the approach suggests an equitable sharing of revenue raised nationally among the national and other levels of government in a country. Further to this, the approach suggests the determination of each level of government's equitable share of the revenue; any other allocations accrued to it from the national government's share of the revenue; and any conditions on which such allocations may be made. It is important to note that this financial approach applies to different kinds of government; it is not associated with fiscal decentralisation in officially declared federations only; it is applicable even to non-federal states that have got no formal federal constitutional arrangement in the sense that they encompass different levels of government which

have de facto decision making authority (King, 1984; Gronrdijk, 2002; Sharma, 2005a). What this means is that while fiscal federalism in a federal state constitutes a set of guiding principles, a guiding concept that helps in designing financial relations between the national and sub-national levels of the government, fiscal decentralization in non-federal states on the other hand is a process of applying such principles (Sharma, 2005b). The last approach to IGR is the normative-operational approach; 'it scrutinizes the significance of considering all relevant norms to analyze the total operational reality of governmental relations without one aspect of governmental relations being given too much prominence at the expense of another' (Hattingh 1998: 14). Of importance are 'group norms or value objectives as the normative-operational approach consists of an investigation of what is or should be desirable' (Hattingh 1998: 14). In as much as intergovernmental relations are practiced within a public administration environment, it follows that 'there are norms and values to which it should subscribe' (Mathebula 2004: 131). In view of this, the behaviour of public officials in performance of their duties should be guided by these norms and values.

There are two kinds of intergovernmental relations and these are vertical and horizontal relations. We have vertical relations where the central government interacts with the states or localities, or where the states interact with the localities. It is horizontal relations when government at the same level interact, for example, inter-state or inter-local interactions. In a federal system, a complete analysis of IGR should at least cover the following six classes of relations: central-state, central-state-local, central-local, state-local, state-state and local.

Wright (1988) and Bogdanor (1991) state some of the essential features of IGR to include all governmental unit (central, state and local); actions of official and their attitudes (purposeful behaviour and perception of other participant in the system); regular interactions among officials (day to day contacts, practical working relationship and continuity of action patterns); all public officials (elected and appointed); and financial policy issues (intergovernmental revenues and expenditures, borrowing and debt, policy formulation and implementation policy content - distributive and regulatory issues).

Wright (1988) further identifies three different models of IGR which are coordinate or separated authority, inclusive authority and overlapping authority model. As for the coordinated or separated authority model in relation to constitutional status, national and state governments are created by the Constitution and their powers are derived therefrom; and the local governments are usually created by the state. In relation to the nature of power relations, relationships between two coequal government units are distinctly separated. The Supreme Court is the arbiter and the national-state relations are relatively modest as the two levels are only tangentially linked. Also, the powers of the two levels are exercised in a separated independent and autonomous fashion. And in relation to authority pattern, autonomy is minimal or nil in the local governments. This model is found in classical federalism and Nigeria practiced such between 1954 and 1966. As for the inclusive authority model in relation to constitutional status, the Constitution may or may not recognize and allocate powers to the levels of government. In relation to the nature of power relations, states and local governments are subordinate to the national government. They cannot challenge the centre. In relation to the authority pattern, there is no share of the state authority outside the national control and also no sphere of local authority outside the state control. This model is synonymous with centralizing federalism and Nigeria practiced it under the military rule (1966-1979 and 1983 - 1999). The last which is the overlapping model has a kind of constitutional status where the Constitution defines areas of autonomous actions by the respective jurisdictions (national, state and local). In relation to the nature of power relations, interactions among the three coequal levels of government, that is, the national, state and local relations are governed by the Constitution and each unit can defend its constitutional powers, hence, there is limited and dispersed power. In relation to authority patterns, the negotiation of the terms of exchange or agreement is interlocking, interdependent, balanced and bargaining. Also, the substantial areas of governmental operations involve national, state and local officials simultaneously. Finally, there is a high degree of potential or actual independence signalling modest and uncertain areas of autonomy. This model was envisaged under both the 1979 and 1999 constitutions.

The 1999 Constitution and IGR

The 1999 constitution metamorphosed from the 1979 Constitution. The Constitution failed to pass through the normal constitutional making process as it was drafted in hurry. General Abdulsalami Abubakar and the Provisional Ruling Council (PRC) introduced the Constitution without consulting the opinion of the public. In drafting the Constitution, they had less than six months (November 11th 1998 - May 5th, 1999) which was too short for a

country traumatized and still reeling in uncertainty and fear following the aftermath of the regime of General Abacha. The promulgation of Decree No: 24 titled "Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Promulgation) Decree 1999" on May 5th, 1999 ushered in the Constitution. The Constitution retained the provisions of the 1979 Constitution with some amendments. It came into force on May 29th, 1999. Regarding IGR, the 1999 Constitution anticipates relationships among 811 government units, that is one central government, 36 states and 774 local government (with the inclusion of those at the Federal Capital Territory (FCT)). Section 7 (1) guarantees the system of democratically elected local government but makes it a state responsibility to ensure their existence under a law providing for their establishment, structure, composition and functions.

Roberts (1999) argues that from the viewpoint of constitutional jurisprudence, the important issue is the extent to which constitutional provisions will enhance IGR within the framework of federalism. He further assesses this in respect of the 1999 Constitution using three of the six basic combinations identified in the previous segment. These chosen three according to him are the areas where constitutional provisions defining IGR are considered significant. He lists them as national - state - local, national - state and state - local relations. In these Robert's chosen three, major areas where IGR occurs include power relations; revenue allocation; and provision of certain welfare and infrastructural facilities. Regarding allocation of power, the federal government has matters contained in Exclusive Legislative List allocated to it (Second Schedule Part 1); both the federal and state governments have matters allocated to them in the Concurrent Legislative List (Second Schedule, Part II), they include the exclusive functions of a local government council and the participatory state/local government functions (Fourth Schedule). But where there is a conflict between federal and state laws, that of the former takes preference (Section 4(5)); and also where the state executive action clashes with that of the federal, that of the latter supersedes (Section 5(3)). This implies that the federal government can intervene in any matter of public importance if it chooses to do so. It is clear that the constitutional provisions relating to power relations are not likely to enhance IGR as powers are so concentrated at the centre in such a manner capable of turning the states and by extension, the local governments to political simpletons always prostrating for political favours from the centre as 66 specific and 2 omnibus items virtually covering the entire range of public affairs are placed in the Exclusive Legislative List.

In relation to revenue sharing arrangement, the 1999 Constitution stipulates an arrangement that allows for statutory allocation of public revenue from the federation account held at the centre to states and local governments (Section 7(6); 162(1) - (8)). The federation may also give grants to a state to supplement the revenue of that state with the prescription of the National Assembly; this is called the Federal grants-in-aid (Section 164(1)). This fiscal dominance of the federal government is a very great challenge to fiscal federalism. Onimode (1999) refers to this as fiscal unitarism and according to him, it can be adduced to the unified military structure where authority and power are centralized at the top and command and instruction are dictated from top to bottom. With this, it is clear that this dominance will continue to work against the progress and development of the other lower levels of government. In respect to the provision of certain welfare and infrastructural facilities, the different levels of government inter-relate in the pursuit of certain programmes of development. Examples of such programmes include Universal Basic Education (UBE) and the Expanded Programme on Immunization (EPI). They also inter-relate in the provision of infrastructural facilities such as construction of roads electrification etc. Regarding this, it is clear that the economic predominance of the centre could engender political attitudes that are antithetical to federal practice, including fierce struggles for the control of the centre as this will result in a politicized and conflicting system of IGR with little room for cooperation (Roberts, 1999). With such predominance, the Federal Government could even behave as if it has more stakes in some state than others along political party line (Gboyega, 1990).

The provisions of the 1999 Constitution have in all, emphasized vertical interaction among the three levels of government rather than horizontal relationships. This according to Roberts (1999) could impose limitations to the extent of cooperation among the levels of government and instead promote a dependency structure that would promote the inclusive authority model of IGR. Resistance to the evolution of such structure by sub-national levels of government would result in oppositional politics and negative IGR. Hence, for an improved IGR, some amendments are necessary to Nigeria's 1999 Constitution.

Suggestions towards Amendments to the 1999 Constitution to Guarantee an Improved IGR

The suggestions below are proffered towards amendments to the 1999 Constitution to guarantee an IGR that could bring about economic prosperity and social harmony within the Nigerian state:

1. *Redistribution of Powers:* For an improved IGR to occur in Nigeria, the intergovernmental allocation of powers contained in the second schedule of the 1999 Constitution should be redistributed in favour of the state governments. The federal government's powers should be reduced such that they do not exceed those listed in the 1963 Constitution where its functions were those whose scope of benefits were national like defence, currency, foreign trade etc. By so doing, the states will be allowed a fair and just exercise of power and control over their resources in exchange for their consent to construct and sustain a united Nigeria (Wayas, 1998).
2. *Revenue Allocation Formula:* This should be reviewed in favour of the States and local government councils. They should be given a larger share of the Federation Account, something in the region of 35 to 40%. Also, the states and the local government councils should adopt a policy of self-sufficiency in resources by exploring and exploiting all available resources that can bring tangible revenues and by managing such resources wisely and in a way that the present trend of heavy dependence of the states and councils on the federal governments could be drastically reduced and reversed.
3. *Horizontal IGR:* The 1999 Constitution allows room for some inter-state political communication, e.g. through the instrumentality of National Council of State. Yet, it is possible to specify a legislative list of subjects on which states could cooperate (Roberts, 1999). If such function attract grants. Such horizontal IGR would be encouraged. Roberts (1999) further states that account should also be taken of IGR that are at once horizontal and vertical, like the type IGR resultant from the establishment of the Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) which involves both the federal government and a number of state governments. Such amendments should be in the second schedule.
4. *Local Autonomy:* Ab initio, the Constitution precludes autonomy for local government; the reason for this is that all good government is, of necessity local. Nigeria must continue to strive towards effective and virile Local Government. Many of the needed actions may be administrative rather than constitutional. Nevertheless, it is important for the federal government to be able to monitor IGR at all levels and take or recommend ameliorative action (Roberts, 1999).
5. *Council for IGR:* In some other federations such as the USA, Australia and India, IGR is monitored by a standing advisory council on IGR. This council recommends improvements where necessary and equally resolves any differences among the levels of government. Such a body known as the National Council on Intergovernmental Relations (NCIR) was established in Nigeria by Decree No. 89 of December 1992 but is was short-lived (Roberts, 1999). The re-establishment of the NCIR as a permanent institution under the Third schedule to the 1999 Constitution is hereby recommended.

CONCLUSION

Having identified the inadequacies in the Nigeria's 1999 Constitution in relation to IGR and having proffered suggestions towards amendments; it is hoped that concerted efforts will be made to turn the vertical interactions among the three levels of government to horizontal relations and to promote a dependency structure that would promote the inclusive authority model. To this end, a virile IGR will be enhanced.

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