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By Clarice Jobson-Mitchual

Nottingham Trent University

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Social Support and Self-Esteem as Predictors of Psychological Distress among Students with Learning Disabilities in Accra, Ghana

Clarice Jobson-Mitchual

Abstract- Using a survey research design, this study examined the extent to which social support and self-esteem predict psychological distress among students with learning disabilities at Multi Kids Inclusive Academy in Accra, Ghana. The Simple Random Sampling technique was used to select 94 students. Survey questionnaires containing the Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (Malecki & Demaray, 2002), Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (Lovibond & Lovibond, 1995), and Adapted Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (Dagnan & Sandhu, 1999) were used to collected data. Descriptive statistics, Reliability and Normality tests, Simple Linear Regression Analysis, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test within the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 application software were used to analyze data. Results indicated that Social Support from Teachers (β = .202, p = .033) and Social Support from Classmates (β = .548, p = .000) predicts psychological distress. Social Support from Parents Dimension subscale (β = -.024, p = .810), did not predict psychological distress. In addition, a significant negative relationship was found between self-concept and psychological distress. Also, differences in gender (β = -.238, p = .033) and age (β = .266, p = .017) predicts psychological distress. It was concluded that, social support students with disabilities in learning receive from their teachers and classmates, and positive self-concept protect them against psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety and stress).

I. Introduction

Going to school, studying, writing exams, among other activities captured under school-life is one of the most stress-inducing areas in the lives of young people (Khan, 2016). This is especially so among students with learning disabilities because their deficiencies make their teaching and learning more challenging (Wiesner-Groff, 2021), thus, this requires more psychosocial support (Cavioni, Grazzani & Ornaghi, 2017). Most students with learning disabilities usually struggle with persistent episodes of frustration, anxiety, depression and are treated as second-class students (Cataudella, Carta, Mascia, Masala, Petretto & Penna, 2021; Ehmke, 2021; Papanastasiou, 2017) in most parts of the world, especially in developing countries like Ghana. As a result, students with learning disabilities usually struggle with negative self-concept, have little motivation to invest more effort in their academic work, thus, causing a decline in their academic performance (Sahoo, Biswas & Padhy, 2015; Papanastasiou, 2017).

According to Jobson-Mitchual (2018) learning disability which are also known as learning disabilities are neurological in nature. They affect the processing of information, which in turn short-circuit fundamental learning abilities, and affect various subject areas like language, reading and mathematics. In addition, learning disability obstruct higher skills like time management, inability to concentrate, impaired reasoning, especially when attention is needed for a long time. The Diagnostic Statistical Manual IV (DSM-IV) of mental disorders defines learning disability as a condition in which individual's standard obtained in normal basic reading, math abilities, and written tests are below standard expected in relation to age, education, and reasoning level.

The most common forms of learning disabilities negatively affect writing, mathematical abilities and reading among students. These may be associated with other conditions like language problem, attention disorders, and behavior problems. However, they are all unique on how their impacts are felt on learning (Cataudella, et al., 2021). Examples of learning disabilities include dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia, dyspraxia, auditory processing disorder and dyspraxia. Dyslexia is a specific learning disability that disturbs reading and associated processing skills that depend on language. Even though its symptoms sometimes differ from individual to individual, it negatively affects the students' ability to read smoothly, write, spell words and remember things that has been learnt. Meanwhile, Dyscalculia is a learning disorder that renders people incapable of understanding and recalling anything related to numbers and mathematics (symbols, formulas, etc.). On the other hand, Dysgraphia is characterized by poor fine-coordination abilities and are unable to write. Also, students with Auditory Processing disorder (central auditory processing disorder) are unable to recognize the slight differences of sounds in words even in cases where the sounds come out very loud and clear enough to hear. These students are unable to tell the direction where sound is coming from.

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In rare instances they can tell the direction a sound is coming from with extreme difficulty, coupled with difficulty in filtering out confounding noise. Finally, Dyspraxia is associated with the struggle to control muscle, thereby making it difficult to move and bring the muscles under control. This causes problems in coordination, speech, language and can impede learning. This condition is often with dyslexia, dyscalculia, or attention deficit and hyperactive disorder (ADHD) (Jobson-Mitchual, 2018; Sahoo, Biswas & Padhy, 2015). Avoke and Yekple (2006) have reported learning disabilities as the most prevalent type of school related problem among other difficulties (i.e. hearing impairments, visual impairments) in most schools in Ghana. It therefore seems odd that little effort has been made to study this area research-wise (Attah, 2012).

According to Walsh (2018), learning disability is the most commonly diagnosed disability that has the most negative impact on children, adolescents, schools and society at large. In fact, in the largest group of special needs students are those with learning disabilities in North America (Shukla & Agrawal, 2015; Whitley, 2008). Learning disabilities has a negative effect on students-teacher relationships when unnoticed or when overlooked. Also, hardly are normal schools able to meet the requirements of children with learning disabilities in terms of meeting their unique academic needs (Shukla & Agrawal, 2015).

Students with learning disabilities are required go beyond the usual classroom work and do extra work compared with their counterparts who do not have learning disabilities, so as to maintain their grades with their equals (Jobson-Mitchual, 2018). As a result of this, most of them struggle with psychological distress, and require extra guidance and direction to enable them to accomplish a task successfully within a given frame of time in and outside of the classroom. This, however, does not mean lack of intelligence, but they possess a different learning method (Jobson-Mitchual, 2018). Nevertheless, most students with learning disabilities perform poorly in their academic work when compared to their non-learning disabled counterparts (Flisher, Malhotra, Nikapota & Patel, 2008; Sahoo, Biswas & Padhy, 2015; Walsh, 2018).

Over the years, various researchers have spent substantive amount of time, among other resources studying the antecedents and implications of learning disabilities. Some studies conducted in this research area have discovered that, the level of social support offered to children with learning disabilities has a direct effect on their mental well-being. In other words, children who receive higher social support from significant others (e.g. family, friends and peers) are more likely to experience less psychological distress, when compared to those who receive little or no social support from significant others (Barth, Schneider, & von Känel, 2010; Pinquart & Duberstein, 2010; Waters, Lester & Cross, 2013; Zhang et al., 2014). Hence, social support serves as a buffer against psychological distress (e.g. stress, anxiety and depression) and psychological disorders (e.g. post-traumatic stress disorder, etc.) (Gerich, 2013; Ozbay et al., 2007). Similar to their other counterparts, most children with learning disabilities easily perceive negative behaviours towards them, and when this persists it undermines their ability to adaptively cope with their disability (Rothman & Cosden, 1995). Yet, when people around them (especially their parents) offer them the needed social support it helps protect them from being psychologically distressed (Fiorillo & Sabatini, 2011; Hapke, 2015; Waters, Lester & Cross 2013; Zhang et al., 2014).

Social support as defined by Cukor and Kimmel (2017) is the extent to which one experiences a sense of belongingness within a society where one can provide and receive affection, from family, peers, and other members of the society. Scott (2020) has classified social support into four main types: emotional social support, informational social support, esteem social support and tangible social support. Tangible social support is offered when an individual is supported with assistance (e.g. given money, food, etc.) to help them manage a problem. Meanwhile, esteem social support is offered when people express their confidence and encouragement to a child with the aim of boosting their self-esteem (i.e. belief in themselves). On the other hand, informational social support has to do with giving a someone guidance, suggestion, useful information or an advice. Finally, emotional social support often involves physical comfort such as hugs or pats on the back, as well as listening to and empathizing with others (Scott, 2020).

The self-concept of student has also been found to be influenced by students' intellectual aptitude. Specifically, students with learning disabilities have been found to have lower self-concept, when compared to their counterparts who have higher intellectual aptitude (Lindeblad, Nilsson, Gustafson & Svensson, 2019; McKenzie, Murray & Derries, 2020). According to Baumeister (1999) self-concept is the manner in which an individual evaluates the awareness he or she has about himself/herself including his attitudes. Self-concept is also related to how an individual rates his worth which may include a general view of their social acceptance and their personal feelings about who they are (Bellmore & Cillessen, 2006). According to Sternke (2010) peoples' self-concept, usually develops based on their experiences and how those experiences are evaluated. The self-concept of younger people is easily changed because their life is driven by self-discovery. The direct opposite applies to older people because their self-concept is more resolute and organized because their conception about who they are set (Cherry, 2017).

Most empirical studies conducted in this research area were conducted outside Africa and in developed countries (Ramaa, 2000). In the face of this low level of knowledge about this subject, the emphases have rather been on intervention measures by researchers in Africa without going deep to have a look at the situation as it manifests in African children (Jobson-Mitchual, 2018). In addition, even though researchers have conducted some studies among students with learning disabilities, studies in this research area is far from being conclusive, especially in the area of the psychological experiences of students with learning disabilities (Walsh, 2018). It is, therefore, imperative to examine the extent to which social support and self-concept predict psychological distress among students with learning disabilities at the Multi kids Inclusive Academy in Accra, Ghana.

a) Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate the effect of social support (from parents, teachers and classmates/peers) and self-concept on psychological distress. The specific objectives of the study were:

i. To examine the relationship between social support and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.
ii. To find out the nature of relationship that exist between self-esteem and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.
iii. To ascertain whether differences in gender and age predict psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.

b) Statement of Hypothesis

i. There will be a negative correlation between social support and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.
ii. A significant negative relationship will exist between self-esteem and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.
iii. Differences in gender and age will predict psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.

II. Literature Review

a) Correlation between social support and psychological distress

Studies such as that of Hapke (2005) and Bane, Deely, Donohoe, Dooher and Flaherty (2012) have revealed that having the needed social support among students with learning disabilities goes a long way to help them cope with their condition. Specifically, it was discovered that students with learning disabilities gain a lot from a robust social support network system from parents, siblings, teachers and schoolmates (Hakpe, 2016). Nevertheless, Heiman's (2006) study which targeted 191 students with learning disability and 190 students without learning disability discovered that, students with learning disabilities saw themselves as not having much support compared with their non-handicapped counterparts. Heiman's (2006) result reinforced that of Pavri and Monda-Amaya (2001) who discovered that even though students with learning disability usually feel lonely especially when they are in school. As a result of this, students with learning disabilities actively seek social support from significant others like parents, siblings, among others (Bane et al., 2012).

One of the reasons why looking into the level of social support sought and received by students with learning disability is important, is because social support correlates with their psychological well-being (Fauziah & Muslihati, 2018). In other words, social support (from family members, peers, teachers, and coaches) leads to lower psychological distress and vice versa (Hapke, 2015). Given its benefits to people's mental health, a strong and reliable social support network may be particularly critical during adolescence because it is one of the most critical developmental stages in life (Hapke, 2015). This is because adolescents usually, experience rapid biological, social, emotional and cognitive changes that redefines the ways they engage with family members, peers, friends, and teachers (del Valle, Bravo, & Lopez, 2010; Martínez, Aricak, Graves, Peters-Myszak, & Nellis, 2011). In their research, Zhang et al. (2014) discovered that students between the ages of 13 to 16 experience psychological distress (stress and depression), and this is intense among those who have little or no social support from their peers. Zhang et al.'s (2014) result reinforced that of del Valle et al.'s (2010) finding indicated that social support among young students with learning disabilities helps in protecting them against psychological distress. In addition, these students usually depend on their peers for emotional support, and their parents for advice, assistance, and support (del Valle et al., 2010).

Similarly, Waters, Lester and Cross (2013) found that support from parents has the most significant effect on how students will cope with psychological distress. Thus, among the various sources of social support, social support received from parents has the most significant effect against psychological distress. Meanwhile, Barrett's (2012) results showed that female teenagers with learning disabilities record higher degrees of distress than their male counterparts. Adolescents who were high on how they anticipate tangible social support emotional support reported low degrees of distress (Barrette, 2012).

Nevertheless, in their research Jeena and Aswathi's (2004) result indicated that students with learning disabilities also face strained family relationship which leads to lower social support, thus, undermining their psychological wellbeing. Wendelborg, and Kvello

(2010) further found that children with disabilities often have a harder time creating strong relationships with peers, and usually face more barriers when trying to participate in extra curricula activities. As a result of this, students with learning disabilities receive less social support from significant others, thus, making them more susceptible to psychological distress (Coster et al., 2012; Wendelborg & Kvello, 2010).

b) Relationship between self-concept and psychological distress

Over the years, studies conducted among young people have revealed that there exist high levels of psychological problems among students with learning disabilities (Carroll, Maughan, Goodman, & Meltzer, 2005; Maughan & Carroll, 2006). Specifically, meta-analyses of various studies done in this research area has shown that the level of depression (Maag & Reid, 2006; Nelson & Harwood, 2011) and anxiety (Nelson & Harwood, 2011) is high among students with learning disabilities.

Further, studies; Lahane, Shah, Nagarale and Kamath (2013), Leminen (2002), Gans, Kenny and Ghany (2003), Zeleke (2007), Zigmond (1993), among others have discovered that the self-concept of students with learning disabilities is lower than students without learning disabilities. Nevertheless, the implication of this result could be well appreciated when follow-up studies such as Walsh (2018). Specifically, in his Canadian study Walsh (2018) discovered that negative self-concept among students with learning disability makes them susceptible to high psychological distress. Walsh's (2018) findings reinforced that of Fauziah and Muslihati (2018) whose result indicated that, there exist a significant negative relationship between self-concept and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. Thus, positive self-concept reduces psychological distress among students with learning disabilities (Fauziah & Muslihati, 2018).

Similarly, Tam and Hawkins (2012) examined the effect of self-concept and psychological distress (i.e. level of depression) among students diagnosed with dyslexia in Singapore. A sample size of 30 students between the ages of 8 to 13 years were used. After data analysis, result revealed that a rise in self-concept reduces symptoms of psychological distress (Tam & Hawkins, 2012). Tiga and Vashishtha's (2010) study also discovered that that self-concept predicts anxiety levels of students with learning disability. Similarly, Alesi, Rappo and Pepi (2014) discovered the existence of high levels of depression and school anxiety among students with learning disabilities who had negative self-concept. It could therefore be concluded that students who have negative self-concept are susceptible to developing psychological distress (Alesi, et al., 2014; Jobson-Mitchual, 2018; Tam & Hawkins, 2012; Tiga & Vashishtha, 2010).

From the above it could be concluded that even though some studies have been conducted in this research area, they were relatively few. In addition, most studies captured in this review were conducted outside Ghana and Africa. And considering the fact that socio-cultural environmental factors sometimes have an effect on most behavioural outcomes, it is an undeniable fact that a research gap exists, for which reason this present study hopes to address.

III. Methods

a) Research Design

The research design used in this study was a survey. Survey research design is generally versatile because it could be adjusted to suite challenging situations, and it is also suitable for quantitative studies (Creswell, 2014). The reason why a survey is the most appropriate research design was the fact that the goal of this present research and quantitative research, in general, is to generalize findings to the entire population target for this study.

b) Study Population

The target population for the study were students of Multi kids Inclusive Academy located in Accra, Ghana. Multi kids Inclusive Academy is a special school for students with various physical, developmental, and intellectual impairments. Out of these students, those with learning disabilities formed the population for this study.

c) Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The simple random sampling technique was used to select 94 students with learning disabilities. Respondents had a variety of mild to moderate learning disabilities, including dyslexia, dyscalculia, dysgraphia and ADHD. Inclusion Criteria: Respondents used in this study met the following: Firstly, they were between the ages of 10 to 18 years. Secondly, respondents were assessed and diagnosed by a professional as having a learning incapacity. Finally, respondents enrolled in the targeted school because their disability is identified chiefly at a school-going age.

d) Data Collection Tools

Questionnaires were used to collect data from respondents. The questionnaire was subdivided into three sections: Section A, B and C. Section A of the questionnaire focused on respondents' gender, age and class/form.

Sections B of the questionnaire contained the Child and Adolescent Social Support Scale (CASSS; Malecki & Demaray, 2002). The child and adolescent social support scale (CASSS) is a 60-item self-report assessment scale that measures observed social support for children in grades 3 through 12. The CASS consists of 5 subscales which focuses on five (5) potential sources of social support: Parents, Teachers

and Classmates and Close Friend. The items of the scale were reduced to 36, and were divided into three subscales: Social Support from Parents, Social Support from Teachers and Social Support from Classmates/ friends. Items in the CASSS include "My teacher helps me solve problems" and "My parents show they are proud of me." The scale is scored on a 6-point Likert scale which ranges from 1 = Never, 2 = Almost Never, 3 = Some of the Time, 4 = Most of the Time, 5 = Almost Always to 6 = Always. These three subscales scores can then be added to result in a general summed up social support score. In like manner, importance ratings are added together for all subscales and then the three subscale scores are added together for generate scores for overall social support. Psychometric properties of the measure have been thoroughly evaluated, demonstrating reliability with overall robust internal consistency of $\alpha = 0.96$, and subscales internal consistency of $\alpha = 0.93$–0.96. The reliability of test-retest is between 0.75 to 0.78, for total frequency scale. The validity of CASSS has significant associations with a correlation coefficient of 0.70 with the social support scale for children (Harter, 1985; Malecki & Demaray, 2002).

Section C of the questionnaire contained 21-item Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (DASS-21). The DASS-21 has 3-subscales: Depression, Anxiety, and Stress. The combination of the three subscales makes it a Psychological Distress scale. In other words, psychological distress as indicated in this scale is the combined score for three psychological health conditions; depression, anxiety and stress in the past week. Items in the DASS include "I found it hard to wind down", "I tended to overreact to situations" and "I felt scared". Items are scored on a 4-point scale: 0 = "Did not apply to me at all", 1 = "Some of the time (Applied to me to some degree)", 2 = "A good part of the time (Applied to me a considerable degree)", and 3 = "Most of the time (Applied to me very much)." Total scores were generated by summing up all the scores on the items on subscale basis and multiplied by a factor 2. The DASS-21 has a Cronbach's alpha of DASS-D = 0.94, DASS-A = 0.87, and DASS-S = 0.91.

The Section D of the questionnaire contained the Adapted Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale (Dagnan & Sandhu, 1999). The scale is one of the most popular measures for self-esteem (Rosenberg et al., 1989). This scale was later modified to be used for individuals suffering mental incapacities and their self-esteem using 6-items (Dagnan & Sandhu, 1999). The RSES has an internal reliability and structure that fits what Rosenberg anticipated in his self-esteem theoretical model. Items in this scale included "I like myself", "I feel that I have a lot of good qualities", etc. The scale is made up of two positive and negative worded items (Dagnan & Sandhu, 1999). Items that had negative structures were reversed scored. The respondents will be asked to respond how

they rate how much they are in favor of the items on a five point Likert scale: 1 = Never true, 2 = Hardly ever true, 3 = Sometimes True, 4 = Often True, and 5 = Almost True. Responses are scored between the range 1 to 5 for each item, and the overall score is generated by adding the scores of all items. A higher score indicated high self-esteem, whereas a lower score indicates lower self-esteem. The RSES has a Cronbach's alpha of 0.66.

e) Data Collection Procedure

The researcher used the help of some teachers and teaching assistants at the Multi kids Inclusive Academy in Accra, Ghana. During data collection, the research team presented the students with some knowledge concerning the research goals and provided clear instructions for each part of the questionnaires. Instructions were repeated to help students understand better because participants have been diagnosed with mild to moderate learning disabilities. Questions asked by curious respondents were all answered before and during the study. Ghanaian local dialect Twi, and English language were used to explain questions to respondents. The participants were assured that the test was not part of the school curriculum and would not affect their school results. The participants were made to understand that all answers were neither right nor wrong, and they were to take control of what they were responding to. Members of the research team assisted most respondents in completing their questionnaires. Out of 110 questionnaires that were given to respondents to complete, 94 completed and submitted. Respondents were engaged in small groups of 20 students, and data collection was completed within four weeks.

f) Data Analysis and Presentation

Statistical tests within the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23 application software was used to analyze data. Specifically, Descriptive statistical tests, Reliability and Normality tests, Simple Linear Regression tests, and the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test were used. Thereafter, appropriate APA tables were used to present results, followed by their interpretations.

g) Ethical Consideration

Institutional Approval was sought by acquiring an introductory letter from Methodist University College Ghana's Psychology Department. This letter was submitted to the Principal of Multi kids Inclusive Academy to seek permission to collect data from their students.

After permission was granted, students were asked to send a consent form to their parents or guardians. Guardians were required to append signatures to a consent form that students were asked to take home and return to school after obtaining

signatures of parents and giving permission for their ward to take part in the study.

Participants were assured of confidentiality and were given the opportunity that at any time they could withdraw from the study. Also parents and guardians were also given the chance to withdraw their children from participating. Consent to participate was high across both schools. Selected individuals who were not given approval to participate in the study were replaced.

Participants were not forced to partake in the study but did so voluntarily. They were given the right to withdraw from the study at any stage if they wish to. The research was friendly and caused no form of harm to the participants in any way. The dignity of the participants was prioritized. Data obtained from the study was kept under lock and key. Anonymity of their responses was also assured with further emphasis on the fact that the study was purely being used for academic purposes. The code of ethics as prescribed by the American Psychological Association was also strictly followed.

IV. Results

a) Sample Characteristics

The background information (i.e. gender, age and grade) of respondents, who are made up of 94 students with different forms of learning disabilities at the Multi Kids Inclusive Academy in Accra, Ghana, are presented in below in Table 2:

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Gender, Age and Grade.

Groups	Frequency (N)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	27	28.7
Female	67	71.3
Age		
10-14years	85	90.4
15-18years	9	9.6
Grade		
Form one	89	94.7
Form three	5	5.3
Total	94	100

Table 2 shows that 127 respondents used in this study, out of this number 28.7% were males and 71.3% were females. In addition, 90.4% of respondents were between ages 10 to 14 years whiles 9.6% were between the ages of 15 and 18years. Finally, 94.7% of respondents were in Form one whiles the remaining 5.3% were Form two students. This therefore shows that most students with learning disabilities used in this study were female Form one students who are between the ages 10 to 14 years.

b) Preliminary Analysis

The preliminary analysis of this study presents result on the descriptive statistics and normality of data (i.e. skewness, kurtosis), as well as the correlation between variables. The goal is to ascertain the extent to which data can be used for regression analysis.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on Variables

Variables	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Social Support	138.94	12.70	-.24	-1.09	.68
Social Support from Parents	*52.60*	*5.61*	*.24*	*-.74*	*.62*
Social Support from Teachers	*44.53*	*7.14*	*-.20*	*-1.16*	*.70*
Social Support from Classmates	*41.21*	*9.21*	*-.53*	*-1.25*	*.76*
Psychological Distress	20.49	12.23	-.07	-1.31	.90
Depression	*6.26*	*3.78*	*.07*	*-.91*	*.84*
Anxiety	*8.26*	*5.63*	*-.09*	*-1.19*	*.85*
Stress	*5.98*	*4.08*	*.42*	*-.63*	*.64*
Self-Concept	18.78	4.96	.52	-.65	.82

Table 3 presents results on the mean scores (M) together with their corresponding standard deviations (SD) on the variables [i.e. social support (with its subscales), psychological distress (with its subscales) and self-concept] used in this study. Observation of the result in the table indicates that all the variables fell within the required range of normality measured in terms of skewness and kurtosis. According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) normality is accepted when it falls within -1 and +1. Hence all variables were normally distributed. In addition, Cronbach alphas (α) which represented the coefficient of internal consistency have also been presented. Measures generally had satisfactory reliabilities, with alpha values ranging from .68 to .90 for the overall scales, and .62 to .85 for the subscales. Coefficient alpha that is higher than or equal to .70 is reliable (Nunnally, 1978). This therefore indicates that variables can be used in a regression analysis.

Table 4: Inter Correlation Matrix on Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Social Support	--								
2. Social Support from Parents	.656**	--							
3. Social Support from Teachers	.441**	-.036	--						
4. Social Support from Classmates	.740**	.363**	-.324**	--					
5. Psychological Distress	.479**	.168	.293**	.171	--				
6. Depression	.689**	.213	.309**	.470**	.873**	--			
7. Anxiety	.362**	.182	.233*	.117	.945**	.749**	--		
8. Stress	.271*	.033	.271**	-.084	.887**	.659**	.761**	--	
9. Self-Concept	.153	.291**	-.353**	.381**	-.204*	.093	-.231*	-.380**	--

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The inter correlation matrix as indicated in Table 4 shows that Social support with its subscales (social support from parents, social support from teachers, and social support from classmates) correlate with Psychological Distress with its subscales (depression, anxiety and stress) and Self-concept. This, therefore, shows that there is a correlation between variables used in this study. Hence, they can be used in a regression analysis.

c) Results for Tested Hypotheses

Hypothesis One: There will be a negative correlation between social support and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. Result is presented in Table 5:

Table 5: Simple Linear Regression Test Result on the extent to which Social Support Predict Psychological Distress.

Predictors (subscales)	β	R	R^2	p
Social Support from Parents	-.024			.810
Social Support from Teachers	.202			.033
Social Support from Classmates	.548			.000
Total		.554	.307	

The Simple Linear Regression Analysis result presented in Table 5 shows that social support explains approximately 31% of variance (R^2 = .307, F (3, 81) = 11.948, p = .000) in psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. The Social Support from Teachers dimension subscale (β = .202, p = .033) and Social Support from Classmates dimensions (β = .548, p = .000) predicts psychological distress. Meanwhile, Social Support from Parents Dimension subscale (β = -.024, p = .810), did not predict psychological distress. This implies that the social support students with disabilities in learning receive from their teachers and classmates protects them from psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety and stress). Hypothesis one is partially accepted.

Hypothesis Two: A significant negative relationship will exist between self-esteem and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. Result is presented in Table 6:

Table 6: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test Result on the Relationship between Self-Concept and Psychological Distress.

Variables	M	SD	r	p
Self-Concept	18.78	5.96		
Psychological Distress	20.49	12.23		
Total			-.204*	.049

As shown in Table 6, the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient test was used to determine whether a significant negative relationship exist between self-concept and psychological distress in students with learning disabilities. Result (r = -.204, p = 049) showed that a significant negative relationship exists between self-esteem and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. This implies that a positive self- concept reduces students' level of psychological distress (i.e. stress, anxiety and depression). Hypothesis two is accepted.

Hypothesis Three: Differences in gender and age will predict psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. Result is presented in Table 7:

Table 7: Simple Linear Regression Test Result on the extent to which Gender, Age and Grade Predict Psychological Distress.

Predictors	β	R	R^2	p
G$_{ender}$	.238			.033
Age	.266			.017
Total		.439	.192	

Analysis result presented in Table 7 shows that differences in the Age and Gender explains approximately 19% of variance (R^2 = .192, F (2, 91) = 10.834, p = .000) in psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. Specifically, gender (β = -.238, p = .033) and age (β = .266, p = .017) predicts psychological distress. This implies that differences in gender (i.e. being male or female) and age of students with disabilities in learning disabilities influences their levels of psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety and stress). Hypothesis three is accepted.

V. Discussion

Result for the first hypothesis indicated that social support explains approximately 31% of variance in psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. Specifically, social support from teacher and social support from classmates were found to predict psychological distress. This implies that the social support students with disabilities in learning receive from their teachers and classmates protects them from psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety and stress).

The result for the first hypothesis is not surprising because the education system in Ghana and most of the world is designed in such a way that most student spend their day in school engaged in curricula and extra curricula activities. As a result of this students with disabilities spend most of their time with their teachers and classmates (peers). This trend has made the influence of their teachers and classmates on their psychosocial development stronger than that of their parents. As such students seek and receive more social support from their teachers and classmates than their parents.

In addition, Accra, just as most modern cities in the world prides itself in its infrastructural development and rising population of middle income families. Yet, the down sides in living in a fast growing urban city is the fact that most parents tend to spend more time outside the home either working or commuting from home to the workplace or from the workplace to the house. As a result of this, even though, their children spend most of their time in school, they hardly get to spend quality time with their children at home. Interestingly, some parents compensate their absence at home by buying their children whatever they want, or pay someone to help their children with their homework. So when children are psychologically distressed (that is experience stress, anxiety or depression) they usually get seek and receive social support from their classmates and teachers. This social support serves as a buffer against psychological distress when compared to the social support they receive from their parents. Hence, the reason why social

support received from teachers and classmates help protect students from psychological distress than social support received from parents.

Some theories such as the attachment theory propounded by John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth even argue that the persistent neglect of children's biopsychosocial (biological, psychological and social) needs especially in critical stages in their lives (i.e. from birth to 4 years, and from 10 to 18 years) increases their susceptibility to develop maladaptive psychological conditions such as cognitive disorders (e.g., learning disorders), psychological distress (e.g. stress, anxiety, depression, etc.), personality disorders, among others. Hence, even though classmates and teachers are able to provide social support for children, has children received more social support from their parents, it would have had a more lasting effect on children. This is because as children progress in their schooling, they tend to change teachers and classmates. So if they overly rely on specific teachers or classmates for social support, and it is unavailable at some stage in their lives, the disruption may have an indirect effect on their psychological wellbeing. This is especially so among students with learning disabilities due to their fragile psychological health.

The findings for the first hypothesis is supported by that of Pinquart and Duberstein (2010), Waters, et al. (2013) and Zhang et al. (2014) which revealed that social support received by students with learning disabilities has a direct effect on their psychological well-being. Specifically, when students with learning disabilities receive the needed (tangible, emotional, esteem and informational) social support from significant others (i.e. parents, siblings, peers, etc.) it will help protect them against psychological distress. Pinquart and Duberstein (2010), Waters, et al. (2013) and Zhang et al. (2014)'s argument is supported by that of Fiorillo and Sabatini (2011) and Hapke (2015). Specifically, Fiorillo and Sabatini (2011) and Hapke (2015) findings revealed that social support received by children with learning disabilities reduces their propensy of being psychologically distressed.

The weakness in the above studies conducted by Pinquart and Duberstein (2010), Waters, et al. (2013) and Zhang et al. (2014) is their failure to ascertain the specific sources of social support (i.e. parents, siblings, peers, etc.) that mitigate against psychological distress among children with learning disabilities. They also, failed to espouse the effect of various types of social support (i.e. tangible, emotional, esteem and informational social support) and individually affect students with leaning disability's mental health. This weakness has been addressed in this present study's findings; this present study focused on how various sources of social support (teachers, classmates and parents) predicted psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.

Result for the second hypothesis indicated the existence of a significant negative relationship between self-concept and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. This implies that a positive a students' self-concept reduces level of psychological distress (i.e. stress, anxiety and depression). Thus, when an individual with learning disability's self-concept becomes more positive, it leads to a reduction in his or her levels of psychological distress.

This result could be explained using Baumeister (1999)'s explanation for self-concept which focuses on an individual's mindset about themselves including their attitudes. In other words, when a student with learning disability has a negative self-concept (e.g., sees himself as mentally unstable) his or her negative self-concept could influence him or her to give into anxiety, stress or depression. This is so because people with lower self-concept have been found to be more susceptible to developing psychological problems, whereas, people with a positive self-concept have more resilient against psychological problems. Hence, the more positive one's self-concept it the less likely are they to be psychologically distressed.

Nevertheless, according to Jobson-Mitchual (2018) even though students with learning disabilities are said to have negative self-concept, relatively little literature is available about the degree to which negative self-concept impacts mental health of children. In the United States, around 70% of students with some form of learning disorder also suffer from low self-concept (Kavale & Forness, 2003).

According to Tam and Hawkins (2012) children learning disability do also suffer from negative self-concept but also have other psychological conditions such as psychological distress. The reason why most children with learning disabilities also suffer from negative self-concept is because they have the tendency of being branded as lazy, they frequently experience rejection, and teasing, humiliated, among other negative treatments not only from strangers but those who are close such as siblings and even some parents (Tam & Hawkins, 2012). This, therefore, makes them more inclined to be depressed, rejection sensitive, anxious and stressed.

One other factor that increases the levels of psychological distress among students with learning disorders is the fact that they perform poorly at school and other learning setting, and also perform poorly at some social skills (Kavale & Forness, 1996). As a result of their academic struggles and low performance most students with learning disabilities also experience disapproval from their parents, school teachers and classmates (Kavale & Forness, 1996).

All these lead children to develop a dilemma of frustration and shame instead of a sense of pride and positivity. A negative self-image may develop as a result

of constant struggle and failure (Kavale & Forness, 1996). Declined self-esteem and nonexistence of self-assurance usually lead to further decline in learning and educational success and strengthen a cycle of disappointment and negativity (Kavale & Forness, 1996). As a result of this, research articles such as that of Svetaz, et al. (2000) are of the view that students with learning disabilities are more prone to developing psychological problems when compared compared to their non-learning disabled counterparts. Svetaz, et al. (2000) further stated that the source of several society's negative interpretation of people having learning disabilities stems from the use of tags for learning incapacity as verbal abuse.

Tam and Hawkins (2012), Puspalata, (2008), and Tiga and Vashishtha (2010) reinforced the above study by stating that as per their findings, self-concept leads to a reduction in the psychological distress levels among children having learning disabilities. We can imply therefore that a significant negative relationship indeed exists between self-concept and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.

The third result indicated that differences in the Age and Gender explains approximately 19% of variance in psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. Specifically, gender and age predicts psychological distress. This implies that differences in gender (i.e. being male or female) and age of students with disabilities in learning disabilities influences their levels of psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety and stress).

The result for the third hypothesis reinforced that of Deasy, Coughlan, Pironom, Jourdan and Mannix-McNamara (2014) whose findings indicated that differences in respondents age and gender predicts students psychological wellbeing. Deasy, et al.'s (2014) result is supported Aro, et al. (2019) whose findings also revealed that differences in age and gender has an effect on the psychological distress among students with learning disabilities.

According to Aro, et al. (2019) knowledge about gender-related differences in the level of psychological problems among people with learning disabilities is controversial. For instance, in their studies Altemus, Sarvaiya and Epperson (2014) and Kessler (2003) discovered that generally, females are more susceptible in developing anxiety and depression than their male counterparts. Yet, most Nelson and Harwood (2011) argues that even though the above assertion is true studies that came to the conclusion that females experience higher rates of depression and anxiety were most mostly conducted among normal students and not those with learning disabilities. Nevertheless, Heath and Ross (2000), and Nelson and Gregg (2012) have found depressive symptoms and anxiety more prevalent in girls with learning disabilities than boys.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendations

a) Conclusion

This study examined the extent to which social support and self-esteem predict psychological distress among students with learning disabilities at Multi Kids Inclusive Academy in Accra, Ghana. After testing the various hypothesis, results revealed that a significant negative relationship exists between self-esteem and psychological distress among students. Finally, result showed that differences in gender and age predicted psychological distress among students with learning disabilities. It is concluded that, the level of social support students with disabilities in learning receive from their teachers and classmates, and positive self-concept protect them against psychological distress (i.e. depression, anxiety and stress).

b) Relevance of the study

This study is unique because it is one of the few studies done in Ghana targeting children with learning disabilities. Even though similar studies have been done in Ghana by other researchers, only but a few has been done targeting children with learning disabilities. Hence, the fact that this study focused on the level of social support (from parents, teachers and classmates), self-concept and psychological distress makes it one of the ground breaking study in Ghana.

This study has as well revealed the importance of social support (especially social support from teachers and classmates) in reducing psychological distress and augmenting the self-concept of children having learning disabilities. Even though social support is believed to be of great benefit students (such as enhancing their academic performance, etc.) this study has shown that social support from teachers and classmates goes further to enhance students' psychological well-being. Parents and teachers could therefore take advantage of this discovery to improve the level of social support, self-concept and psychological health of students with learning disabilities.

This study has also given some hope to families with children with learning disabilities because it has been empirically proven that students or children with learning disabilities do not have a bleak future as presumed in Ghana, and in most third world countries. And that giving them the needed social support will reduce psychological distress (stress, anxiety and depression) and enhance their psychological well-being.

c) Limitation of the study

The quantitative research method adopted in this study is one of its limitation. This is because it gave little room for respondents to give further explanation to their responses as the questionnaire was made up of Likert scale survey questions.

Also, this study did not focus on the effect of the various types of social support (tangible, emotional, esteem and informational) on psychological distress. A consideration of the extent to which different types of social support predict psychological distress may be unearthed further result that would have enabled stakeholders (such as parents, teachers, among others) to understand and appreciate how various types of social support serves as a buffer against psychological distress.

d) Recommendations

Future studies should compare the levels social support, self-concept and psychological distress among students with learning disabilities and those without learning disabilities so as to determine whether differences will exist between the two groups. This is important because it will help to determine whether learning disability is a mediating variable between social support, self-concept and psychological distress.

Social support from teachers and classmates has been found to reduce psychological well-being among students with disabilities. Based on this result it is recommended that, parents, should step up and sustain the social support the offer to their children with learning disabilities. This is important because doing so will go a long way to enhance the psychological wellbeing of students with learning disabilities. According to Waters, et al. (2013) social support from parents has the most significant effect against psychological distress. This could be done by spending more quality time with children especially those with learning disabilities. When together, parent could seek to know what their children have been up to, the challenges they encounter in on a daily basis, and engage them in solves their problems.

It is also recommended to other stakeholders such as Teachers, Child Psychologists, Educational Psychologists, among others to consider social support as part of their therapies offered to student and children with learning disabilities, to enable them cope with psychological distress and behavior problems. Parents, guardians and other caregivers of students with learning disabilities could also be educated to understand the importance of social support to the enhancement of psychological wellbeing of children with learning disabilities.

Even though getting students with learning disabilities to use for research is difficult, future studies are encouraged to use a larger sample size than the one used in this present study. This will enhance the extent to which findings is generalized as reflection of the general population of student with learning disabilities.

Finally, the mixed method research approach will have been more desirable than the quantitative research method used. Mixed method has to do with the systematic integration, or mixing, of both qualitative and quantitative and data (and analysis) within a single research. It is, therefore, recommended to researchers who have interest in conducting a similar study to consider the mixed method research approach. Doing so will allow respondents to elucidate their responses to enhance readers understanding.

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Identity Crisis: An Analysis of V. S Naipaul's *A House for Mr. Biswas*

By Dr. Divya. P

Introduction- The Indian diasporic writings de signate the multi-cultural space of immigrants and extend a genre of a divergent Indian cultural discourse which depicts their struggles. The concept of rootlessnes, dislocation, fragmented thoughts and memories of homeland and their longing to go back to their motherland all could be the theme of disporic writings.

The diasporic writers or immigrant writers stand in-between two cultural scenarios in the process of moving from one culture to another and the same dual culture drives a wedge between the nation and the self. Even though they are profoundly associated with their hereditary customs, traditions, language and religion, they also focus on alienation, hybridisation, marginalization and local community life from the margins.

The diasporic writers are trapped in-between two cultures, and the readers of both Western and Indian contemplate the west-centric vision and cultural validity of India respectively in the present scenario of literary narratives in the existence. The complexity in the dislocations of immigrant writers contemplating their memories of their mother land, the breakup of their family relationship, their homelessness, cultural myths intensified the question of identity in their life which they continued living in an alien environment.

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IDENTITYCRISISANANALYSISOFVSNAIPAULSAHOUSEFORMRBISWAS

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Identity Crisis: An Analysis of V. S Naipaul's
A House for Mr. Biswas

Dr. Divya. P

INTRODUCTION

The Indian diasporic writings designate the multi-cultural space of immigrants and extend a genre of a divergent Indian cultural discourse which depicts their struggles. The concept of rootlessnes, dislocation, fragmented thoughts and memories of homeland and their longing to go back to their motherland all could be the theme of disporic writings.

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The diasporic writers are trapped in-between two cultures, and the readers of both Western and Indian contemplate the west-centric vision and cultural validity of India respectively in the present scenario of literary narratives in the existence. The complexity in the dislocations of immigrant writers contemplating their memories of their mother land, the breakup of their family relationship, their homelessness, cultural myths intensified the question of identity in their life which they continued living in an alien environment.

In the novel *A House for Mr. Biswas*, Mr. Biswas reminiscences the miseries of community life of Trinidad. The events and people of his childhood memories in the novel *A House for Mr. Biswas*, coincide after the marriage of Mr. Biswas to the Tulsi family and that transforms his life into an allegory on bourgeois modernity and its values. Mr. Biswas endeavours to blow out claustrophobic hold of the inclinations of the Tulsi family by building his own home, but in vain, since it scared to him incessantly.

Mr. Biswas got a new job as a journalist which permitted him to come out of his personal disabilities, invigorated him to write and read more books and to share his bookish knowledge among own children. The same attitude to reading and writing benefitted his children, inspiring them to go abroad and study further on the basis of scholarship. Naipaul portrays the character of Mr. Biswas living on the margins, following the demands of Tulsi family. As a good father he tried to

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create comfortable surroundings for his children as well as for his wife.

The pitch and toss in the life of Mr. Biswas and the tragedy inflicted on him by the debts, and his long wait for his son, Anand to return home causes his untimely death. In the novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas,* Naipaul vividly delineates the struggle of East Indians in their quest for identity. The gendered analysis of the protagonist of the story in the colonial land highlights discomfort which would cause terrible frustrations given such circumstances. The colonized feel their culture and identity suppressed by the power structure. They realised that complete self realization is not possible in a society that keeps oppressing them continuously. Consequently, they react by surrendering the 'self' to the 'other,' and fight against the injustice. In this regard, Naipaul's novels plainly portray the emanation of such an attitude where the colonized do not get a platform to flourish and achieve perfect life vision through developing their full potential.

Later in his life Mr. Biswas felt that his life is trapped in the custom of marriage from which his life could not escape. Thus, the experiences in his life manifest the identity crisis, self-assertion and self-affirmation. Thus, the gender and the identity issues of the protagonist in the novel are evident in his struggle to build his own house which symbolises his yearning for the personality of his own.

The novel, *A House for Mr. Biswas*, reveals the protagonist's struggle to find his own identity. The story looks into the self of the protagonist who wanders in isolation in a quest of genuine selfhood in a dispossessed land. The novel revolves round to certain limitations and struggles to express individuality but later, Mr. Biswas succeeds in getting a house of his own which is a dramatic achievement in his limited inadequate life. The story of Mohun Biswas is symbolic of the cultural milieu of immigrant people of East Indians in Trinidad.

The cultural clash and ruptures of East Indian community and the whirlpool of events in his life to find foothold in the New World leads the protagonist in *A House for Mr. Biswas* to achieve his dream to build a home of his own. In the first section of the novel titled, "Pastoral," Bipti's father who came to Trinidad as indentured labourer attempts to re-build a mini India according to their wish, including the Hindu way of life and its customs, traditions and rituals, superstitious

beliefs with their faith in pundit. The discourse of India and the ill effects of superstition play a major role in the novel. Bisoondaye, the grandmother, thinks that the birth of Mr. Biswas at midnight with six fingers is a bad omen. This prompts her to go to next village, cut the leaves of cactus and hang it on every door. Promptly, the pundit is called into the house and he declares:

> You must fill this brass plate with coconut oil- which by the way, you must take yourself from coconuts you have collected with your own hands and in the reflection on this oil the father must see his son's face. (17)

Raghu, the father, gets the first sight of his son in this manner. Furthermore, the child is deemed as unlucky since it is superstitiously believed that he caused his father's death. Naipaul comments on the effect of superstition which becomes the part of the tradition and culture in an alien land and its impact on the people and the ritual that followed after the death of Mr. Biswas's father:

> Bipti was bathed. Her hair, still wet, was neatly parted and then filled with red henna. Then the henna was scooped out and the parting filled with charcoal dust. She was now a widow forever. (32)

For the Hindus, in Trinidad everything happens as part of the role played by 'fate' on them and the novel portrays every related aspect of the life of characters such as Bipti's unhappy marriage with Raghu and also their migration from India to the sugar estate. The East Indians at Trinidad still spoke Hindi but they had to abandon their custom of cremation. After Mr. Biswas's father's death the circumstances compelled him and his mother, Bipti, to move to Pegotas where her well-to-do-sister Tara lived. We get a different perspective of disintegration as revealed by Naipaul:

> And so Mr. Biswas came to leave the only house to which he had some right. For the next thirty-five years he was to be a wanderer with no place he could call his own, with no family except that which he was to attempt to create out of the engulfing world of the Tulsis. For with his mother's parents dead, his brother on the estate at Felicity, Dehuti as a servant in Tara's house, and himself rapidly growing away from Bipti who, broken, became increasingly useless and impenetrable, it seemed to him that he was really quite alone. (40)

But at Pegotas Tara had overall control of Mr. Biswas and decided to make him a pundit for which she approached Jairam who was a rude, bizarre man full of negativity that creates his life more horrible and awful. He holds scandalous views and is full of contradictions. Naipaul presents him:

> He believed in God, fervently, but claimed it was not necessary for a Hindu to do so. He attacked the custom some families had of putting up a flag after a religious ceremony; but his own front garden was a veritable grove of bamboo poles with red and white pennants in varying stages of decay. He ate no meat but spoke against

vegetarianism: when Lord Rama went hunting, did they think it was just for sport? (51)

Later, Mr. Biswas was thrown out of the house of the pundit for some of his disgraceful acts. He returns home, but Tara again sends him to a rum-shop of Bhandat who is Tara's brother-in-law. Thus, he complained to his mother when he returned about rude behaviour of Bhandat: "... Why do you keep on sending me to stay with other people. I am going to get a job of my own. And am going to get my own house too. I am finished with this" (67). Unfortunately Bhandat considers him as Tara's spy and accuses him of stealing a dollar.

Naipaul's sketch of the protagonist and the role of fate in his life as an Indian in an alien land attract an attention. Thus, the protagonist Mr. Biswas declares his resolution to have his own house which might give him liberation and create an identity of his own. Gradually, Mr. Biswas develops the habit of reading books including those of Samuel Smiles, but his ambitions of buying new shop or buying a motor bus are not fulfilled. Naipaul comments:

> He bought the seven expensive volumes of Hawkins' Electrical Guide, made rudimentary compasses, buzzers and doorbells, and learned to wind an armature. Beyond that he could not go. Experiments became more complex, and he didn't know where in Trinidad he could find the equipment mentioned so causally by Hawkins. His interest in electrical matters died, and he contented himself with reading about Samuel Smile's heroes in their magic land. (79)

In various novels, Naipaul critically argued about the caste system in India, particularly, about the Brahmin community which is dominant. The novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* explores the various occasions such as in the character of Lal, a low caste Hindu who converted himself to Presbyterianism and the Hindu social order is also challenged by the inter-caste marriage between Mr. Biswas's sister, Dehuti and Ramchand, who is a low caste Hindu. It also reveals that the socially sanctioned marriage between Shekhar, Mrs. Tulasi's elder son, and Dorothy who is allied to Presbytarian family, and the illegal and inter racial relation between Bhandat and a Chinese woman are also against the social order. All these undertakings in the novel signify the breaking of customs and rituals which dominated the East Indian society.

In the next stage of his life, Mr. Biswas encounters with the Tulsi family and he is trapped in a dowryless modern marriage, but he struggles to keep his identity by taking up sign-painting. He fought against the cultural dogmas of Tulsi family by joining a group of revolutionary Hindu Missionaries from India, named Aryans, which espoused the education of girls, abolition of child marriage and caste system. Meanwhile, uncertain thoughts haunted his memories and he promptly apprehended the absurdity of his life:

Suppose that at one word I could just disappear from this room, what would remain to speak of me? A few clothes, a few books. The shouts and thumps in the hall would continue; the puja would be done; in the morning the Tulsi store would open its doors. (55)

Mr. Biswas regards Tulsi family as a feudal world with conservative attitudes that follow rigorous and feudalistic norms in which a person like Mr. Biswas cannot bear to live.

The life at The Chaze is a temporary shelter for Mr. Biswas who is a typical representative of the condition of life of the displaced people in an alien land. Soon afterwards, his feelings of loneliness and of being a non-entity at The Chaze make him recall the noisy background activities of Hanuman House. Naipaul makes an analysis of a person based on his/her relation with others, and eventually Biswas's alienation leads him to psychic disorders. The psychic crisis of Mr. Biswas haunts him with a sense of strong feeling of the dislocation and uncertainties of his life as well as the unwanted tensions that haunt him tear him down.

The emotional crisis grips Mr. Biswas at the crucial moment of his life. His new job as the sub-overseer in one of Tulsi estates at Green Vale at a low salary of twenty five dollars and the accommodation of a single room for his family carry the feelings of suffocation. The thought of building a new house at Green Vale, he realises, is a vain attempt because he still depends on the Tulsis for his aspirations to be fulfilled. Nevertheless, he manages to construct a house but his feeling of claustrophobia increases the intensity of alienation that he experiences in a foreign land. The frustration leads Mr. Biswas into ill health, and therefore, he returns to Hanuman House to heal from his sickness compounded at the death of his dog. Tarzan is heinously killed by the dispossessed labourers, and later, when his unfinished house has been burned down by the same people, Mr. Biswas makes up his mind not to go back to Green Vale.

Naipaul's protagonist, Mr. Biswas keeps on at his struggles to keep his individual identity, but the role of fate shatters him emotionally and his aspirations to construct a new house for himself and his family remains just a dream. When Mr. Biswas vacates the room of Owad, it instils in him unhappiness and agony. His new job at Trinidad Sentinel as a reporter creates a sophisticated image which brings on new changes in him. His attitude was such that he thinks: "... he had won a victory?" (200). He gets onto the bus in another search for a new identity as a journalist.

Nevertheless, he again makes an attempt to complete his dream house but his plan had to be abandoned because of the inconvenience of location to follow his ambitions and aspirations. In this regard, Madhusudhana Rao opines:

In his house, which is incomplete like his own syncopated individuality, he has come to respect the feeling of love,-

that state of consciousness which recognizes the value of gifting one's self away to meet another's human need. In a sense, Mr. Biswas has at last arrived. (71)

Obviously, Naipaul designates the house as not only as a shelter, but also as something that signifies solidity and consistency that existed for the engraving of a veritable selfhood. Owad also assimilates himself into the wider society of Trinidad when he starts private practice in San Francisco. A perfect and authentic carving of the character in the novel *A House for Mr. Biswas*, the impact of colonization in Trinidad under the silhouette of Hanuman House and the principles of traditional family system are the major aspects to the development of an individual.

Naipaul places his comments on the basis of his expatriate sensibility. The caste system of India is being followed in its same intensity at Trinidad, but adaptability helped to reconcile himself to the situation. The homelessness and displacement of the protagonist is vividly portrayed in the novel. Hanuman House (Tulsi House) in the High Street at Arwacas serve as an alien fortification that embodies the abode of Hindu culture in Trinidad. The Hanuman House is a miniature India with Pundit Tulsi and thousands of other Indians who had migrated from India to Trinidad. Naipaul presents Mrs. Tulsi as an ardent preserver of Hindu culture, the upholder of traditional daily *puja,* and the orthodox religious aspects serve as a counter to the blitz of western culture.

The novel *A House for Mr. Biswas* is an epic work on the life of the protagonist, Mr. Biswas and his struggles to build an own house that is symbolic of his identity. The novel envisages the perplexities of protagonist, Mr. Biswas whose desire to attain his own authentic selfhood in the alien land represents the struggle between his desires and obligations as well as his inner motivations and circumstantial necessities.

The fantasy and dreams in Mr. Biswas led to the conflict between desire and necessity. Furthermore, the same sort of necessity enforces him to become the part of Tulsi household, even though his existence is like that of an alien. Thus, he dreams: "... real life was to begin... soon, and elsewhere" (147). The sense of humiliation of the protagonist creates in him an ambition to become someone influential. He feels ashamed of his designation of an indentured labourer which belongs to the lowest strata of the socio-economic order.

The experience of the protagonist, Mr. Biswas, reflects the experiences of minority community in the rapidly changing foreign soil. His dream of a happy life embodies his unfulfilled dreams and desires and it isolated him from others. Indian caste bound systems and the identity of minority groups of indentured labourers are emphasised in the novel. Naipaul underlines: "... As a boy he had moved from one house of strangers to another and since his marriage he felt he had lived nowhere" (8). As an alien, he lives in an in-

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between culture devoid of traditional identity and yet unable to make a new one in post industrial society with fragmented socio-cultural realities. Thus, the Indian culture, rituals, myth and customs in Trinidad create struggles to attain an identity that makes the protagonist more fragile. The diasporic identity crisis and the impact of Indian culture along with the issues of rootlessness in the life of Mr. Biswas render him the image of a caged bird.

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Respuestas Lectoras De Los Niños Y Las Niñas. Conversación Literaria Y Modos De Acceso Al Poema

By Prof. Israel Acosta Gómez & Prof. Giovanni Benavides Bailón

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Abstract- The literary reading exercised from the collective understanding is to go "attributing meanings", by promoting enunciation situations in which the reader-students reconstruct the ideals that the reading presents. To understand, therefore, is to assess the responses and intentions that underlie the background of the reading from the literary conversation as a procedure for elucidating the paths to meaning. Reading is playing with everyone's experience. Therefore, for this activity of assertion of senses to occur; precisely, readers have the mission of elucidating, clarifying, solving the unknowns that are evoked. Thus, understanding will not be a unitary and homogeneous process, but will become a decision-making process, where everyone contributes and shares; experience and communicate your impressions of reading, and not where you blame yourself because you have not said what you are told to express. In this way, we propose with this work, to present the different ways, routes or accesses (reading keys) that served as the basis for the achievement of an understanding of poems, in which a communicative activity of experience and creativity was generated. student.

Keywords: reading and comprehension, reading responses, literary conversation, access codes.

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RESPUESTASLECTORASDELOSNIOSYLASNIASCONVERSACINLITERARIAYMODOSDEACCESOALPOEMA

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

Respuestas Lectoras De Los Niños Y Las Niñas. Conversación Literaria Y Modos De Acceso Al Poema[1]

Prof. Israel Acosta Gómez [α] & Prof. Giovanni Benavides Bailón [σ]

Resumen- La lectura literaria ejercida desde la comprensión colectiva es ir "atribuyendo sentidos", mediante la promoción de situaciones de enunciación en la cual los lectores-estudiantes reconstruyan los ideales que presenta la lectura. Comprender, por ende, es valorar las respuestas e intencionalidades que subyacen en el fondo de la lectura desde la conversación literaria como procedimiento de elucidación de caminos hacia la significación. Leer es jugar con la experiencia de todos. Por ello, para que ocurra esta actividad de aseveración de sentidos; precisamente, los lectores tienen la misión de elucidar, clarificar, solucionar las incógnitas que le son evocadas. Así, la comprensión no será un proceso unitario y homogéneo, sino que se convertirá en un proceso de toma de decisiones, donde todos aporten y compartan; vivencien y comuniquen sus impresiones de lectura, y no donde se fustigue porque no se ha dicho lo que se le diga que exprese. De esta manera nos proponemos con este trabajo, presentar los modos, vías o accesos distintos (claves de lectura) que sirvieron de base a para el logro de una comprensión de poemas, en el cual se generó una actividad comunicativa de la experiencia y la creatividad estudiantil.

Palabras Clave: lectura y comprensión, respuestas lectoras, conversación literaria, claves de acceso.

Abstract- The literary reading exercised from the collective understanding is to go "attributing meanings", by promoting enunciation situations in which the reader-students reconstruct the ideals that the reading presents. To understand, therefore, is to assess the responses and intentions that underlie the background of the reading from the literary conversation as a procedure for elucidating the paths to meaning. Reading is playing with everyone's experience. Therefore, for this activity of assertion of senses to occur; precisely, readers have the mission of elucidating, clarifying, solving the unknowns that are evoked. Thus, understanding will not be a unitary and homogeneous process, but will become a decision-making process, where everyone contributes and shares; experience and communicate your impressions of reading, and not where you blame yourself because you have not said what you are told to express. In this way, we propose with this work, to present the different ways, routes or accesses (reading keys) that served as the basis for the achievement of an understanding of poems, in which a communicative activity of experience and creativity was generated. student.

Keywords: reading and comprehension, reading responses, literary conversation, access codes.

I. Introducción

"…Entender la literatura como práctica social, sin embargo, no supone tener en común un baje, una memoria cultural conjunta, sino también compartir maneras de leer los textos… parece interesante también que la escuela promueva la construcción de comunidades de interpretación en las que los estudiantes puedan formar parte de una historia de lecturas conjuntas, de una historia que les permita hacer emerger recuerdos y relaciones comunes, modos de leer colectivos" Martina Fittipaldi (2013, p. 427).

"…Cada lector reinventa códigos porque no solamente lee con sus facultades cognoscitivas, sino con toda su personalidad…" Marina Parra (1999, p. 85).

El trabajo de los docentes se enmarca en dirigir el desarrollo de la personalidad de los educandos, por lo cual la creatividad debiera ser una de sus características esenciales dentro de las actividades que se propongan, porque un maestro que no sea creativo, simplemente para el autor de esta ponencia, no es bueno; puede ser cualquier cosa, pero no maestro, esencialmente él, tiene y debe que ser creativo, esa será su principal destreza.La lectura, pues, desde las dimensiones comunicativas (dialógicas) y creativas, favorece el enjuiciamiento del lector, como colaborador y edificador de los sentidos y significados textuales, a partir de su discurso como conformador del habla. Llama la atención que leer prepara al estudiante para la vida, y desde la noción de lectura colectiva, se entiende a esta como un modo de apreciación colectiva de las disímiles problemáticas que ellas nos presenta; por eso leer es hacerlo con todo el acervo acumulado, con las experiencias y sobre todo, con la posibilidad de compartir los hallazgos con los demás, esas ambigüedades que colegidas entre todos, se entenderán mejor; porque al compartir la experiencia,

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[1] Una versión más amplía y enriquecida se puede ver publicada en la revista *Fides et Ratio* de La Paz, Bolivia, indexada en *Scielo*. Aquí se podrán hacer otras observaciones y análisis respecto del tema abordado. Ver:
[2] Licenciado en Educación, especialidad Español y Literatura. Prof. Instructor e Investigador de temas concernientes a la Didáctica de la lengua y la literatura (lectura y comprensión), así como de la creatividad. Labora en el Departamento de Educación Infantil de la Facultad de Ciencias Pedagógicas. Posee un postgrado en Docencia Universitaria y es Maestrante en Ciencias Pedagógicas.

se está participando en un proceso de recepción colectiva de los significados.

Y no hay mejor ayuda, que la del maestro preparado para transmitir el mensaje, y de este mismo, respetando y escuchando atentamente sin imponer respuestas. Solo al socializarlas, se convertirán en hallazgos compartidos, y se podrán reconstruir las ideas o proposiciones que el texto abre ante cada "yo", porque como indica Marina Parra (1999) cada lector, todos los lectores, leen con su personalidad, es decir, leen al poner de relieve sus saberes, cultura y sobre todo, experiencias. Por ello, se debe incentivar en el aula como espacio dialógico desprejuiciado. No hay que temer a la idea distinta, sino debemos promoverla, para generar situaciones de lectura ético-estéticas para la reflexión y el crecimiento de la otredad.

La lectura eslabón fundamental de la cadena escolar, al romperse o perderse, se pierden o se rompen los demás eslabones. Es la encargada de que cada estudiante resuelva cada una de sus dificultades de la mejor manera posible. Por ello, para hacer visible el susurro de una lectura útil, y para gestar una lectura libre y silenciosa en las aulas, que integre y autoestructure el conocimiento, se debe lograr una actividad de comprensión, que no repita lo que el texto dice, sino que se potencie la participación de los lectores como constructores de sentido, que es utilizar su experiencia para actualizar el texto; sin dudas, eso es hacerlo vivir y trascender.

La lectura se inserta en la vida del estudiante, sin más, porque la identidad del lector depende mucho de la variables cognitivo-afectivas-volitivas que pueden hacer transformar significativamente la realidad del texto en el universo del saber del lector (Coll 1985; Colomer 1991, 2001, 2004, 2005); McNamara 2004; Fittipaldi, 2013).Por tanto, este intercambio supone ante todo, razonamiento, trabajo continuo para poder, leer el mundo, porque leer es básicamente, saber comprender y sobre todo saber interpretar, o sea saber llegar a las esencias para estar en posición de establecer nuestras propias opiniones.

Muy de acuerdo con Colomer, Manresa y Silva-Díaz (2005) al enunciar que el texto posee zonas de sombras, es decir, zonas de intención que serán suplidas a partir del conocimiento previo que tienen los lectores que "procesan" el discurso literario; por lo queel texto provee información al lector; no obstante, la información extraída del mismo obedece de cómo el receptor re-construya los significados completándolo con sus conocimientos previos y cultura propia (VieiroyAmboage 2016).Por estas y otras razones es que autores de diferentes latitudes se encargan de la temática, entre ellos están:Colomer, T. (1991, 2001, 2004); Gómez-Villalba, E. y Pérez González, J. (2001); Villaminzar Durán, G. (2003); Cassany, D. (2003); Montealegre, R. (2004); Pinzás García, J. (1986); Colomer, T., Manresa, M. y Silva-Díaz, C. (2005); Blanco

Iglesias, E. (2005); Escalante de Urrecheaga, D. y Caldera de Briceño, R. (2008); Millán, N. R. (2010); Solé, I. (2012); Llamazares Prieto, M. T., Ríos García, I. y Buisán Serradel, C. (2013); Fittipaldi, M. (2014) entre otros. También hay que desarrollar en cada estudiante la capacidad de la toma de respuesta, de la habilidad para comprender, por medio de una actividad lectora eficiente, creadora de de sentidos, le hace al estudiante, aumentar la curiosidad, el ansia de conocer, educarse en el amor hacia el saber, el interés por la actividad cognoscitiva, al constituir una de las tareas más importantes y necesarias de los centros educacionales, para la edificación de dinámicas educativas más perceptivas. Será conveniente instituir en las aulas una *comunidad de lectores* que interpretan y expresen lo que piensan, sería plausible que los maestros de Lengua y Literatura comiencen por proponer una didáctica del decir más respetuosa y menos dogmática.

De esta manera nos proponemos con este trabajo, presentar los modos, vías o accesos distintos a la lectura que sirvieron de base a para el logro de una comprensión de poemas, en el cual se generó una actividad comunicativa de la experiencia y la creatividad estudiantil.

II. Respuestas Lectoras. ´Elucidación de Los Discursos´. Lectura Para Compartir

Para la comprensión de un texto es necesario el conocimiento de todas sus palabras y símbolos especiales, ella no es una suma, sino la integración de las unidades de sentido, es también, un proceso-producto-resultado de las actitudes conscientes de los lectores modelos que sí saben disfrutar y emocionarse, como aclara Villaminzar, (2003), y porque además, es muy lógico en este proceso, según Gómez-Villalba y Pérez (2001) "la comprensión lectora, se concibe como un proceso interactivo entre el lector y el texto. El lector relaciona la información almacenada en su mente con la que le presenta el autor" (p. 10). En consecuencia, se debe potenciar la comprensión del texto desde esencias meta cognitivas y reflexivas, desde el compartir y el hacer con el texto cosas diferentes. Para Blanco (2005).

…el proceso de lectura es un proceso de toma de decisiones, un ´cuerpo a cuerpo´ con el texto, donde el lector, partiendo de lo que sabe sobre el mundo, busca respuestas a preguntas, escoge significados, a veces duda, aventura interpretaciones y va poco a poco recorriendo un camino que le lleva a ´entender´ el mensaje. (…) (p. 3).

Esto exige dominar el código, reconocer las formas de las palabras y las relaciones que se establecen entre ellas, pero este proceso solo es el punto de partida para llegar a la comprensión de los significados generales. Con esto, coincidimos con

Pinzás (1986), la cual asevera que "las metas del lector (leer para informarse, leer para retener, leer para resumir, etc.) controlan la aplicación de los macro-operadores, que transforman el texto-base en macroproposiciones que representan la esencia del texto. La representación formal de estas metas se denomina el ´esquema del lector´". (p. 9).Y, inexcusablemente, otra de las metas del lector, según Solé (2012), es ser un lector activo, el cual supone interpretar, y preocuparse y ocuparse por el ejercicio de la crítica; de esta manera, nos alega Solé, que:

…esta lectura posmoderna o hermenéutica hace más perentoria aún la necesidad de contribuir a formar lectores activos, dotados de criterio (…) Nos vamos acercando al lector moderno, un lector que procesa el texto, que accede al conocimiento de otros (e incrementa y transforma el suyo propio)…conducente a la reflexión. Este es lector moderno, que elije, procesa, dialoga con el texto y lo interpela (…) (p. 48).

Aquí resulta fundamental que para operar con las macroproposiciones, hemos de conocer la lengua en toda su dimensión, teniendo en cuenta los niveles de estructuración del texto y los recursos empleados por el autor, ello depende también del conocimiento del contexto, lo que implica saber quién produce el texto, a qué grupo o clase social pertenece, cuál es su ideología, con qué intención lo hizo, en qué situación comunicativa fue codificado; todo esto permite atribuir un significado al texto que de no conocerlo, no sería posible la reconstrucción de estas macroproposiciones, que no son más que las ideas mentales procesadas (la experiencia puesta en acción). ParaLlamazares-Prieto y Alonso-Cortés (2016), se pone de manifiesto como:

…en las aulas son situaciones de lectura compartida aquellas en las que el maestro y los alumnos cooperan en la tarea de leer y de aprender, utilizando un texto que está a la vista de todos. Se diferencian de otras situaciones de lectura en voz alta por el hecho de tratarse de situaciones dialógicas, es decir, de situaciones en las que los alumnos participan interaccionando entre ellos y con el docente…

Por ello, como expresa Cassany (2003), "al fin y al cabo, si el significado textual se ubica en la mente de los lectores y no dentro del texto, alcanzamos el nivel máximo de comprensión de un discurso cuando podemos contrastar las diversascomprensiones individuales del mismo". (p. 32). Pudiera ser que la comprensión tenga un halo de individualidad, pero si se contrastan las opiniones y se intenta salvar el texto, pues vale la pena que los lectores generen espacios de intercambio (dación-reflexión) entre las ideas codificadas en el texto y las ideas que el propio texto requiere. Por ello, la comprensión es un proceso mediante el cual reconstruimos significados, por lo cual, al comprender un texto, el receptor comienza por reconocer las palabras y signos auxiliares, y los sentidos de los intersticios o espacios vacíos que todo texto deja. Tanto es así, quepara Escalante de Urrecheaga y Caldera de Briceño (2008) adoptan en decir que:

…se entiende la comprensión en el marco del procesamiento interactivo que se activa a través de operaciones mentales o estrategias cognoscitivas que decodifican, aprehenden y recuerdan el sentido de un texto por intermedio de las variables sujeto-entorno. Al aprehender el sentido de un texto, el lector pone en marcha factores sensoriales (percepción, afectivos e intelectuales) (…) descubre las posibles relaciones con las experiencias previas, decodifica; comprende. (Escalante y Caldera, 2008, p. 35).

Destacan en estas palabras, el término ´interacción en la lectura´ el cual es un modelo del proceso lector en el que el que este construye el sentido del discurso haciendo uso de su competencia lingüística y de sus experiencias previas, es decir, de su universo cognoscitivo; pero para ello, se necesita asumir un pensamiento crítico-creativo, para producir significados desde una asunción lógica de las macroproposiciones elaboradas a partir de la interacción textual, lo que demanda de los lectores, en plural, sus aportaciones, visiones y puntos de vistas, que al contrastarlos, pues surge un nuevo texto; un texto enriquecido, así para Fittipaldi (2014).

…el aprendizaje de la interpretación supone no únicamente la apropiación y puesta en práctica de las estrategias lectoras sino también la conciencia de que un mismo texto puede dar lugar a diversidad de interpretaciones y puede ofrecer múltiples niveles de sentido, sentidos que, sin embargo, han de ser argumentados a partir del texto leído, han de volver a este para ir afeminándose y matizándose en ese camino… (p. 427).

Por ello, "la predicción y la confirmación de respuestas no deben aparecer como errores que comete el lector sino como hipótesis, tanteos o adivinanzas que este hace con el fin de construir el significado intentado por el autor" (p. 36). La comprensión de los textos, confirmadas a través del desempeño y experiencias vividas por el autor de este trabajo, entre ellas están la incapacidad para: captar significados y traducirlos a su código; decodificar el texto; descubrir los intertextos o influencias de otros textos en dependencia de su cultura; desentrañar el significado intencional del texto según el contexto en que se escribió; reconstruir el significado de este y estar en condiciones de expresarlo;emitir juicios y valoraciones sobre lo que dice el texto; asumir posiciones ante él; opinar y actuar como un lector crítico; aprovechar el contenido del texto para aplicarlo en otros contextos; reaccionar ante lo leído y modificar su conducta. Por ende, Villamizar (2003) señala que:

…la lectura trasciende el descifrado y demás habilidades necesarias para su adquisición, por cuanto el lector recibe a través de ella mucho más que información. Está en condiciones de recibir y/o compartir, no sólo datos o informaciones, sino sobre todo dimensiones estéticas,

valores, beneficios, emociones, disfrutes, goces y placeres (p. 93).

Pues, cuando nos enfrentamos al proceso de lectura y comprensión de un texto se está siempre prediciendo posibles interpretaciones que son el resultado de saberes y operaciones cognitivas de diversa índole, es decir, de la experiencia que es la variable socio-cognitiva que coadyuva al entendimiento textual. Igualmente, para Llamazares, Ríos y Buisán (2013).

…leer es una actividad compleja para entender e interpretar textos escritos, con diferentes intenciones y objetivos, para lo que se necesita recurrir al conocimiento del mundo y a los conocimientos textuales y dominar las habilidades de descodificación y las estrategias para procesar activamente el sentido y los significados del texto (p. 309).

La construcción de respuestas lectoras mediante la actividad de comprensión, es una práctica de resolución de problemas, es intentar armar el rompecabezas a partir de la reacción que seha tenido; esasumir una actitud independiente y creadora sobre la desembocadura del texto sobre otros textos, y sobre la posibilidad de abrir el texto, porque siempre habrá "espacios" que "rellenar", lo cual permite lograr la intertextualidad. Y, si de intertextualidad se trata, hay que promover una lectura crítica, elaboradora; pues leer críticamente no es decir únicamente lo que uno piensa, sino fundamentar los argumentos, sobre bases que sean demostrables desde "el texto"; ya lo explica Jurado (2014), cuando asintió:

…la lectura crítica no es la "libre opinión" del lector. La lectura crítica surge del ejercicio intelectual que presupone hacer inferencias, sean simples o complejas; las inferencias complejas dependen de las asociaciones entre los conocimientos que promueve el texto (en sus estructuras implícitas) y los conocimientos del lector, que a su vez devienen de los acervos textuales… (p. 12).

El proceso de la comprensión, entonces, supone captar los significados que otros trasfieren mediante sonidos, palabras, imágenes, colores y movimientos; es que cuando se comprende, se negocia con el autor-emisor, y se corrobora una especie de transacción; a partir de la cantidad y la calidad en la formulación de las macroproposiciones se van actualizando los sentidos del texto. El proceso de gestación de respuestas, es un trabajo intelectual complejo, así como emotivo, porque requiere de la puesta en marcha de conocimientos (saberes, experiencias, competencias), unido a un cúmulo de sentimientos y vivencias que hay que acoplar al texto; Ronald Barthes (1987) lo confirma, cuando sentenció que "leer es hacer trabajar a nuestro cuerpo siguiendo la llamada de los signos del texto, de todos esos lenguajes que lo atraviesan y que forman una especie de irisada profundidad en cada frase". (p. 37).

Asimismo, la respuesta lectora es un resultado emotivo-comportamental, pues la comprensión, como

determinante, tiene lugar cuando el lector u oyente pretende reconstruir en su mente el mensaje que el autor comunica verbalmente o por escrito, para luego socializarlo. Para Viviana Suárez-Galvis (2016) queda claro que "...la conversación literaria es un espacio en el que se oye la polifonía de voces, pues cada uno es heraldo de una perspectiva particular de lectura. En el momento de la socialización, dichas perspectivas se encuentran, se complementan o se excluyen..." (s.p). Es decir, conversar entre lectores permite abrir la experiencia de todos, y no escuchar una única respuesta, que con mala suerte sería la del docente que se encasilla en tan solo "un sentido".

De este modo, se puede llegar a comprender, que - dicho sea de paso - no será jamás sobre interpretar y obligar a decir al texto otras cosas que él jamás ha dicho. No, es sopesar en el diálogo la ironía, el encanto, el ensueño... para construir relaciones posibles ante la ambigüedad textual. Hay que enseñar a comprender, porque comprender, supone la lógica de ir "desmontando", seccionando el texto, para poder otorgar un sentido lógico, no un único o tácito camino; comprender es compaginar con la ética del texto, y para ello, habría que escuchar a cada uno de los lectores; porque hay que llenar de luz, ese espacio de sombras evocatorias que es la literatura. Por ello, para Colomer, Manresa y Silva-Díaz (2005).

…la literatura, precisamente, es uno de los instrumentos humanos que más enseña a "darse cuenta" de que hay más de lo que se dice explícitamente. Cualquier texto tiene vacíos y zonas de sombra, pero en el texto literario la elipsis y la confusión han sido organizadas deliberadamente. Como quien aprende a andar por la selva notando las pistas y señales que le permitirán sobrevivir, aprender a leer literatura da la oportunidad de sensibilizarse a los indicios del lenguaje, de convertirse en alguien que no permanece a merced del discurso ajeno, alguien capaz de analizar y juzgar(p. 6).

Reflexión grupal. Lectura crítica y conversación. De la recepción individual a la colectiva A través de la reflexión meta cognitiva de los estudiantes, se llega a la construcción divergente del alumnado al dialogar los sentidos, porque estos devienen de la mente del lector-modelo. En este sentido, la misión u objetivo de la estrategia es contribuir a formar un lector competente, capaz de resolver problemas de manera inteligente con el texto y construir generalizaciones que reconozcan un proceso único de aprender desde el contexto y poder transferir lo asimilado desde el texto, a nuevos contextos comunicativos. Asimismo, Coll y Mauri (2008) lo corroboran, al decir que:

…el interés no está en el discurso en el aula per se, sino en los rasgos del discurso y en los procesos discursivos que nos ayudan a entender cómo los maestros y los compañeros apoyan y orientan eficazmente los procesos deconstrucción de significados y de atribución de sentido que llevan a cabo los estudiantes

mediante su participación en las actividades que tienen lugar en el aula. (p. 37).

III. ¿Qué Dicen Los Lectores Ante el Texto-Poema?

En el nivel inicial de la investigación este método permitió denotar que los lectores no intercambian experiencias, que equivalen a decir que dialogan, comparan, oralizan; que son capaces de inferir, de armar hipótesis, de respetar la opinión del otro interlocutor. Es pues que este muestrario de un registro de experiencias nos da la medida de cómo pueden programarse mejor el itinerario del lector para direccionar las actividades y para dotar de sentido al texto (Colomer, 2001). De esta forma, para NoeJitrik (1998), también, "la lectura, como objeto de conocimiento, brinda sentido, interpretaciones y saber… la lectura es una actualización objetiva de la competencia, al mismo tiempo, que es una construcción que se produce entre el lector y el texto". (pp. 18 ss.).

El maestro lo demuestra a partir de que algunas opiniones que se gestan, surgen de un diálogo entre los estudiantes, a propósito de sus opiniones ante en el texto objeto de estudio. Estas indican, en ocasiones, la baja comprensión ante lectura del texto. Aunque, se debe afirmar que no todas las opiniones en el foro estuvieron desacertadas, porque la comprensión heterogénea, enriquece los marcos del texto. El maestro luego de cada intervención del estudiante dinamiza y sincroniza (adecuación de la opinión) a partir de un campo argumental, sin imponer, solo para sugerir, explicar. Se está de acuerdo con Carattoli (2012) cuando asevera acerca de los intercambios, pues, "es interesante resaltar cómo los estudiantes recurren al uso de las citas como argumento para su interpretación y cómo el docente vuelve sobre ese argumento para ayudar a la conceptualización de todo el grupo". (p. 16).

Una discusión que concibió que los estudiantes opinaran libremente utilizando argumentos; demostrando con fragmentos del poema sus explicaciones, todo lo cual consintió en valorar las actitudes y disfrutar del intercambio como otras zonas de comunicación desde la apreciación de otros compañeros del aula, para defender sus apariencias. (Camps, 2005; Carattoli, 2012). Por su parte, la propia Anna Camps (2002) define el aula, como un espacio lleno de substancia, porque:

…el aula es un espacio de vida como tal, fuente de contrastes, diferencia de pareceres, tensiones, conflictos, que tendrán que ser resueltos con el diálogo…La interacción grupal oral es un instrumento imprescindible para que los estudiantes aprendan a enfrentarse por sí mismos con la construcción del significado a través de los textos. Discutir para comprender, hablar para leer, para hablar, para escribir…" (pp. 5 y 6).

Esto demuestra la valía del diálogo áulico como herramienta para encauzar el aprendizaje escolar desde el foro las posibles intenciones comunicativas del poema.

IV. Leer y Disfrutar Con el Texto. la Poesía Nos ´Habla´. Conversación y Diálogo

Colomer (1991) plantea que el aprendizaje de la lectura, a partir de la actividad de construcción de sentido del texto, debe potenciar "la ponderación de los conocimientos previos del lector, ya que la capacidad de comprender un texto depende de la posibilidad relacionar su mensaje con los esquemas conceptuales propios" (p. 28) En este sentido, el aprendizaje de la comprensión constituye un proceso continuo en el que el estudiante adquiere progresivamente las habilidades que le permiten leer textos cada vez más complejos y de diferente carácter o tipología, y a la vez profundizar en su comprensión y entendimiento cabal. La propia Colomer (2001) así lo estipula también, al decir que debe enseñarse "la lectura interpretativa, entendida como la lectura que utiliza conocimientos externos para suscitar significados implícitos, sentidos segundos o símbolos que el lector debe hacer emerger" (p. 14). Una vez más, Colomer (2004) lo asegura al decir de que "el aprendizaje lector va indisolublemente unido al uso y disfrute "en presente" de los libros, de manera que enseñar y promocionar se encuentran ahí más fusionados que nunca". (p. 9).

Es por ello que se ha elaborado esta propuesta de estrategia con un corpus de acciones estratégicas, con vista a conseguir que puedan obtener los estudiantes la comprensión textual creativa, estructurante, edificadora y crítico-creativa. La conversación literaria es una pulsión de la experiencia; no hay lectores como páginas en blanco, es decir, no existen lectores que sepan, quieran y puedan hablar de lo que han leído.Para la profesora francesa Michèle Petit (2014).

…los lectores no son páginas en blanco sobre las cuales se imprimen los textos, puesto que son activos. A tal punto que existe cierta violencia que obra en la lectura, así está sea aparentemente tranquila: cuando uno ha aprendido a refrenar las pasiones de cortar o de arrancar las páginas, leer implica una dimensión de apropiación salvaje, de vuelo, de armar piezas: los lectores atacan la integridad del texto, "saltarse" tal pasaje, volver a determinado fragmento, llevarlo hasta sus pensamientos para librarlo a exégesis insólitas... (p. 167).

En fin, que los intercambios en los foros recatan esa idea de que la lectura es una puerta abierta al diálogo, porque se permite la construcción de acervos, la construcción de la experiencia del sujeto lector que lo conduce sin dudas, a su auto preparación como lector;

porque sirve la poesía para dar lección al alma y educa el esfuerzo por el conocer y el sentir, y por compartir en sociedad significados y sentidos distintos, pero necesarios para darle cuerpo y vida al texto. El camino de la elucidación, salva de manera constante, del olvido al texto, porque los lectores tienen esa sed, y hay que incentivarla, de avivar el sentido, de componerlo. Entonces, para Aidams Chambers (2007).

> ...la puesta en escena sustancial de la vida literaria escolar ocurre fundamentalmente en las conversaciones sobre textos, una actividad social y comunitaria plena de potencialidades para la enseñanza y el aprendizaje sobre cómo funciona la literatura y cómo nutre los imaginarios y los saberes de los alumnos y de los docentes... (p. 20).

Pues, en la conversación se pone de relieve lo pensado, lo callado, y a la vez ese entusiasmo de compartir con los otros las ilusiones halladas. Se socializan en un estilo democrático, con respetos y sin exposiciones, sus impresiones, sus dudas y hasta sus insensateces o errores de comprensión. Ahí está el camino formativo del lector, en reflexionar en el grupo las certezas y vivencias que le albergan en el momento de la lectura, de sus experiencias, que al compartirlas con sus colegas lectores, se promueva la sociabilidad. Comunicar sus alegrías y pesares en torno a la poesía, es entender mejor ese texto; hay que reforzar el comentario, el diálogo, no clausurarlo. Nos parece, que en la diversidad de criterios, nace la conversación literaria. Del mismo modo, lo demuestra Trigo (1988) cuando asiente que:

> ...los pensamientos reproducidos en los poemas penetran en la vida espiritual de los estudiantes y suscitan reflexiones y sentimientos elevados que son, sin duda, un aspecto importante de la educación moral, intelectual y estética. Cuando el niño entra en contacto con formas poéticas, cuyos contenidos guarden relación con sus intereses, ansiedades y vivencias más profundas, es seguro que dejan algo junto a su mente y a su corazón… (p. 295).

Se trata de lograr una eficiencia en la clase de Lengua y Literatura, tal, que coadyuve a la gestación de diálogos sugerentes desde el texto-poema; porque el texto como entramado semiótico, dispone una interpretación creativa. Coll (1985) así lo asegura, al decir

> ...no puede entenderse ni explicarse únicamente como el resultado de una serie de "encuentros" felices entre el estudiante y el contenido del aprendizaje; es necesario, además, tener en cuenta las actuaciones del maestro que, encargado de planificar sistemáticamente estos "encuentros", aparece como un verdadero mediador y determina con sus intervenciones que las tareas de aprendizaje ofrezcan…margen a la actividad autoestructurante del estudiante (p. 63).

Hay que enseñar a problematizar (debe existir la mediación como sustento para dirigir la observación, y no para colapsarla). Hay, sin dudas, que enseñar a horadar el texto, "convocar" a todas las voces que confluyen en el aula. Hay potenciar la comprensión del texto desde esencias metacognitivas y reflexivas, y al optimizar la actividad auto estructurante del estudiante como generadora de respuestas sensibles. Jorge Larrosa (2003), en su libro "La experiencia de la lectura…", recomienda que "la lectura es producción de sentido, mediante una "escucha", y más que una apropiación, en tanto que el lenguaje, al igual que la imaginación, produce realidad, la incrementa y la transforma". (p. 43).

Pues, esa "transformación", evolución del sentido, depende mucho de la participación, del colectivo como co-autor del texto. El texto evoluciona, crece, porque las apreciaciones distintas, variadas y sensibles en cada mentalidad, generan la motivación del lector por decir, hasta cosas distintas, ingeniosas, que tal vez su autor jamás pensó. Munita (2014) lo comprueba cuando aseveraba que:

> …parece igualmente relevante el hecho de abrir conversaciones abiertas sobre los textos leídos, formas de diálogo en las que, más que guiar a los estudiantes hacia unas determinadas líneas de problematización de los textos, se espera que sean ellos quienes sorprendan abriendo nuevos significados sobre las obras… (p. 378).

En tal caso, la actividad autoestructurante del estudiante, favorece que se gesten *procesos* de interpretación relacionantes y epistémicos, conversaciones al estilo del "dime", donde la argumentación juega un papel delimitador; asimismo, se debe "interpretar" para construir un nuevo texto y es el que se almacena en el universo del saber que está pleno de vivencias, que resumidas, componen la explicación del texto base. Todos los lectores aportan, y tal vez, porque ha de concebirse el aula como un espacio audible y democrático. Para Virginia Calvo Valios (2015)

> ...este enfoque de conversación sitúa en primer plano la experiencia del lector al leer el texto y la experiencia de compartir conjuntamente con otros lectores. Pensamos que la discusión literaria podría propiciar el desencadenamiento de conversaciones exploratorias en el círculo de lectura, la activación del intertexto lector en sus contribuciones y la negociación de significados entre los jóvenes... (p. 144).

Camps (1995) lo determina al decir que "la argumentación como actividad discursiva…tiene como objetivo convencer a otras personas de que si representación del mundo es equivocada y deben adoptar otra…En el diálogo cara a cara, dicha representación se elabora a partir de las respuestas del interlocutor" (p. 52). Es un diálogo que intenta recuperar aquella idea sesgada, olvidada; un diálogo no solo para decir, sino para compartir, entregar, proponer, y en el cual se intenten resolver los obstáculos que la lectura y comprensión del poema presenten. En consecuencia, leer es investigar, construir relaciones de sentido, completar los resquicios que en cada texto, y más en la poesía por su polisemia o

variedad, existen; ello hay que motivarlo. Jurado (1995), así lo demuestra al expresarnos:

...en la lectura, no se trataría, pues, de buscar una verdad para legitimarla, sino de bucear en el texto, entre los inicios que éste proporciona, de formulación de conjeturas, que quiere decir, en otras palabras, apostar hipotéticamente. Esto quiere decir también que en el texto abundan los elementos no dichos, los silencios, los Intersticios y efectos simbólicos múltiples.

Con el objetivo de que los lectores, a juicio de Camps (1995) y Jurado (1995), convencieran al discutir con los demás, y supieran representar sus ideas, investigaran en su duda aquello que ayuda a esclarecer el poema, fue una de las intenciones que promovió que se analizan las transcripciones acaecidas en el *foro de discusión,* por medio de la *conversación literaria* como procedimiento didáctico-comunicativo. Precisamente para explicitar experiencias que permitan armar el rompecabezas del poema (construcción del sentido textual), al aunar las voces lectoras. Con lo anterior, se llegó a la siguiente estructuración de los niveles de lectura, tratando de imbricar para adaptarlas a la realidad educativa que se expone, y para "intentar" relacionar estas *claves de lectura* o de acceso a ella, con una propuesta de "subcategoría" que aúnen esos otros modos de leer que se solapan o hibridan. Todo ello bajo las esencias de los postulados de Martina Fittipaldi y Lawrence Sipe. No se han seguido al pie todas esas claves, sino con el objetivo de correlacionar para explicar de mejor manera cómo accedieron al poema los lectores; que, desde luego, no es esto una camisa de fuerza, sino solo una tentativadidáctica para mejorar aún más las prácticas de lectura y escritura. Se presentará, del libro "Antología de poesía infantil", de Dorys Zeballos, el cual es una compilación de muchas poesías de diversas nacionalidades, temáticas y autores, por lo que se ha seleccionado de María Elena

Walsh, el poema "Nada más" para el trabajo de lectura literaria en un aula de Lengua y Literatura en el Octavo grado en una escuela de Secundaria desde una sesión de tiempo de biblioteca. De lo que se trata es de aportar, contribuir todos hacia la construcción de sentidos colectivos; puesto que si del poema viene una posible evocación, entonces, los lectores y el mediador pueden arriesgar o aventurarse, al evaluar cada sensación de significado que va surgiendo en el seno de la comunidad de lectores que interpretan porque tienen experiencias y utilizan estrategias que les ayudan a poder comprender. Martina Fittipaldi (2013) nos dice en torno a ello que:

…interpretar implica, en última instancia, construir un sentido global de lo que estamos leyendo, un sentido que no es unívoco y que nace de la transacción establecida entre los lectores y el texto en el marco de un contexto específico…el afirmarse como lectores puede conducirlos a asumir con mayor motivación el trabajo interpretativo… (p. 427).

A continuación, reproducimos fragmentos de la *conversación literaria* entre los alumnos de Octavo grado y el mediador, con el fin de entender, la metáfora aludida por Fabio Jurado (1995) cuando aludía que "...las conjeturas son construidas no desde el azar sino desde la confluencia de saberes y experiencias sobre el mundo" (p. 71), es pues, que hay que escuchar lo que los lectores construyeron en proceso de mediación: sentidos, lógicas, y estas palabras de Jurado (1995) han permitido concebir a la conversación literaria como marco de apropiación de la cultura. Veamos lo que sucedió. Hay que enseñar a conjeturar para que se expongan los posibles reflejos que logra el autor con el poema, y que los lectores pueden descubrir mediante la conversación como procedimiento comunicativo esas posibles matizaciones evocatorias.
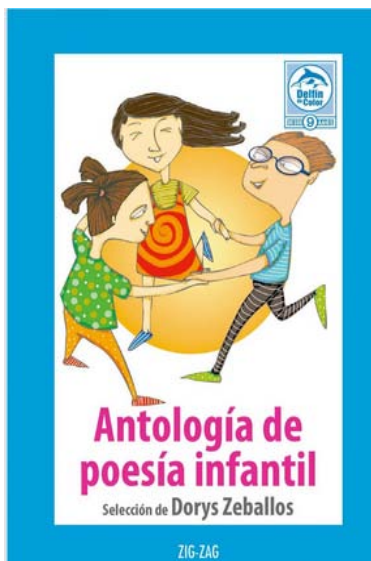

Fig. 1: Libro promocionado en el aula durante varias semanas, y del cual se seleccionó un poema y se desplegó una actividad de conversación literaria

Poema: NADA MÁS

Con esta moneda
me voy a comprar
un ramo de cielo
y un metro de mar
un pico de estrella
un sol de verdad
un kilo de viento
y nada más.

Autora: María Elena Walsh (Argentina)

///

Conversación literaria, discusión de sentidos

///*Mediador:* La expresión "Nada más" qué sirve de título al poema, qué les puede sugerir o insinuar.///

///*Mariana:* Me sugiere un acto de sencillez, de humildad, porque todo lo que se desea comprar no es nada material, es todo lo natural lo que se desea...No hay nada mejor que aspirar a lo humanamente sensible. Lo que realmente nos aporta a los seres humanos...///

///*Laura:* Lo que desea comprar nada más es lo que resulta más necesario, además, no existe tesoro mayor que lo que sale del alma; la sencillez del alma vale más, porque es más sincera...///

///*Carlos:* "Nada más", me sugiere no solo la sencillez, sino algo más, y es la ausencia de codicia, se destierra toda la avaricia, ese egoísmo que llega a matar, esa ingratitud del mundo que llega a aislar y ensombrecer y que nos afecta de alguna manera...///

///*Mauren:* Sí, el egoísmo mata, nos hace fracasar como seres humanos. Y, tal vez el poema pueda abordar que lo que más no llega y satisface, que es felicidad de ser sinceros con lo que queremos, es decir, no desear todo, y sí desear algo mejor, ser mejor todos los días con lo que se tiene...///

///*Mediador:* En el poema existen palabras que nos anuncian de alguna manera eso natural que ustedes muy bien comparan con la sencillez, con esa candidez; pueden descubrir entre todos algunos significados en torno a estos...///

///*Lucía:* Bueno, cuando se menciona el cielo; el cielo es grande, símbolo de libertad, esa que abunda poco, o por lo menos a veces se priva a muchos países de tenerla. En cielo está la vida, como en la vida está el respeto...En el cielo está la gloria, la satisfacción y la paz...///

///*Ana María:* También, nos habla del mar, que como el cielo nos entrega esa paz; al mirarlo, vemos su inmensidad como el caso del cielo, pero a la vez, siento, como en el caso del propio cielo, paz, desahogo. Creo, que en la mar está además el misterio; cuánto se oculta debajo del mar, pero, en la idea del poema, apoyo que se ve como espacio de libertad, como en el cielo...///

///*Beatriz:* Del mismo modo, se menciona a la estrella, quizá porque en sus cinco puntas pueden estar la armonía perfecta entre los elementos que componen la naturaleza; el agua y la tierra, por ejemplo, como símbolos de la existencia...///

///*Horacio:* Y, el Sol, el Astro rey, del cual depende la vida; en el Sol está la esperanza de vivir, de sobrevivir todos los días a las amarguras que a veces la vida nos da...Hay en el sol, esa verdad, de la cual no habla la autora, porque la verdad es lo que nos hace auténticos y sinceros...///

///*Vanessa:* Yo siento que en la inmensidad del mundo está el bien y la verdad; y eso hay que defenderlo. En lo grande también lo pequeño, en las buenas acciones: No es lo grande porque lo es, sino porque en ello está en el caso del poema, lo valioso....///

///*Alicia:* Y, al final, el viento, que no por último deja de ser importante, porque no es sola una corriente de aire, sino que yo entiendo que en el poema puede significar ese coraje, aliento y esfuerzo por que todas las cosas lindas de la vida: valores, sentimientos, siempre florezcan...///

///*Mediador:* Cuando en el poema, se menciona al final "y nada más", una vez más reiterado desde el título, qué intenciones comunicativas puedes descubrir///.

///*Mauren:* En el "y nada más" está la sencillez y la virtud; está también lo grande, porque lo verdaderamente grande es la utilidad de la honradez...Hay que lograr que lo humanamente justo se pinte todos los días ese cielo...///

///*Mariana:* Parece que la intención de su autora es llamar a la humanidad a unirse más y odiarse menos, sí, eso creo, porque solo con la maravilla que nace de esos símbolos (cielo, mar, sol, viento), se nos regala las buenas acciones que todos necesitamos en este mundo...///

26

///*Mediador:* Qué creen que sucede con estas "medidas" que la autora antepone a cada cosa que desea comprar: "un *ramo* de cielo; un *metro* de mar; un *pico* de estrella; un *kilo* de viento".///

///*Mauren:* Por un lado, "un ramo de cielo..." puede significar un conjunto, en donde se origina o nacen frutos, hojas, pero, es que si pensamos, en el propio poema, se nos puede estar hablando de todo lo humano como generalidad, empezando por la naturaleza, como elemento imprescindible en lo que lo humano cobra vida...Su autora desea adquirir (y quitaría "comprar") lo más sencillo, pero a la vez, lo más valioso, lo que más le interesa... Además, ese conjunto, puede ser símbolo de la "unidad"...///

///*Lucía:* El "metro de mar", para ello hay que partir de que matemáticamente es una unidad de longitud, es decir de extensión, amplitud. Por ello, tal vez, su autora esté indicándonos la distancia o viaje que debe recorrer, quizá, para apartarse de las miserias de la humanidad; de ese mar, que antes se dijo es además de largo, vasto, es misterioso. Tal vez, desea evadirse, alejarse, para buscar la manera de mejorar el mundo de tanta codicia...///

///*Beatriz:* La estrella está en el cielo, en la vida, y "un pico de estrella" puede estar haciendo referencia a que en esa punta puede estar la palabra VIDA, porque las estrellas están lejanas, y como en la vida, se necesita voluntad para alcanzar lo bueno y útil...///

///*Horacio:* El viento también simboliza la libertad, y por ende, "un kilo de viento" es una unidad de peso, es decir, eso es lo que se necesita; un kilogramo, es una unidad magnitud en la que la fuerza, la presión, la energía y la potencia son esenciales para que se viento pueda convertirse en lo que salve el mundo. El viento trae ese ímpetu, coraje y brío para vivir...///

///*Mediador:* Y, de qué creen ustedes, entonces, luego de esta conversación esclarecedora que le poema nos pueda estar advirtiendo///

///*Mariana:* En el poema se hace alusión a la sencillez, a lo que nos aportan las cosas de la vida, esas en las que en apariencia no nos pudieran brindar nada; ahí está precisamente la belleza del poema...///

///*Alicia:* Por medio del uso de las palabras (cielo, mar, estrella, viento, mar, sol), elementos naturales de la vida, se hace mucho énfasis en que esas, como otras cosas que son símbolo de lo verdaderamente bello, es que se aconseja al ser humano a cuidar más esas cosas que llenan de amor al mundo...///

///*Mariana:* El poema puede servir de consejo a todos aquellos que solo ven lo material en la vida, y no aquella virtud, esa dignidad en lo que realmente nos puede aportar a la vida esa sencillez al alma, con ese poco de amor que todos necesitamos...///

///*Carlos:* También el poema es un llamado a apreciar y cuidar al ambiente, a la naturaleza, que continuamente se ven amenazados por el descuido y malas prácticas de algunos seres humanos; ese "y nada más" con que concluye el poema, nos puede servir para mejorarnos como seres sociales, porque al final vivimos en sociedad, que es vivir en paz con todos...///

///

V. Intento de Imbricación de Los Niveles de Lectura y Las Claves del Acceso al Texto. Subcategorías Para su Evaluación

Se ha hecho

»*Lectura inteligente:* Nivel 1: *(Clave heurística-analítica: SUBCATEGORÍA- indagación, inquisición, hacen comparaciones, búsqueda constante de indicios en el poema)*

- *¿Cómo los estudiantes interactúan con los significados que el texto evoca?*
- *¿Dividen el texto-poema en apartados lógicos? donde los estudiantes abren el texto y lo analizan tangencialmente.*

Claves de acceso al poema según niveles de lectura	
BREVES INTERPRETACIONES DEL REGISTRO DE EXPERIENCIAS DE LOS LECTORES	
CLAVE HEURÍSTICA-ANALÍTICA Nivel 1 (Lectura inteligente)	SUBCATEGORÍA- indagación, hacen comparaciones, búsqueda constante de indicios en el poema, explicitación de inferencias e hipótesis
Se interesan en buscar, indagar (compararaspectos propios del poema con asuntos tangentes a su realidad; analizan las palabras, emplean sinónimos, establecen comparaciones...)	Algunos lectores en la conversación analizan (establecen nexos comparativos entre el título y el posible campo temático del poema) Por ejemplo: Explican que por el título se puede apreciar que es un poema que puede abordar algo similar a la humildad, al compararla como un tesoro del alma, porque la sencillez del alma vale más, porque es más sincera. Otros refirieren en ese mismo sentido que sin un alma verdaderamente bella.

»Lectura crítica: Nivel 2 *(Clave personal-íntima: SUBCATEGORÍA-temática, conversación, intercambio, socialización con los otros)*

- *¿Se sensibilizan los estudiantes con el tema abordado en el texto-poema?*

- *¿Son capaces de verter su experiencia lectora (sus repertorios) para volver al texto y re-construir sus sentidos a partir de la argumentación/valoración consecuente en la colectividad?(opinan, conversan)*

Claves de acceso al poema según los niveles de lectura	
BREVES INTERPRETACIONES DEL REGISTRO DE EXPERIENCIAS DE LOS LECTORES	
CLAVE PERSONAL-ÍNTIMA Nivel 2 (Lectura crítica)	SUBCATEGORÍA- temática, conversación, intercambio, socialización con los otros
Establecen un diálogo cercano, respetuoso, en el cual todos se escuchan, y en donde nadie tienen "la última palabras", porque existe la cooperación y la empatía por construir juntos el sentido del poema.	Parte de los lectores al conversar y emitir sus respuestas, hacenmención, por ejemplo a que no puede existir un mundo mejor, sin que las personas se aprecien; en el poema existe una fuerte carga simbólica, donde los elementos "cielo, mar, estrella, viento, sol", forman parte del campo temático del poema, porque su autora no desea nada material, (estos elementos representan una condición espiritual) sino que recurre a elementos naturales, verdaderamente imprescindibles, para demostrar que solo con el amor se engendra la maravilla, y con los valores y sentimientos se hace el milagro mayor: el poder construir algo mejor, que si solo se piensa en el dinero, y la codicia, que nada aportan a la sociedad.

»Lectura creadora: Nivel 3 *(Clave performativa o creativa, SUBCATEGORÍA- intertextual-interpretativa, de la vida al texto; creación de su propia versión de los hechos evocados en el poema, expresión de la creatividad y la imaginación)*

- *Son capaces los estudiantes de diseñar o activar intertextos adecuados a la obra poética objeto.*
- *Crean, exponen sus sentimientos al "re-utilizar" el mensaje del texto.*

Claves de acceso al poema según niveles de lectura	
BREVES INTERPRETACIONES DEL REGISTRO DE EXPERIENCIAS DE LOS LECTORES	
CLAVE PERFORMATIVA O CREATIVA Nivel 3 (Lectura creadora)	SUBCATEGORÍA- intertextual-interpretativa, de la vida al texto; creación de su propia versión de los hechos evocados en el poema, expresión de la creatividad y la imaginación
Es una clave que puede estar presente desde el mismo principio de la clave 1ra, pero es al final, luego de la escucha atenta en el foro de discusión, como los lectores pueden demostrar su creatividad e imaginación. Fueron capaces de construir sus propios poemas, y a la vez, al hacerlo, se sienten en la obligación de estar re-interpretando el poema base, y a la vez, de enriquecerlo. Son autores, y es bueno que por algún momento se lo crean. *Tareas para socializar* *Diseña una postal en el powerpoint en el que insertes el poema que redacten juntos. Musicaliza la presentación. *Crea un cuaderno de poesía con los poemas que escriban, tanto los que creen en el colectivo, como los que realicen individualmente.	Algunos poemas redactados colectivamente: ***Se les facilitó un esquema poético el cual debían completar:** Nada más (_____)- *metáfora a partir de una pareja sintáctica.* Deseo: (_____)- *3 sustantivos separados por comas que expresen los valores humanos.* Voy a comprar, sí, (_____)- *símil relacionado con la naturaleza, tratar de fijarse en el poema de María Elena Walsh; poner algunos elementos naturales.* No voy a comprar, sino, regalo, esparzo *Todo un amanecer de(_____) – **situar un sustantivo en letra mayúscula que resuma** ////////////////////////////////////// ***Versión reconstruida en el colectivo de lectores** *Nada más (quiero flores generosas)* *Deseo:(respeto, valentía, honradez)* *Voy a comprar, sí, (un gramo de amoroso paisaje, otro de cielo eterno y un océano de caricias)* *No voy a comprar, sino, regalo y esparzo* *Todo un amanecer de (TERNURA)* //////////////////////////////////////

Con la aplicación del *registro de experiencias* dentro del *foro de discusión,* se puede afirmar se puede contribuir a la formación del lector literaria, pues sí se evidencian resultados alentadores respeto a que fueron capaces de:

- Lograr extraer la idea principal del poema;
- Asumir una actitud crítica, argumentativa y valorativa ante el poema;
- Escuchar las opiniones de sus compañeros, exponer sus respuestas, sin imponer sus apreciaciones;
- Crear sus propios discursos; porque se convirtieron en enunciadores, es decir, crearon su mundo poético a su estilo.

VI. Conclusiones

- La conversación literaria, deja la idea de que a leer los lectores no solo les agrada, porque se comprobó fehacientemente, sino en toda la dimensión del término "agradar", está relacionado con la necesidad de esos lectores de "abducir" a partir de la lectura, es decir, de explicar sus hallazgos, que desconciertan, pero, sirven para entregar al texto-poema una nueva luz interpretativa, porque en cada respuesta lectora está presente la evocación distinta, bilateral y creativa, necesaria para construir significados y sentidos, desde la visión y re-visión de todos en el aula de clases, sin menoscabar la interesante sensibilidad del estudiantado, que es su visión del mundo.
- Leer críticamente refuerza lo que se lee, en la reconstrucción de su horizonte cultural-comunicativo en el leer para aprender y disfrutar del texto como recurso heurístico, constructivo y motivacional. Las respuestas lectoras son esos inter-cambios de pareceres, que no por no ser iguales, y ahí está su belleza, deja de tener valor. Así, en la pluralidad están las intenciones que mejoran continuamente los saberes del lector y los del texto leído, inquirido. Tratar de analizar los modos de acceso al texto mediante las claves de lecturas y niveles de apreciación cognoscitiva, resulta esencial para promover espacios de interactuación interpretativos, una verdadera aula que eduque literariamente.
- Los intercambios producidos a propósito de la comprensión del poema objeto de estudio, por medio del registro de experiencias (foro de discusión) lograron que los estudiantes puedan acceder al tema mediante el diálogo, la argumentación; el cuestionamiento, la oralización, el contraste de opiniones; la gradualidad de las experiencias puestas en el texto; porque los repertorios o experiencias de lecturas representan la comprobación y construcción en la lectura del

mundo (vida en conjunto) y le sirve al sujeto mismo para desarrollar su cosmovisión o entendimiento de este, que es en sí mismo un complemento de lo social. Con todo, porque la literatura es más experiencia comunicada que todo lo que se pueda decir de esta noble entidad. La actividad performativa o creativa debe estimularse más como una de las claves o modos de acceso al texto, en este caso, al poema; se pueden habilitar talleres de creación de poemas en los que se evoque sobre la temática aludida, tanto de manera personal como colectiva puede concebirse una práctica escritural significativa para reforzar el aprendizaje lecto-escritural de los niños y las niñas de la secundaria.

- La lectura colectiva les hizo liberar la imaginación, soñar, pensar, hacer muchas cosas con las palabras y aportarle al poema las experiencias previas, que enlazadas con las nuevas, surgidas en el foro de intercambio, pudo nacer el nuevo saber, y esto tuvo mucho que ver con el aprendizaje significativo del lector y con la zona de desarrollo próximo.

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Development and Validation of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale

By Jacob Igo & Benjamin. O. Ehigie

Abstract- There has been growing societal problems relating to gambling particularly those related to crime. Recently, gambling has been tilting towards sports betting since other forms of gambling are gradually fading away. Unfortunately, there is no specific tool to measure addiction to sports gambling. This informed the development and validation of sports betting addictive behaviour scale.

A total of 366 (Male = 325; Female = 39) sports bettors were selected from three major towns in Benue state including Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo. Using literature review and focused group discussion, 59 items were generated. Using 5 lecturers and 2 Postgraduate students, content and face validity were established respectively. The already standardized gambling addictive behaviour for adolescents scale was used to establish convergent validity.

Results of the content and face validity at 70% level of item acceptance resulted to 46 items. All the 46 items that passed the content and face validity were further returned after item-total correlation using r = .30 criterion. Convergent validity of r = .965 was obtained by correlating Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale and Gambling Addictive Behaviour for Adolescents Scale.

Keywords: sports, betting, addictive behaviour, reliability, validity.

GJHSS-A Classification: FOR Code: 110699

DEVELOPMENTANDVALIDATIONOFSPORTSBETTINGADDICTIVEBEHAVIOURSCALE

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

Development and Validation of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale

Jacob Igo [α] & Benjamin. O. Ehigie [σ]

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A total of 366 (Male = 325; Female = 39) sports bettors were selected from three major towns in Benue state including Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo. Using literature review and focused group discussion, 59 items were generated. Using 5 lecturers and 2 Postgraduate students, content and face validity were established respectively. The already standardized gambling addictive behaviour for adolescents scale was used to establish convergent validity.

Results of the content and face validity at 70% level of item acceptance resulted to 46 items. All the 46 items that passed the content and face validity were further returned after item-total correlation using r = .30 criterion. Convergent validity of r = .965 was obtained by correlating Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale and Gambling Addictive Behaviour for Adolescents Scale. The reliability coefficients obtained were; Cronbach alpha of internal consistency (α = .98) and full-scale reliability of r = .94. Factor analysis of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale with principal component and varimax rotation yielded four (4) factors when Eigen value above 1 was extracted. The factors which accounted for larger proportions of the total variance were given factor names as; Betting-relationship Conflict (α = 0.98), Betting Distress (α = 0.93), Betting-economic Interference (α = 0.83) and Sport Betting Anticipatory (α = 0.83).

The strength of the scale in assessing sports betting addiction was emphasized and it was recommended that the use of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) should be done to identify those that are addictive to sports betting so that intervention can be provided to bettors. Also, clinicians and other non-governmental organizations should develop training/rehabilitation modules on the four (4) dimensions; to train individuals on ways of eliminating betting behaviours based on the categories of the behaviour identified.

Keywords: sports, betting, addictive behaviour, reliability, validity.

I. Introduction

Sports betting simply means placing a financial wager on the outcome of a sporting match, as well as on events that occur within the larger match or fixture (Palmer, 2015). Two important changes occurred in the mid-1990s. First, some bookmakers moved beyond horse and greyhound racing and started taking bets on the outcome of team sports. Secondly, in other part of the world, some bookmakers began taking bets over the telephone and then the Internet, and in 2008, telephone and Internet sports betting became possible in almost all part of the world (Palmer, 2015).

Research by Gainsbury (2013) also opined that sports betting appears to be the fastest growing form of gambling in the world, with preliminary findings indicating that gambling via electronic gaming machines fell from 39 to 19 per cent between 1999 and 2011, while participation in sports betting increased from six to 13 per cent over the same. In developing nations like Nigeria, many people suffer from gambling activities most of whom have become addicted even without being aware of it. An online report simply puts it that, many people suffering from a gambling addiction feel alone and perhaps they think that no one could possibly understand what it's like to be them but they are oblivion of the fact that, they are not alone and others know exactly what they are going through. This feeling is so common that the mental health field has a name for it – gambling disorder.

According to Eboh, (2015), public perceptions of sports betting are often misleading. On the one hand, people are usually aware that sport betting poses serious risks to those who are predisposed to stake bets excessively. However, on the other hand, it is also acknowledged that sports betting can have positive consequences for communities (e.g. via providing a source of revenue for sporting clubs or humanitarian causes) and can be an enjoyable pastime for individuals (Vong, 2009).

Gambling generally and problems associated with it have been linked with risky personality, risky decision-making, and pro-risk attitudes. Such personality traits as sensation-seeking, impulsivity, and low self-control have been associated with risky behavior in various domains (Zuckerman, 2007). Sensation-seeking describes a preference for varied, stimulating experiences and a willingness to engage in risk-taking in order to obtain such experiences (Zuckerman as cited in Eboh, 2015). While sports betting normally called sports gambling has, at times, been considered a socially deviant or immoral behaviour in some cultures and throughout history, the American Psychiatric Association only first defined it to be a medically diagnosable health problem in 1980 in the 3rd

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version of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (3rd ed.; DSM–III; American Psychiatric Association, 1980; Korn & Shaffer, 1999). When gambling behaviour results in behavioural, emotional, relationship, or financial problems, it may develop into a diagnosable condition known as problem or pathological gambling (Eboh, 2015).

Sport betting (as was classified in general gambling) has been associated with various forms of risky behavior, and shares correlates associated with general risky behavior (Stinchfield, Govoni, & Frisch, 2007). Few researchers such as Oyebisi, Alao and Popoola (2012) and Gupta and Derevensky (2000) have all carried out empirical research on the concept of gambling where sports betting has been identified as an aspects of gambling with no distinct instrument to measure it even as some of the items seems to measure sports betting though included in general gambling without items covering all the sports betting addictive behaviour. Furthermore, finding of some of these works lack generalisation to the population other than which sampling was selected. For instance, the study by Park and Jung (2012) who worked on development of a gambling addictive behaviour was limited to adolescents in Korea.

Furthermore, in as much as sports betting addiction has been seen to pose a serious societal threat and has become an issue of great concern to clinicians, organizations, health workers and even scholars from different works of life, the issues of contextualizing the concept has been difficult as sports-related problem gambling is not prevalence in surveys because problem gambling is assessed on the totality of gambling experiences rather than a single activity (Griffiths, 2017).

Looking at the society today, gambling has been shifting its base from other forms of gambling to sports gambling since most of those archaic methods are becoming obsolete. Careful literature search has shown that there is no distinct instrument to measure the direction of gambling. It therefore become pertinent to develop a specific scale that will measure sports betting addictive behaviour as none has existed based on research findings and even those available are found in general gambling as indicated by certain items which does not capture all the addictive behaviours of sports bettors. This study therefore seeks to develop and validate sports betting addictive behaviour scale.

a) *Hypotheses*

i. Items generated will concurrently satisfy conditions for content and face validity.
ii. Each Item in the scale will significantly correlate positively with total score on the scale.
iii. Exploratory factor analysis will significantly produce factors for the scale developed.

iv. Items in the developed scale with significantly be internally consistent among themselves.
v. Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpABS) will positively correlate significantly Gambling Addictive Behaviour for Adolescent Scale (GABSA).

II. Methodology

a) *Design*

The study adopted a cross-sectional research design to develop and validate Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS). The research design offered the researcher the opportunity to gather data at one point in time from different categories of people in terms of age, gender, etc. as against longitudinal research that requires long period of data gathering.

b) *Settings*

The study was conducted in Makurdi, Gboko and Oturkpo of Benue state. These three towns are the major towns in Benue state (National Population Census, 2006) which share borders with Enugu state in the South, Kogi state in the West, Cross-River in the East state and Nasarawa and Taraba states in the North in terms of land mass. Makurdi precisely is the capital of Benue state of Nigeria and it is located in the heart of the state, inhabited by different ethnic groups; some of whom are not indigenes of the state. Gboko and Otukpo are located in the hearts of Tiv and Idoma nation which are the two major ethnic groups in Benue state.

Specifically, the study was conducted in different settings particularly in bookmaking houses (popularly known as bet shops) like BetNaija, Naira Bet, Merry Bet, 1960 Bet, among others scattered all over the towns in Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo and of course all over Nigeria and beyond. These three major towns in Benue State have several outlets that have sports betting shops with thousands of bettors always seen in and around these outlets who are either staking bets or discussing betting activities.

c) *Population*

The general population for this study consists of all those who patronize sports betting outlets particularly those who have been found to be addictive to sports betting. As earlier mentioned, American Psychiatric association (2013) put certain conditions of addiction. They are indicated by five or more of the following: (1) is preoccupied with gambling (e.g., preoccupied with reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, or thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble) (2) needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement, (3) has repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back, or stop gambling, (4) is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling, (5) gambles as a way of escaping from problems or of relieving a dysphoric mood (e.g., feelings

of helplessness, guilt, anxiety, depression), (6) after losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even ("chasing" one's losses), (7) lies to family members, therapist, or others to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling, (8) has committed illegal acts such as forgery, fraud, theft, or embezzlement to finance gambling, (9) has jeopardized or lost significant relationship, job, or educational or career opportunity because of gambling and (10) relies on others to provide money to relive a desperate financial situation caused by gambling. This was achieved by first of all trying to observe the participants and a brief interview was also conducted on them before administering the scale on them to see if they will meet up with at least one of the aforementioned criteria.

d) Participants

The study considered all those who patronize bet houses all over the three locations mentioned above. Young adolescents and adults who are into betting who were found in these bookmaking houses or otherwise called betting shops were sampled and a brief interview was conducted on the participants before the questionnaire was given to them to know if they are addicted to sports betting.

A total of 500 copies of questionnaire were administered to purposively selected 500 sports betters across different locations in bet shops in Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo in Benue state. However, only 366 were retrieved. Frequency distribution revealed that 325 (88.8%) were males, while the other 39 (10.7%) were females. Their ages ranged from 17 to 63 years old with average age of 33.07 (SD = 12.50). In addition, 237 (64.8%) of the respondents were single, 117 (32.0%) were married and 12 (3.3%) were divorced/separated. Also, among the sampled participants, 270 (73.8%) were Christians, 69 (18.9%) were from Islamic religion while 27 (7.4%) were from other religious affiliations. Furthermore, 36 (9.8%) of the participants had primary education, 50 (13.7%) had secondary education, 262 (71.6%) had tertiary education while 18 (4.9%) did not indicate their highest level of education.

e) Instruments

A well-structured questionnaire was designed to gather data from selected respondents. The instrument consisted of two (2) sections; A and B.

Section A: This section consisted of socio-demographic information of respondents. It consisted of five (5) socio-demographic information of respondents. The following variables were contained in section A; Gender, age, marital status, religion and highest educational qualification.

Section B: This section consists of Gambling Addictive Behavior Scale for Adolescents (GABSA). This is a 32-item scale developed by Park and Jung, (2012) to measure gambling addictive behaviour among students.

It has the following sub-scales; loss of control (9 – items), life dysfunction from problem gambling (4 – items), gambling experience (7 – items) and social dysfunction from problem gambling (5 – items). The scale was found to have adequate internal consistency as a whole (α = .94) and subscales (loss of control – α = .90, life dysfunction from problem gambling – α = .89, gambling experience – α = .88 and social dysfunction from problem gambling - α = .90). Response format for the scale ranged from SA – Strongly Agree (4), A - Agree (3), D - Disagree (2) and SD - Strongly Disagree (1). The Gambling Addictive Behavior Scale for Adolescents (GABSA) was used to carry out the convergent validity for the Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpABS). A cross validation was conducted and Gambling Addictive Behavior Scale for Adolescents was found to have adequate internal consistency as follows; loss of control – α = .93, life dysfunction from problem gambling – α = .84, gambling experience – α = .94 and social dysfunction from problem gambling - α = .94. As a whole, the internal consistency was found to be α = .96.

f) Procedure

The researcher first and foremost recruited and trained 2 research assistants for the purpose of the study. The researcher then went to the selected towns with the research assistants and located the sports betting shops in the selected towns, that is Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo. Having met with the managers of sports betting shops or those in charge of the betting shops as the case may be, the researcher explained to them the purpose of the study. After successfully convincing the shop managers or those in charge of the betting shops, the researcher was allowed with the aid of the research assistants to administer the questionnaire on sports bettors found in each shop. In some shops, the researcher and the assistants could not locate many participants and as such, the research and his assistants left some copies of the questionnaires to the shop attendants to give to the participants on their behalf after being briefed on how to administer the questionnaire to those who will patronize the shops. The idea was to make the shop attendants have an idea of those who are expected to participate in the research which is those who are sports bettors who are addictive to sports betting. In totality, 500 copies of questionnaire were taken to the field and were divided into three which were taken to the three towns; Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo respectively. After a careful administration of the 500 questionnaires and some given to the shop attendants, only 366 were retrieved for data analysis.

The study was conducted in various stages;

i. *Item Generation*

The first step in developing the new measure of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale was to create

an initial pool of items designed to measure the construct. The aim of this stage was to generate items that adequately assess Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour. This was done through a careful literature search as well as a focused group discussion which was conducted with those who were seen to be addicted to sports betting. To ensure that the items are conceptually consistent with the construct, an assessment of content validity was conducted using a panel of experts which consisted of lecturers of the Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan for content validity to judge the appropriateness of each item. A preliminary set of 59 items was generated for Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (See Appendix I).

ii. *Content and face validity*

The generated items were subjected to two (2) different forms of validity, to determine the items that actually measure Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour. For face validity, the items were generated given to the supervisor who is an expert in the field. Thereafter, a total of five (5) professionals, consisting of selected lecturers of the Department of Psychology, University of Ibadan and two (2) post-graduate students of the same department were consulted for expert validity and face validity respectively on the generated items. The participants were requested to examine each of the items contained in the original scale and indicate whether or not the items measured Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour. Their responses were given as not related (0), somewhat related (1) and highly related (2). Items that received up to 70% of being related were retained in the scale (Appendix II).

iii. *Questionnaire Administration*

At this stage, the scaling method was determined. Respondents were asked to respond to the items using the following format comprising 1 – Not applicable to me, 2 – Mildly applicable to me, 3 – Applicable to me, 4 – Highly applicable to me.

Items remaining, after the content and face validity assessment, were administered to a sample of sports bettors. In addition, other data that were used to compute the convergent validity of the scale at this stage was also determined by putting them in the questionnaire and administering to the participants to achieve convergent validity which include Gambling Addictive Behaviour Scale for Adolescents. Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale was administered to a total of 500 sports bettors in the three major towns in Benue state which include Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo but only 366 were returned and properly filled. The instrument which consists of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) was administered in a paper-and-pencil format to all the participants. The responses were then coded and entered into Statistical Package for Social Science by the researcher.

iv. *Initial Item Reduction*

When the scale was administered initially, item-total correlations were computed and those items that did not correlate at .30 or above with total score were removed. In the case of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale, all the items at this stage scaled through as they all had a correlation value above .30.

v. *Exploratory Factor Analysis*

The exploratory factor analyses were conducted for the purpose of determining if underlying dimensions were evident from the data. A total of six factors emerged but only four of them loaded up to 1.00 Eigen value and only the four were returned and named as Betting-relationship Conflict, Betting Distress, Betting-economic Interference and Sport Betting Anticipatory

vi. *Convergent validity*

To further assess the convergent validity of the new measure, the relations between the new measure and data collected on other constructs in the second stage were examined. Specifically, the data were examined to determine how much Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) correlate with another scale (Gambling addictive behaviour scale for adolescents) that assess similar constructs (convergent validity) as reported in chapter four of this study.

vii. *Data Analysis*

Gathered data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics such as simple frequencies and percentages were utilized to describe the demographic features of respondents as well as the content and face validity of the instrument. The inferential statistics made use of was the Pearson r correlation. Also, reliability analysis was done using split-half reliability, while internal consistency was calculated using Cronbach Alpha (α).

III. RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: Items generated will concurrently satisfy conditions for content and face validity.

Phase 1: Item generation, content and face validity

This section presents the initial items as they were used for content validity. These items are presented in the tabular form including experts and students rating. Any item with less than 70% rating is removed subsequently. Table 4.1 presents the initial item pool as well as the expert and student ratings of the items;

Table 4.1: Content and face validity of generated items

S/No	Items	Expert Rating (%)	Students Rating (%)
1	SpBABS1	100.00	94.23
2	SpBABS2	100.00	99.10
3	SpBABS3	77.10	78.90
4	SpBABS4	71.40	80.21
5	SpBABS5	57.10**	42.10**
6	SpBABS6	85.70	90.66
7	SpBABS7	71.40	80.12
8	SpBABS8	71.40	72.18
9	SpBABS9	57.10**	50.11**
10	SpBABS10	71.40	80.12
11	SpBABS11	100.00	99.10
12	SpBABS12	57.10**	56.12**
13	SpBABS13	57.10**	54.12**
14	SpBABS14	82.10	88.12
15	SpBABS15	57.10**	45.12**
16	SpBABS16	85.70	90.12
17	SpBABS17	85.70	76.12
18	SpBABS18	85.70	85.70
19	SpBABS19	100.00	100.00
20	SpBABS20	71.40	71.40
21	SpBABS21	100.00	100.00
22	SpBABS22	85.70	85.70
23	SpBABS23	100.00	100.00
24	SpBABS24	100.00	100.00
25	SpBABS25	100.00	100.00
26	SpBABS26	57.10**	50.12**
27	SpBABS27	71.40	71.40
28	SpBABS28	85.70	85.70
29	SpBABS29	71.40	71.40
30	SpBABS30	71.40	71.40
31	SpBABS31	85.70	85.70
32	SpBABS32	57.10**	47.22**
33	SpBABS33	57.10**	60.12**
34	SpBABS34	83.40	90.12
35	SpBABS35	76.90	88.14
36	SpBABS36	42.90**	50.22**
37	SpBABS37	57.10**	61.13**
38	SpBABS38	84.30	88.30
39	SpBABS39	75.40	76.40
40	SpBABS40	85.70	88.70
41	SpBABS41	77.90	87.90
42	SpBABS42	71.40	81.40
43	SpBABS43	84.40	94.40
44	SpBABS44	71.40	81.40
45	SpBABS45	42.90**	52.90**
46	SpBABS46	85.70	85.70
47	SpBABS47	87.50	77.50
48	SpBABS48	88.30	98.30
49	SpBABS49	42.90**	52.90**
50	SpBABS50	85.70	85.70
51	SpBABS51	57.10**	67.10**
52	SpBABS52	71.40	81.40
53	SpBABS53	85.70	85.70
54	SpBABS54	85.70	85.70
55	SpBABS55	71.40	81.40
56	SpBABS56	85.70	75.70
57	SpBABS57	71.40	71.40
58	SpBABS58	85.70	95.70
59	SpBABS59	84.40	94.40

*** Item deleted*

Table 4.1 presents a total of 59-items initially generated item pool for content and face validity and all the items were approved for further testing. When the content validity was conducted, 13-items were deleted (SpBABS5, SpBABS9, SpBABS12, SpBABS13, SpBABS15, SpBABS26, SpBABS32, SpBABS33, SpBABS36, SpBABS37, SpBABS45, SpBABS49 and SpBABS51). Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) had 46-items remaining. The forty-six (46) items that emerged were later administered to 500 sports bettors in three different towns namely Makurdi, Gboko and Otukpo but only 366 were returned and properly filled.

Hypothesis 2: Each item in the scale will significantly correlate positively with total score on the scale.

Item Analysis

The resultant item pool consisting of 46 - items administered to 500 sports bettors which 366 were returned and subjected to item analysis procedure to remove items that do not correlate with the total score and subsequently improve on the construct validity of the instrument. Items were selected if they met the benchmark of .30. Table 4.2, present the item-total correlation result;

Table 4.2: Item-total correlation of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS)

S/No	Items	Item-total correlation	α if item deleted
1	SpBABS1	.636	.976
2	SpBABS2	.601	.976
3	SpBABS3	.472	.977
4	SpBABS4	.425	.977
6	SpBABS6	.459	.977
7	SpBABS7	.521	.977
8	SpBABS8	.458	.977
10	SpBABS10	.342	.977
11	SpBABS11	.622	.976
14	SpBABS14	.485	.977
16	SpBABS16	.521	.977
17	SpBABS17	.798	.976
18	SpBABS18	.521	.977
19	SpBABS19	.709	.976
20	SpBABS20	.755	.976
21	SpBABS21	.829	.976
22	SpBABS22	.784	.976
23	SpBABS23	.741	.976
24	SpBABS24	.794	.976
25	SpBABS25	.839	.976
27	SpBABS27	.828	.976
28	SpBABS28	.788	.976
29	SpBABS29	.760	.976
30	SpBABS30	.749	.976
31	SpBABS31	.638	.976
34	SpBABS34	.770	.976
35	SpBABS35	.673	.976
38	SpBABS38	.667	.976
39	SpBABS39	.791	.976
40	SpBABS40	.795	.976
41	SpBABS41	.692	.976
42	SpBABS42	.680	.976
43	SpBABS43	.723	.976
44	SpBABS44	.759	.976
46	SpBABS46	.773	.976
47	SpBABS47	.814	.976
48	SpBABS48	.783	.976
50	SpBABS50	.807	.976
52	SpBABS52	.746	.976
53	SpBABS53	.816	.976
54	SpBABS54	.756	.976
55	SpBABS55	.641	.976
56	SpBABS56	.782	.976
57	SpBABS57	.634	.976
58	SpBABS58	.662	.976
59	SpBABS59	.669	.976

Table 4.2 presents the item-total correlation analysis on the SpBABS. The table presents all the 46-item meets the .30 correlation value requirement.

Hypothesis 3: Exploratory factor analysis will significantly produce factors for the scale developed.

Factor Analysis

The next step was to conduct the factor analysis of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour (SpBAB) scale.

The method of Principal Component Analysis was used to perform the factor analysis of the scores of the remaining 46-items on the SpBAB scale. The results show that 6 factors but only 4 had Eigen values greater than 1 which were extracted. The results are presented on Table 4.3;

Table 4.3: Eigen values and percentage of variance of the factors extracted

SN	Factors	Eigen-values	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	Factor 1	23.07	50.15	50.15
2	Factor 2	2.95	6.41	56.56
3	Factor 3	2.10	4.56	61.12
4	Factor 4	1.11	2.41	63.53
5	Factor 5	.961	2.09	65.61
6	Factor 6	.687	1.49	67.11

The results show that six factors emerged but only four of them had the Eigen value of 1.00 which is appropriate figure to return a factor (Kaiser, 1960). The four (4) factors whose value met the required criteria ranged in order of magnitude from 1.11 to 23.07 Eigen-value and they accounted for 63.53% of the total variance for the scale. These four factors were named Betting-relationship Conflict, Betting Distress, Betting-economic Interference and Sport Betting Anticipatory. This tends to suggest the appropriateness of the scale in this study. After the varimax rotation, the loading of each of the items of SpBAB scale on each of the factors was found and the results are presented on table 4.4;

Table 4.4: Summary of factor analysis of SpBAB scale

S/No	Extracted factors	1	2	3	4
	Betting-relationship Conflict				
1	SpBABS40	0.859			
2	SpBABS19	0.847			
3	SpBABS48	0.808			
4	SpBABS39	0.796			
5	SpBABS47	0.793			
6	SpBABS22	0.778			
7	SpBABS59	0.742			
8	SpBABS17	0.723			
9	SpBABS21	0.715			
10	SpBABS53	0.707			
11	SpBABS41	0.695			
12	SpBABS28	0.674			
13	SpBABS56	0.64			
14	SpBABS25	0.638			
15	SpBABS50	0.622			
16	SpBABS24	0.619			
17	SpBABS34	0.607			
18	SpBABS30	0.598			
19	SpBABS27	0.587			
20	SpBABS29	0.564			
21	SpBABS20	0.562			
22	SpBABS52	0.518			
23	SpBABS18	0.515			
24	SpBABS23	0.498			
25	SpBABS42	0.477			
	Sports Betting Distress				
26	SpBABS54		0.672		
27	SpBABS44		0.546		
28	SpBABS38		0.538		
29	SpBABS43		0.516		

30	SpBABS46	0.569	
31	SpBABS35	0.516	
32	SpBABS57	0.743	
33	SpBABS58	0.691	
34	SpBABS55	0.699	
Sports Betting Economic Interference			
35	SpBABS7	0.604	
36	SpBABS6	0.643	
37	SpBABS8	0.713	
38	SpBABS14	0.666	
39	SpBABS16	0.598	
Sports Betting Anticipatory			
40	SpBABS1		0.495
41	SpBABS31		0.372
42	SpBABS11		0.591
43	SpBABS2		0.553
44	SpBABS4		0.609
45	SpBABS10		0.451
46	SpBABS3		0.757

Data on the forty-six (46) items, obtained from 366 participants were subjected to factor analysis to detect factorial structure or the relationships among variables on the 46-items and to unravel the inter-relationship of the items and to detect items with least latent roots for deletion according to Ford, McCallum and Talt's (1986) and Schwab's (1980) proposition. Principal component factoring procedure with varimax rotation was used to factor analyze the data. From the result, according to the cluster of items, four (4) factor solution ensued and are labelled as; Betting-relationship Conflict, 25-items, Betting Distress, 9-items, Betting-economic Interference 5-items and Sport Betting Anticipatory 7-items.

Further, Meryer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Barlett's test of sphericity were computed. The result revealed acceptable KMO, and significant chi-square following Brace, Kemp and Snelgar's (2006) proposition. This confirmed that the instrument is indeed factorable and useful. It also shows clearly that the respondents perceived four (4) sports betting addictive behaviour traits.

The varimax rotation shows that out of the four (4) SpBAB scale factors with Eigen values greater or equal to 1, 25 items distinctively loaded on Betting-relationship Conflict, with item 40 (I have missed significant activities in my life because of sports betting) having the highest loading of .859. On Betting Distress, a total of 9 items loaded distinctively with item 57 (—I feel aggressive each time I loss a bet) having the highest loading of .743. Betting-economic Interference had 5 items that loaded distinctively with item 8 (—I stake sports bets repeatedly with the hope of winning at least one of the many tickets) having the highest factor loading of .713. As regards Sport Betting Anticipatory, there are a total of 7 items that loaded distinctively with item 3 (-I think of staking sports bets always) having the highest loading of .757.

Hypothesis 4: Items in the developed scale will significantly be internally consistent among themselves.

Reliability Analyses

The Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) scale reliability is defined as the extent to which it provides the same results. The SpBAB scale adopted the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Statistics to test for the split-half reliability, while Spearman Brown Prophecy was utilized to get the full scale reliability; the following split half and full scale reliability coefficients were obtained; whole scale (SpBABS) (split half = .946; full scale = .942;), Betting-relationship Conflict (Split-half = 0.969, full-scale = .958), Betting Distress (Split-half = 0.889, full scale = .886), Betting-economic Interference (Split-half = 0.738, full-scale = 0.804) and Sport Betting Anticipatory (Split-half = 0.765, full-scale = 0.750). Internal consistency analyses were conducted using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to obtain reliability estimates. All the four (4) factors as well as composite combining the items on the four (4) factors, demonstrated strong internal consistency estimates as follows; whole scale (SpBABS) α = .977, Betting-relationship Conflict α = .978, Betting Distress α = .926, Betting-economic Interference α = .828 and Sport Betting Anticipatory α = .827. The result is presented on Table 4.5;

Table 4.5: Reliability and internal consistencies of the SpBAB Scale and sub-scales

S/No	Scale	Split-half (r)	Full-scale (r)	Cronbach alpha (α)
1	Whole scale	0.946	0.942	0.977
2	Betting-relationship Conflict	0.969	0.958	0.978
3	Betting Distress	0.889	0.886	0.926
4	Betting-economic Interference	0.738	0.804	0.828
5	Sport Betting Anticipatory	0.765	0.750	0.827

Hypothesis 5: Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpABS) will positively correlate significantly Gambling Addictive Behaviour for Adolescent Scale (GABSA).

Construct Validity

In order to determine the construct validity (convergent), the Pearson product Moment Correlation Coefficient (r) was adopted to run the relationship between factors of Gambling Addictive Behaviour Scale for Adolescents (GABSA) and Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS). Table 4.6 presents the inter-relationship between the two scales;

Table 4.6: Pearson r correlation between whole scale of GABSA and SpBABS

Variable	Mean	SD	Df	r	p
Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpABS)	97.51	38.92			
			318	.965	<.000
Gambling Addictive Behaviour for Adolescent Scale (GABSA)	87.85	28.56			

Result in table 4.6 shows that, there is a significant relationship between sports betting addictive behaviour scale (SpBABS) and gambling addictive behaviour for adolescent scale (GABSA) r = .956; p<.001. This is an indication that sports betting addictive behaviour scale has high convergent validity.

To further test the validity of the factors, correlation matrix was conducted on the factors of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) and Gambling Addictive Behaviour Scale for Adolescents (GABSA). The results are presented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Correlation Matrix among sub-scales of GABSA and SpBABS

S/No	Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Mean	SD
1	Betting relationship conflict (SpBABS)	-								48.59	23.99
2	Betting distress (SpBABS)	.484**	-							23.10	9.65
3	Betting economic interference (SpBABS)	.333**	.258**	-						16.16	5.94
4	Sport betting anticipatory (SpBABS)	.649**	.248**	.246**	-					16.09	5.94
5	Loss of Control (GABAS)	.371**	.217**	.115**	.399**	-				28.09	11.35
6	Life dysfunction from problem gambling (GABAS)	.733**	.416**	.293**	.586**	.338**	-			79.09	51.96
7	Gambling Experience (GABAS)	.695**	.303**	.275**	.562**	.411**	.462**	-		101.09	42.13
8	Social dysfunction from problem gambling (GABAS)	.403**	.272**	.165**	.284**	.752**	.374**	.338**	-	17.56	7.16

*** Significant at the 0.01 level*
** Significant at the 0.05 level*

Table 4.7 presents the inter-relationship among the sub-scales of sports betting addictive behaviour scale and gambling addictive behaviour for adolescents. It is shown on table 4.7 that betting-relationship conflict of SpBABS correlated positively with loss of control (r = .371; p<.01), life dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .733; p<.01), gambling experience (r = .695; p<.05) and social dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .403; p<.01). Betting distress of SpBABS dimension had significant positive

relationship with loss of control (r = .217; p<.01), life dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .416; p<.01), gambling experience (r = .303; p<.01) and social dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .272; p<.01). Betting economic interference dimension of SpBABS has significant positive relationship with loss of control (r = .115; p<.01), life dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .293; p<.01), gambling experience (r = .275; p<.01) and social dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .165; p<.01). Sports betting anticipatory dimension of SpBABS had significant positive relationship with loss of control (r = .399; p<.01), life dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .586; p<.01), gambling experience (r = .562; p<.0.01) and social dysfunction from problem gambling (r = .284; p<.015).

IV. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to develop and validate the Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) and to determine the associated psychometric properties utilizing the Rasch rating scale measurement model. Subsequently, the study led to the development and validation of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS). The study has been able to describe the development and factor structure of the Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale and presented the results that provide strong evidence of reliability and validity of the scale.

This study uncovered four (4) factors from Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale which includes; Betting-relationship Conflict, Betting Distress, Betting-economic Interference and Sport Betting Anticipatory. Not surprising it had significant and positive relationship with Gambling addictive Behaviour Scale dimensions, as they share similar factors. This confirmed Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) to be a valid measure of one who is addicted to sports betting. It is pertinent to note that someone who is addicted to sports betting will manifest such traits as they appear in the factors that emerged from Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale.

In a related study, Castro, Fuentes & Tavares (2005) looked at gambling follow-up scale specifically on development and reliability testing of a scale for pathological gamblers under treatment. The main objective was to provide preliminary data on the gambling follow-up scale, a new scale assessing recovering gamblers. The secondary goals included assessing the impact of "work status", "family relationship", "leisure" and "enrolment" in gamblers anonymous on gambling together with the impact of treatment. Using GFS, 3 independent raters interviewed gamblers under treatment. The sample was collected in 2 university centers in the city of SoPaulo, Brazil. Patients attended psychotherapy coupled with psychiatric follow-up, participation in GA, or both. The

researcher interviewed 47 pathological gamblers; 13 were interviewed twice, with a minimum interval of 6 months, for a total of 60 GFS interviews. Interviews took average of 60 minutes SD = 2.7. Interater concordance ranged from 82% to 95% (intraclass correlation coefficient range 0.85 to 0.99, P<0.001). a factorial analysis showed a 1-factor solution (Eigenvalue = 2.4, 47.6% of total variance accounted). "Leisure," "frequency and time gambling," and "family relationship" showed considerable loadings (0.84; 0.71; 0.71), whereas "enrolment in GA" and "work status" showed moderate loadings (0.59; 0.56). A linear regression model significantly correlated gambling (R2 = 0.356; P < 0.001) with "leisure" and length of treatment. Treatment modalities affected "leisure" (F2, 43 = 5.00, P = 0.011), with GA attendees reporting more regular and gratifying activities. The GFS showed interrater reliability and construct validity. More leisure and lengthier treatment were significantly related to less gambling. GA enrolment seemed to particularly benefit the quality of leisure. Future studies could profit from the quickness and simple structure of the GFS in providing shareable outcome measures.

Generally, sports betting is a form of behaviour that has been identify to have serious consequences on gamblers health, study-habit, academic performance, and has been reported to be related to some criminal related behaviour (Oyebisi, Alao, & Popoola, 2012). Also, betting has been generally defined as betting or wagering money or something of value on an event that has an uncertain outcome with the possibility of winning money or materials (Korn & Shaffer, 1999; Potenza, Fiellin, Heninger, Rounsaville & Mazure, 2002). Public perceptions of betting are often misleading. On the one hand, people are usually aware that gambling poses serious risks to those who are predisposed to gamble excessively. However, on the other hand, it is also acknowledged that gambling can have positive consequences for communities (e.g. via providing a source of revenue for sporting clubs or humanitarian causes) and can be an enjoyable pastime for individuals (Vong, 2009).

For the occasional bettors, these behaviors may provide an innocuous opportunity for excitement, socialization, or boredom relief. When these behaviors increase, however, problem and pathological gambling create negative consequences in an individual's financial, social, and overall health. Gambling explored through the public health perspective looks at the effect of gambling on individual wellbeing and health, familial health, community health, health care system and public policy. Korn and Shaffer (1999) identified eight negative health and social consequences of gambling: gambling disorders, family dysfunction and domestic violence, youth and underage gambling, alcohol and other drug problems, psychiatric conditions, suicide and suicide

ideation, significant financial problems, and criminal behavior.

V. Conclusions

This study sought to achieve three specific objectives; to develop a sports betting addictive behaviour scale that is in line with the change in gambling activities from the general gambling to sports betting; to design a useful and effective tool for identifying and assessing those who are addicted to betting which affects their daily functioning even at home and in work places; and to outline the necessary sub-categories of the kind of behaviours exhibited by sports betters who are addicted to this form of gambling. Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn;

i. 56 items were first generated using careful literature review as well as focused group discussion and 46 of these items were returned after face and content validity were conducted.
ii. The findings provided psychometric evidence for sports betting addictive behaviour scale which included measure of validity and reliability as well as convergent validity.
iii. Also, Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) was a significant positive correlate of the dimensions of Gambling Addictive Behaviour for Adolescent (loss of control, life dysfunction from problem gambling, gambling experience and social dysfunction from problem gambling).
iv. Finally, it is concluded that Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) is a good predictor of betting addiction particularly in sports and as such, organizations, clinicians, researchers and other NGOs can use to measure the implications of betting addiction as it affects the general society.

VI. Implications of Findings

The items of the Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) are valid; therefore, clinicians, organizations, NGOs and academicians can be confident that the dimensions of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) are effectively measuring betting addiction. More importantly, the inference made from such measures is sound, credible, and precise. The Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) correlated significantly and positively with gambling addictive behaviour for adolescents. This finding provides evidence for convergent validity and demonstrates that the dimensions of the Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) are valid and critical to the measurement of sports bettors. The Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) provides the basis for measuring those who are addicted to sports betting. Essentially, high scores of the dimensions of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale

(SpBABS) are an indication that they are addicted to sports betting and such negative behaviour exhibited by addiction to sports betting can manifest in such an individual as such, urgent intervention needs to be provided.

Sports betting addiction is detrimental to both physical and emotional aspect of an individual and there is need to provide a viable tool to measure such behaviour so that possible solutions can be provided for those who are addicted. Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale is a validated tool that measures betting addictive behaviour that are congruent with the emerging trend in gambling. Many of the previously published gambling scales are based on general gambling with little or no specific items to measure sports betting addiction, whereas the Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) is eclectic and rooted to sports betting addiction specifically as it measures the emerging trend of gambling.

The Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) does not measure academic aptitude and/or knowledge content. The Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) measures frequency of betting addictive behaviour. Frequency is a measure of how often the behavior is used. The frequency measure of behavior is a standard behavior measure and is the most concrete of all psychometrics. Behavior can be measured or counted reliably. The underlying assumption of this measure is that all betting behaviours are uniformly manifested.

Results from this study generated a total of four (4) factors; (Betting-relationship Conflict Betting Distress, Betting-economic Interference and Sport Betting Anticipatory and) and 46 items. The Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) is able to guide guild clinicians, academicians and NGOs to development strategies that will help individuals stay away from gambling.

VII. Recommendations

On the basis limitation, this study involves a vast population and so there was need for larger sample but the researcher was constrained in that aspect. Also, the researcher was constrained on the basis of accurate response from the participants. It was therefore recommended based on the findings of this study that;

1. This study should be replicated in other locations of the world.
2. Use the Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) to identify those that addictive to sports betting so that intervention can be provided to adductors.
3. Develop training/rehabilitation modules for the four (4) dimensions; to train individuals on ways of eliminating betting behaviours based on the categories of their behaviour identified.

4. Academicians should use Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) to research on the how the behaviour affects other aspects of individual behaviour.

5. Clinical psychologists should ensure maximum use of Sports Betting Addictive Behaviour Scale (SpBABS) to measure sports betting addiction as addiction is identified in DSM as a maladaptive behaviour.

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Appendices

FINAL ITEMS OF SPORTS BETTING ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOUR SCALE

Key: 4 = Highly applicable to me; 3 = Moderately applicable to me, 2 = Mildly applicable to me; 1 = Not applicable to me

S/No	Items	1	2	3	4
1	I bet on sports everyday				
2	I bet on sports every week				
3	I think of betting on sports always				
4	I dream of betting sports				
5	I bet on sports because I hear people win huge amount of money				
6	I bet on sports because of my economic situation				
7	I bet on sports repeatedly with the hope of winning atleast one of the many tickets.				
8	I bet on sports because of the fun attached to it				
9	Each time I loss a bet, I tell myself never to go into it again but I find myself staking sports bets over and over again				
10	I feel anxious each time my stake is on				
11	When I stake sports bets, I feel like the money is already in my pocket as my hope is always very high				
12	I borrow money from friends, family members and significant others severally to stake sports bets				
13	Sometimes I involve myself into dubious activities just to get money and stake sports bets.				
14	I sell personal belongings to stake sports bets				
15	I feel sad and worried when I don't have money to bet on sports				
16	I lie to family, friends and significant others just to get money to bets				
17	I pick money from relatives without their knowledge to bet on sports				
18	I use the last money even when am starving to bet on sports				
19	Am no longer trusted with money because of my sports betting attitudes				
20	I have had issues with my family and friends because of my sports betting attitudes				
21	I sometimes stay in sports betting shops all day to stake bets				
22	I ignore many other activities because of sports betting				
23	Am always on my gadget staking bets or checking updates on my bets				
24	When am walking on the road, I constantly check my bets on my phone/tab				
25	I talk people into staking sports bets				
26	I lie to family, friends and relatives to cover my sports betting activities				
27	I do not benefit from staking sports bets considering what I lost compared to the one I gain in sports betting, yet I keep staking sports bets				
28	Virtual games takes my time and resources more than other games				
29	I have marital/relationship problems because of my sport betting attitudes				
30	I have missed significant activities in my life because of sports betting				
31	My life is preoccupied with sports betting such that I think of nothing else than sports betting				
32	I need to stake sports bets with increasing amounts of money in order to get the desired money				
33	I have repeated and several times had unsuccessful efforts to control, cut down, or stop sports betting				
34	I become restless or irritable when each time I try to reduce my sports betting activities.				
35	After loosing a bet, I often return the next day to get even more to recover my loss				
36	I have jeopardized or lost significant relationship because of sport bet				
37	I have committed fraudulent acts to raise money to stake sports bets				
38	I rely on others most times to provide money to relive a situation I find myself in because of sports betting				
39	I feel like am losing when I don't have money to stake bets				
40	I forfeit other important activities to meet up with time on sports betting				
41	I transfer aggression to others each time I lost a bet				
42	Losing a bet to me is like losing money I already have				
43	Am always ready to risk anything to get money to stake sports bets				
44	I feel aggressive each time I loss a bet				
45	I feel sad and moody each time I loss a bet				
46	I have lost a job and similar opportunities because of sports bets				

Method of Administration: Pen and paper and no limited time for administration

Scoring

   Add all the scores to constitute the composite scores of the participant on sports betting. Average scores can be taken to determine those who score high or low on sports betting. For the dimensions, the following scoring method should be used;

Sports Betting-Relationship Conflict: Item 30, 14, 37, 29, 36, 17, 46, 12, 16, 40, 31, 22, 43, 20, 38, 19, 26, 24, 21, 23, 15, 39, 13, 18, 32.

Sports Betting Distress: Item 41, 34, 28, 33, 35, 27, 44, 45, 42.

Sports Betting Economic Interference: Item 6, 5, 7, 10, 11.

Sports Betting Anticipatory: Item 1, 25, 9, 2, 4, 8, 3.

Elements of Universal Appeal in the Heroic Characters of Mrs. Warren and Ghasiram Kotwal

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Abstract- In this paper, we have gone on to analyze the character of Mrs. Warren in 'Mrs. Warren's Profession' and Ghasiram Kotwal in the play by the same name 'Ghasiram Kotwal.' Both these characters are among some of the strongest ones drawn by George Bernard Shaw and Vijay Tendulkar Both the characters are the strongest characters of George Bernard Shaw and Vijay Tendulkar respectively. As Shaw was inspired from a true story of a lead poisoning case of Ms. Ann Jane in a white lead factory on the other hand, Ghasiram was a historical inspiration from the Maratha history of a man who was in charge of policing in Poona during the reign of Madhav Rao Peshwa under the aegis of the minister Nana Fadnavis. The two characters in question are some of the most versatile in terms of the emotional and dramatic hues they carry, besides being very pragmatic at times. They have a very vivid universal appeal because they are breakers of stereotypes in the most nuanced way. These characters show how men and women can transcend from the debate of Masculinity and Feminism when the ambition of men and women is held as the only guiding light to achieve success in life.

Keywords: universal heroism, morality, enterprise, independence, superior man, new women, gender consciousness.

GJHSS-A Classification: FOR Code: 190499

ELEMENTSOFUNIVERSALAPPEALINTHEHEROICCHARACTERSOFMRSWARRENANDGHASIRAMKOTWAL

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

Elements of Universal Appeal in the Heroic Characters of Mrs. Warren and Ghasiram Kotwal

Shehnaz Khan

Abstract- In this paper, we have gone on to analyze the character of Mrs. Warren in *'Mrs. Warren's Profession'* and Ghasiram Kotwal in the play by the same name *'Ghasiram Kotwal.'* Both these characters are among some of the strongest ones drawn by George Bernard Shaw and Vijay Tendulkar Both the characters are the strongest characters of George Bernard Shaw and Vijay Tendulkar respectively. As Shaw was inspired from a true story of a lead poisoning case of Ms. Ann Jane in a white lead factory on the other hand, Ghasiram was a historical inspiration from the Maratha history of a man who was in charge of policing in Poona during the reign of Madhav Rao Peshwa under the aegis of the minister Nana Fadnavis. The two characters in question are some of the most versatile in terms of the emotional and dramatic hues they carry, besides being very pragmatic at times. They have a very vivid universal appeal because they are breakers of stereotypes in the most nuanced way. These characters show how men and women can transcend from the debate of Masculinity and Feminism when the ambition of men and women is held as the only guiding light to achieve success in life.

Keywords: universal heroism, morality, enterprise, independence, superior man, new women, gender consciousness.

I. Mrs. Warren and Ghasiram as Universal Heroes

Mrs. Warren and Ghasiram both make decisions that are not acceptable on a moral compass; however they catapult them to a position of unimaginable power and control over the lives of others. Such power and control also bring with it the opportunity to do good for the people. Mrs. Warren claims to keep the women in her business more cared for than any other would, and In *'Ghasiram Kotwal',* Ghasiram takes on to the role of a city Kotwal in charge of policing in Poona, and he is determined to purge the social evils and the immorality that had crept into the society of Poona especially the Brahmins of Poona. Ghasiram by taking strict control of law and order and bringing among the people of Poona fear of law, and ensuring legal and moral uprightness. His measures had paid off, and the Brahmin women should have been thankful to Ghasiram for that. Ghasiram's ways did not go well with the Brahmins of Poona as they were discriminate between a Poona Brahmins and Brahmin of Kanauj, and they plotted and waited for his downfall.

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II. Mrs. Warren as a Character

Mrs. Warren in *'Mrs. Warren's Profession'* is an independent woman, and she has drawn her independence by her sheer astute understanding of businesses. The idea of demand and supply thereby created a business that had many customers to lure. The profession was not respectable, of course; however, despite that moral disadvantage, Mrs. Warren happens to be one of the most impressive women in the works of George Bernard Shaw as she impresses us with her intellect, hard work, and her consciousness of her beauty. She builds an empire single-handedly when everything was at odds for her. She is determined to improve her economic status and refuses to live as a destitute like her sisters, one of whom died of lead poisoning working in a lead factory of the presumed 18th Century Industrialized England.

III. Ghasiram Kotwal as a Character

Ghasiram kotwal, on the other hand, is the male counterpart when we compare the works of an Indian dramatist who drew inspirations from the middle and lower class Maratha cultures in the state of Maharashtra. The character of Ghasiram is a splendid art form expressed in the most meticulous dramatic touch. He is very important as he has hues of a being who, though, is a male has his disgust for the turpitude in male Brahmins. He lives for his ambition and marries his daughter to Nana, which presumably was the custom then that parents would give away their daughters in marriage, in their early teens. Ghasiram uses Nana's urge to fuel his ambition, which was partly a result of the humiliation he and his daughter had undergone at the hands of the Poona Brahmins.

IV. Evolution of the Superior Man and the New Women

The characters of Mrs. Warren and Ghasiram Kotwal are splendid examples of strong men and women who are needed in society to make a definitive change, and bring about a new modern order.

George Bernard Shaw had always advocated for the evolution of a superior man and the idea of the new women. These are universal ideas for achieving greater heights for humanity. George Bernard Shaw, through his characters, has shown that nature inherently

works in the most mysterious ways to achieve its object. That object is the evolution of a superior man and humanity. The material desires of the society which are loaded with loathsome ideals impede the evolution of such superior man, and defeat the 'life force.' Mrs. Warren can also be seen as an ambassador of such thought when through her, Shaw wanted to show that though she was in a dishonorable profession, be that as it may, the grit of a superior man was in her. She braved all odds to overcome more so to disprove that this world is not a man's world alone. When advocating these ideals, Shaw was very holistic and took the superior man's evolution as not confined to the evolution of man alone but the evolution of man and women, in general, for humanity. Through the character of Mrs. Warren, Shaw can show that when gender consciousness is lost and with it are lost, all chauvinism which results in all the energy and spirit channeled into a productive space and hence, results into an achievement of nature's object of the evolution of superior men and women. Through these characters, Shaw and Tendulkar have shown that all our efforts should be to achieve the greatness of humanity, and we should not confine to representing man or woman separately as a gain for each is, a gain (reward) for mankind.

V. Enterprise and Independence

Mrs. Warren is a woman who displays exuberant confidence that surpasses almost all the characters drawn by George Bernard Shaw. She has an exemplary business acumen and judges the expectation of the masses. Mrs. Warren knows her true worth and she is under rewarded. She chooses the ambitious path of building her enterprise and, in doing so, sets up a chain of comfort houses (brothels) for men, and earns a fortune out of those so much so that she uses the earnings from the immoral business to fund the education of her daughter Vivie Warren in the best of institutions of the time. She takes a bold step for the contemporary period shown in the drama as women were not so outgoing in those days, and Vivie, due to the vision of Mrs. Warren, had achieved the best that a woman in those times could get. She graduated in Mathematics from Oxford and, thereafter had already been offered a great opportunity at the office of 'Fraser and Warren'. Mrs. Warren gets the credit for the risk she takes to give her child the most modern education at the time albeit she was a single mother and it was not even sure who was her (Vivie's) father. Mrs. Warrens is bold in the sense because she educates her child with the best education despite she was in a profession where education is never a consideration increasingly so as she was herself not very educated.

Mrs. Warren is in charge of the enterprise. She is not a dangling subsidiary but the main leading force of the enterprise. She ensures that she best utilizes all the energy and resources to get the maximum profits. She doesn't let her emotion for her daughter even to take away that spirit of doing well in business, albeit it was immoral. However, morals are only contemporary and seldom have a universal character. She values profit-making opportunities similar to Ghasiram as he, too, traded off the post of a kotwal by betrothing his daughter to the much older Nana.

Ghasiram Kotwal is also an independent and bold character drawn by Vijay Tendulkar, an Indian author with a lot of dramas (plays) in Marathi and 'Ghasiram Kotwal' being the English adaptation of the play with the same title. Ghasiram Kotwal is a Brahmin who had traveled to Poona searching for a better life, but in the course, it transpired that the Brahmins of Poona ridiculed him and his daughter as inferior Brahmins. This incident in the life of Ghasiram Kotwal was a turning point as he determined to revenge on the city of Poona.

Before Ghasiram arrived in Poona, the city of Poona had turned into an evil and morally corrupt society as the menfolk, especially the Brahmins who had been defiant to Nana, were indulged ceremonious debauchery under the guise of deity worship.

"SUTRADHAR (to the beat of the dholki drum):

Night comes.

Poona Brahmans go

To Bavannakhani.

…

They go to the temple - as they have done every day. The Brahmans go to Bavannakhani.

The Brahmans make a curtain with backs towards the group of spectators. The curtain sings and moves and recites;

Ravi Shiva Hari

Mukunda Murari

Radhakrishna Hari

The street of Bavanna became for a while

The garden of Krishna."

(Act I, 16-17) Credits: rupkatha.com/ghasiram-kotwal/

This excellent play analytically criticizes the lewd and snobbish character of the ruling class, explicitly the Brahmins of Pune. They consistently see themselves as the defender of social morality. The play additionally makes a solid dissent against the caste system pervasive in Indian culture.

In the first act of the play, sutradhar (Marathi Word for Facilitator) announces the entry of Nana. At night, life begins at Pune. Brahmins and Nana dominate the city. The Brahmins, go to Bavannakhani (Marathi word for a building complex) where Gulabi, a courtesan, entertains Nana and his followers with dance and song. The facilitator announces as a backdrop about the

degenerate class in power in vivid details by saying the following:

"The night progresses
And the peshwa's chief Minister,
Nana of the nine courts
Nana of the wealth And 'Power'
Nana Of Phadnavis
To Gulabi's place proceeds." (Act1, P.38)

In this way, Nana and his subjects enjoy a wide range of disgusting exercises fixated on unbridled sex. Nana, having forgotten his duties towards the public busy in his enjoyment. Society is spoilt as the Brahmins who have a place with the higher strata act as lowly men. They are the defenders of religion and sacred scriptures, however they, themselves, were busy in spreading immorality. Busy in self indulgence, they used to relish the company of other women and neglected to realize what their women needed.

Nana meets Ghasiram's little girl at a religious ceremony and is attracted towards her. The power turned the head of Nana and made him egoistic; he boasts to the girl.

"All your dreams this Nans will fulfill …no one in Poona today dares to watch the great Nana Phadnavis!(P.48)

The innocent girl points to the idol of Ganapati and says

"He will see."

And a lecherous, Machiavellian politician with no moral scruples mockingly replies. "that idol of holiness? That all holy Ganapati? The maker of Good? Look, he has two wives one on this side. One on that side. If you sit on our lap, he won't say anything!" (p.48)

This negligence towards the religious institution and class, which, even though his unquenchable thirst for sex, symbolizes the wanton human values of the advanced society. The idol, a substitute for the formless god, is worshipped by people and is accepted to create amazement and dread among the miscreants and keeps men on the way of integrity. But, when man, out of childishness, plays god himself, the faction of idol revere loses all its importance and turns into a device in the hands of the so-called religiously high-grade people to sustain abuse and exploitation.

Ghasiram took on to these evils that had ravaged the women in particular and society, in general, and tried to bring the city in order. It is true that his rule as a kotwalship (Marathi word for Superintendent) became tyrannical because of his disgust flaming out his revenge that was breeding against the Poona Brahmins as he was humiliated and falsely implicated under the charge of pickpocketing.

VI. Dilution of Gender Consciousness

"……Women have to pretend to feel a great deal that they don't feel…….." (ActII-Location 1556ASIN: B002VRZPFO).

Mrs. Warren has taken on the men's, and she works through it very efficiently to achieve success, and the dividends of this success further fuel her desire to succeed, and inherent in her is the belief that she is at least making the lives of the exploited women less unpleasant while she is in charge of the profession. She believes that if it were someone else would be concerned only about the profits while she is still like a mother for the forsaken women beyond the business, which ensures that women under her are not abused as they are so usually prone to abuse. Mrs. Warren, while running the business, has shed off her feminine concerns and evolves as universal gender which is just and rationale in the sad realities of practical life. She transcends from women to a hero because of her ambition and the resulting success.

Ghasiram shows the care and concern for his daughter only after she is dead and gone, but shows that he had the love and affection for his daughter except that he was blind in hate and revenge he had for the Brahmins of Poona. He transcends the role of a man and tries to put Poona in order when he orders that the city is freed from all evils and invoked the night curfew. *Ghasiram* was aware of the ill-treatment or negligence of women folk of Poona and, therefore, he did away with the lustful ceremony of *'Lavani'* which had corrupted the Brahmins of Poona and made it a city of Debauches. His hate and revenge had an instrumental role to play in his ambition to become the *Kotwal* of the city.

Before Ghasiram became the Kotwal of the city of Poona, the menfolk were busy in revelry and debauchery and moral turpitude. The religion was a tool of wantonness when rituals to the deities were planned and made customary to suit the lustful men of Poona and had very little to do with pleasing the Gods. Ghasiram, in such turbulence, had stood tall and was determined to purge the city of Poona of its evil ways of life.

Ghasiram begins watching through the roads of Poona during the evenings. The people need to remain at home around evening time and shouldn't have extramarital connections. After coming to power, he adopts the most vindictive approach to torment the Brahmins of Poona. Because of the exacting burden of his guidelines,

"The city of Poona began to tremble at Ghasiram's name. Thieves and adulterers went straight! prostitutes lane was desolate/the chasing of women was halted. /Pimps turned into baggers./Counterfeit coins were worthless". (Act II, p.68)

Ghasiram grows haughty and tackling the people high handedly by imposing some strict rules, but sometimes he gets sinister and crazy.

"The nails of the Brahmin's right hand are pulled out. The fingers are washed with lemon juice and soap. All the lines and signs of his hands are noted. His hands are wrapped in a bag is sealed and ordeal is prepared." (Act II, P.65)

Here Freud's Ego hypothesis can be actualized, which tells that an individual who knows morality does improper deeds to accomplish his objectives. He slaughters ethical quality to satisfy his needs. Ghasiram's character overlooks his emotions of superego and his love for his only daughter and uses her as a lifeless thing. It shows his proud and narrow-minded nature; he has no regard for the person. In Super Ego, an individual knows the estimation of ethical quality just as the aftereffect of malice. Hence, an individual having super conscience emotions (superego) lean towards ethics rather than individual shrewdness or evil deeds.

VII. Spirit of Seeking Opportunity in Adversity

Mrs. Warren's character shows through her own account as one that had survived through the hardships of women working in the white lead factories in England and then going on to become a very successful businesswomen with her comfort houses spread across western Europe.

Ghasiram Kotwal, too, had faced extreme hardship as he was ridiculed by the Brahmins of Poona and charged with a false case of pickpocketing, which had defiled his ego to the extent that he had just one goal, and that was to revenge on the city of Poona. He eventually succeeded when he attained the favour of Nana and was appointed the City Kotwal. He used this position to assert his strength, of course, to some excesses, which caused a lot of discontent in the Brahmins who had become the subject of his ire as he had determined to turn Poona into a city of pigs. He was largely successful in doing so as he had punished men for the debaucheries they committed and imposed night curfews that improved the plight of women who were earlier reduced to mere objects of desire rather than human beings in flesh and blood.

a) *Both as victims of exploitation by the people in possession of power and money*

Mrs. Warren worked along with her two sisters in a white lead factory, and she had heard of many harrowing incidents of women dying of lead poisoning. When she was young, she was convinced that one of her sisters had jumped off the bridge and committed suicide. Later, she realized that she (her sister) had turned into, a comfort woman for the rich and wealthy men. Mrs. Warren's world view changed about the society and morals in general as she had realized that society and morals are only to enslave the poor, in contrast, the rich and wealthy have fun. They run over the norms of the society, and have been overrunning the morals of God.

Ghashiram is embarrassed repeatedly by the Brahmans, just as much as by police, and this insult makes him an angry individual. He is offended and persecuted for no true reason. He feels baffled because of the loss of his dignity. He blows up and takes a pledge to render retribution. He says in animosity.

"I'll come back to Poona. I'll show my strength. I'll cost you! Your good days are gone! I'm a Kanauj Brahman but I've become a Shudra, a criminal, a useless animal. There is no one to stop me now, to mock me bend, to cheat me. Now I am a devil. You've made me an animal. I'll be a devil inside. I'll come back like a boar and I'll stay as a devil. I'll make pigs of all of you. I'll make this Poona a kingdom of pigs. Then I'll be Ghashiram again, the son of Savaldas once more." (Act I, P.46)

Even Ghasiram had realized it by the time he had started working for Gulabi, the city dame or the 'prostitute' who was thronged by the Poona Brahmins, who are traditionally the priestly classes and are supposed to be moral and close to God. On the contrary, Ghasiram realized that by visiting Gulabi, they had committed the greatest sin and therefore, it had shaken his belief in morality and societal norms. This realization may have been the reason that pushed him to become so heartless that he even traded his adolescent daughter in exchange for 'Kotwal' and sacrificed her to the pervert Nana.

b) *Both are judged by the social norms which are at odds with morality*

Critics have been harsh on Mrs. Warren and Ghasiram both when they state that both the characters have tossed the morality and Godliness to achieve worldly affairs. This criticism is not a fair criticism when we weigh them in the circumstances they were. While Mrs. Warren and her sisters were living in extreme poverty, it had pushed them to risk the hazardous white lead factory, Circumstances pushed Ghasiram into a rage to revenge on the Poona Brahmins due to the extreme humiliation he faced. This humiliation, and his poverty had a contributed to his character. Ghasiram chose to succeed at any cost and teach Poona City a lesson of morality.

There are enormous pretentions among the rich who rule, and they sometimes have their wickedness shrouded in mystery like the legendry freemasons secret society.

FRANK. Viv: there's a freemasonry among thoroughly immoral people that you know nothing of.

In 'Mrs. Warren's Profession', Mrs. Warren is still judged by her daughter as she discusses with Mr. Croft about the ill gotten fortune of her mother.

"CROFTS. Only that you've always lived on it. It paid for your education and the dress you have on your back. Don't turn up your nose at business, Miss Vivie: where would your Newnhams and Girtons be without it?"

VIII. Conclusion

George Bernard Shaw, through Mrs. Warren has shown how the changing moral landscape has

redefined morality in modern times, and increasing capitalism focused on profits has taken over the conduct of modern men and women. It also shows how with rigidity, fortunes of men or women cannot be changed. Ghasiram's character, according to Tendulkar, ridicules the corrupt mindset of the rich and powerful through him, he shows how one has to take extreme steps even sacrifice a lot to bring about a great change in society, as society is hard to change otherwise. In both these characters, there are elements of universal heroism. When they both show exemplary competence in the trade, they take up their boldness to rising above the established norms of the society. They are universal because they transcend gender consciousness which is evident from the way they are objective in achieving their ends without asserting neither their gender nor seeking any sympathies from anyone and relying on merits solely.

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The Sacramental Nature of Church Marriage and its Implication for Inter-Faith Relations

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Abstract- While for the Church, Marriage is a sacrament or covenant of life-long partnership of a man and a woman for their benefits, procreation and education of children in the way of the Lord; the Islamic system of marriage (Nikah) is a social, legal and spiritual contract between the groom and bride, which has a very significant role in society. It is an act of Sunnah through which two families get closer. Thus, both Muslims and Christians value marriage and family but differ in the purpose, structure, and attributes which they associate with marriage from their different religious traditions. In spite of their differences, some of their members engage in interfaith marriages. The challenges of such interfaith marriages and their prospects are of interest to us in this work. We examine the dictates of scriptures and traditions to understand the theological implication of such marriages and with oral interviews and questionnaire administered, we examine the practical issues involved.

Findings show that while some Christians take verses such as "do not be un-equally yoked with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14) as clear warning for Christians not to marry from among people of other faiths, others rely on passages such as 1Corinthians 7:13-15, 1Peter 3:1-6, to argue that the unbelieving husband or wife can become sanctified through the believing wife or husband.

THESACRAMENTALNATUREOFCHURCHMARRIAGEANDITSIMPLICATIONFORINTERFAITHRELATIONS

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:

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Findings show that while some Christians take verses such as "do not be un-equally yoked with unbelievers" (2 Cor. 6:14) as clear warning for Christians not to marry from among people of other faiths, others rely on passages such as 1Corinthians 7:13-15, 1Peter 3:1-6, to argue that the unbelieving husband or wife can become sanctified through the believing wife or husband. Likewise, while some Muslims take verses such as: "Do not marry unbelieving women until they believe" (2:221) as prohibition of marriage with non-Muslim women; others quote verses like "Lawful unto you are the chaste women among those who have received the Book" (5:5) as clear evidence that it is allowed for only Muslim men to marry from Christian women. In practice, both Christian and Muslim men and women marry; and while some have challenges even to the point of divorce others are living together happily. From careful examination of the prospects and problems, we recommend that families and couples brought together in inter-religious marriages should try as much as possible to cooperate with each other in addressing their religious, social and legal complexities experienced in their specific situations.

I. Introduction

Muslims and Christians value marriage and family but differ in the purpose, structure, and attributes which they associate with marriage from their different religious traditions. These differences notwithstanding, some of their members engage in interfaith marriages. There is no doubt that such is capable of fostering peaceful relations among the people and in line with the growing concern for a constructive dialogue between Christians and Muslims in many other aspects of our social life. While such dialogue is so desirable, it is sometimes resented by those who see it as a way of converting to the other religion and contrary to the dictates of their religion.

In this study therefore, we examine the dictates of scriptures and traditions to understand the theological implications of such marriages and with oral interviews and questionnaire administered, we examine the practical issues involved. Interviews were unstructured and 480 respondents responded to the questionnaire. They were randomly but equally chosen among Christian and Muslim couples, religious officials (pastors, Imams), parents and counselors from: Epe, Ikorodu, Abeokuta, Ijebuode, Osogbo, Ilesa, Ibadan and Oyo. The choice of 2 major cities each from Lagos, Ogun, Osun and Oyo States respectively and from the South-West of Nigeria is because they are highly populated with Christians and Muslims living together in peace and therefore sometimes experience interfaith marriages. We shall carefully examine the prospects and problems and thereafter make recommendations.

a) Marriage in Christianity

For Christians, Marriage is a sacred bond between a man and a woman instituted by and publicly entered into before and under God. It is the covenant by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring. Christians believe that marriage is a sacrament[1], a lasting commitment of a man and a woman to a lifelong partnership, established for the good of each other and the procreation of their children. As a gift from God, it should not be taken for granted. It is the right atmosphere to engage in sexual relations and to build a family life. Getting married in a church, in front of God, is very important; but it is also a public declaration of love and commitment made in the presence of friends and family. Marriage vows, in the form 'to have and to hold from this day forward, for better for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part', show that marriage is

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permanent (Matthew 19:6; Mark 10:9), sacred (Genesis 2:22), intimate (Genesis 2:23–25), mutual (Ephesians 5:25–30) and exclusive (Genesis 2:22–25; 1 Corinthians 7:2–5).

It is worth noting that in the New Testament marriage is not an end in itself but part of God's end-time restoration of all things in the person of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:10, NIV). Thus, the biblical pattern for marriage is best seen in a close study of the pre-eminent passage on marital roles in Ephesians 5:21–33. There are only two biblically sanctioned instances of divorce: (1) sexual marital unfaithfulness (i.e. adultery); and (2) the unbelieving spouse's refusal to continue the marriage after the conversion of the other partner.

b) Marriage between Christians of Different Traditions

For Christians, marriage can be viewed from two sides – whether it is valid in the eyes of the "Church" or the denomination that the intending partner belongs and whether it is a sacrament.[2] In other words, both depend in part on whether the non-Christian spouse is a Christian (baptized in any church) or a non-Christian, such as a Jew, Muslim or atheist.

Generally, when Baptized Christians from any denomination marry, the marriage is valid as long as the couple obtains official permission from their churches to enter into the marriage and follows all the stipulations for a church wedding. Marriage between a Catholic and another Christian is also considered a sacrament. In fact, the church regards all marriages between baptized Christians as sacramental, as long as there are no impediments. Their marriage is rooted in the Christian faith through their baptism. "Mixed marriage," is the canonical term for such a marriage in many churches. A more ecumenically sensitive term for mixed marriage is "inter-church" marriage because "mixed," in a sense has some negative connotations.

Negative attitude toward Interchurch marriage or marriages between Christians of different traditions grew worse out of bitterness of the reformation. The bitterness persisted for centuries. Up till the mid-twentieth-century, the official positions of different churches are shown in statements such as:

"The Church strongly forbids marriages between two baptized persons if one is a communicant of any heretical sect and the other is a Catholic" (Code of Canon Law, 1060).

"Marriage between Protestants and Roman Catholics is diametrically opposed to the eternal truths of God" (… Resolution of the Missouri Synod of the Lutheran Church, 1953).

"…This convention earnestly warns members against contracting marriages with Roman Catholics"

(Resolution of the General Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1948).

It is the duty of Christians to marry in the Lord. And, therefore, such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels, Papists, or other idolaters (Presbyterian Confession of Faith, Chap. XXIV, Sec. III).

Of course, today, these policies have been made largely meaningless by the very numbers of interdenominational marriages and especially by the hard fact of contemporary ecumenism.

We are aware of some decrees and resolutions that relaxed some of those above and permitted for instance, the minister of the non-Catholic to address and exhort the couple at the end of the nuptials and to lead those present in prayer.[3] The provision for excommunication of a Catholic who celebrates his marriage before a non-Catholic minister contained in Canon 2319 was abrogated.[4]

c) Marriage with a Non-Christian

Biblically, marriage is an intimate and complementing union between a man and a woman in which the two become one physically in the whole of life. The purpose of marriage is to reflect the relationship of the God-head and to serve him. They were both in God's image (cf. Gen. 5:1-3, 9:6,1Cor. 11:7, Col.3:10), for procreation ("fruitful and multiply") and ruling over the earth ("subdue" and "rule" Gen. 1:28). For marriage to function according to God's ideal therefore, believers in Christ need to marry only believers. Although, pagan customs encouraged marriage with anyone (cf. Gen.16), Israel was given explicit commands not to marry foreigners who would lead them to worship foreign deities (Deut.7:1-4, 13:1-6, 17:1-7, 20:17, 23:2). New Testament believers are also not to be "unequally yoked" with unbelievers (2Cor. 6:14). Just as God's ideal was for marriage to be permanent and exclusive (Gen. 2:24, Mal.2:14, Mk. 10:1-2).

There are others who rely on views in passages such as 1Corinthians 7:13-15, 1Peter 3:1-6, to argue that the unbelieving husband or wife can become sanctified through the believing wife or husband. Of course, most of these verses are seen differently by scholars and interpreters:[5]

1 Corinthians 7:13-15: "… For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife and the unbelieving

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[2] Witte, John Jr. *From Sacrament to Contract: Marriage, Religion, and Law in the Western Tradition.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.

[3] Walter, J. "The Matrimonial Proceedings (Polygamous Marriages) Act, 1972," *International and Comparative Law,* Quarterly, XXI (1972), 781-789, 4.

[4] Witte, John Jr. *From Sacrament to Contract: Marriage, Religion, and Law in the Western Tradition.* Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2012.

[5] Field, E.P. 1956. What is Marriage? Theology: A Monthly Review Vol. Lix No.431: 188-194; c.f. Gehman, H.S. 1972 "Marriage" in *The New International Dictionary of the Bible.* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.

wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy… For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife? (KJV)"

1 Peter 3:1-2: "… if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of their wives... While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear".

Historically however, marriages between persons of differing religions have usually encountered oppositions from familial sources and Church leaders. The negative attitude towards the marriage of a Christian with a non-Christian actually began to grow in the first centuries of church history. The Fathers of the Church who first propounded it were probably influenced by the Jewish prohibition of marriage with gentiles.[6] By 385, St. Ambrose of Milan could write: "there is hardly anything which could be more dangerous than for a Christian to marry one who is a stranger to the faith.[7] By the 4th and 5th centuries, the Roman law forbade marriages between Christians and Jews mainly for political and economic reasons; the prohibitions between Christians and infidels came to be part of the Canon Law of the Medieval Church. These prohibitions were frequently supported and maintained for pragmatic and non-religious purposes, although the fear of a diminution of faith was also a factor.[8]

d) Marriage in Islam

The Islamic system of marriage (*Nikah*) is a social, legal and spiritual contract between two people (groom and bride), which has a very significant role in society. It is an act of Sunnah in Islam, due to which two families get closer. Marriage is one of the central aspects of Islamic law of personal status. In the categories of human action, the five *ahkām*, most of the classical scholars regard it as being a recommended action, i.e. *mandub*. The Zāhiris went as far as considering marriage an obligation, wājib, while the Mālikis differed as between wājib, mandub or simply neutral, mubāh.[9]

According, to most scholars, the purpose of marriage is partly to make sexual intercourse permissible and partly to legalize progeny, that is, to contribute to the continuity and preservation of the human race.

Thus, the objectives of marriage are to fulfill the will of God, to seek the love of our Prophet Muhammad, to benefit it from the prayer of the children and to profit from their intercession on behalf of their parents. Allah in His Book says:

"One of His signs is this: that He has created mates for you from yourselves that you might find peace of mind in them and dwell in tranquility with them, and He put between you love and compassion. Surely there are signs in this for a people who reflect" (30: 21)

And in praising the habits of good believers, Allah says: "…And those who say, 'Our Lord, grant unto us wives, and offspring who will be the comfort and joy of our eyes, and give us (the grace) to lead the righteous' (25:74)

And there are many traditions and hadith ascribed to Prophet Muhammad in which he praised the practice of marriage such as: "Get married so you multiply. I shall indeed be proud of your multitude on the Day of Resurrection." And also: "When one is married, he secures half of his religion. So let him fear God in the other half.[10]

In the Shāria law, marriage is brought into being by the completion of a contract, which in its nature is a little different from any other form of contract. The point is often made that this contract is a civil contract, as distinct from the marriage sacrament in the Christian tradition. In one sense this is correct, but it easily leads to misunderstanding because it implies incorrectly that such a distinction exists in Islamic law. Of course in so far as the totality of the Shāria is regarded as created and given by God, then it is all a sacred law, including the contract of marriage, especially since the basic rights and duties arising from the marriage contract are laid down in Qur'ān and Sunna. Thus marriage is both 'ibāda (worship) and 'muāmalat (action).

The basic conditions for a valid marriage contract are that it be concluded by the two consenting parties through offer and acceptance within a single session, that there be a dower (*mahr*) payable to the bride, duties of marriage guardianship, and that the contract not involve any action or obligation contrary to Shāri'a. In most schools the marriage must be made public, usually through the presence of two witnesses at the completion of the contract.

A valid marriage contract gives rise to a number of specific rights and duties between the two parties. The husband is owed obedience by the wife, and she is entitled to accommodation, food, clothing and protection from her husband. Sexual intercourse is a mutual right for both parties. Marriage does not establish common property. A valid marriage legitimates children born into the marriage and establishes inheritance rights between husband and wife, parents and children.

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[6] Deut. 7:1-4

[7] Charles P. Kindregan, 1967, *A Theology of Marriage,* Bruce Publishing Company, U.S., p131.

[8] Davey, T. 1979. The Marriage Debate: Comments on the most difficult Vocation. *The Month: A Review of Christian* Thought and World Affairs Vol. ccxl No.1343: 257-261.

[9] Ibm Rushd, *Bidāyāt al-Mujtahid* , 2 vols. Cairo: Dār al-Fikr, 1966, II, 2.

[10] At-Tirmidhi Hadith 3096 narrated by Anas ibn Malik

Islam has reserved the right for a bride and a groom to choose her/ his life partner with own free wills. Mohammad says that order must be obtained from the widow and the divorced lady for her marriage, and permission should be obtained from the virgin girl for her marriage (Al-Bukhari: 5136). In the same way, Prophet Muhammad prohibits forcing a virgin in marriage without her permission, whether by her father or someone else. It was reported that, "Aisha says that she asked the Prophet, 'In the case of a young girl before her parents marry her out, should her permission be sought or not?' and He replied, "Yes, she must give her permission." She then said, "But a virgin will be shy, O Allah's Messenger." He answered: "Her silence is [considered as] her permission" (Al-Muslim: 3306). Likewise, Abu Hurayrah states that, "the messenger of Allah advised to people that "The orphan girl's permission should be sought regarding proposals of marriage to her, her silence being as her acceptance, but if she refuses, it is not permissible to marry her."

Dissolution of marriage takes place in a variety of ways, most commonly by the death of one or other of the parties, which activates the rights of inheritance. Divorce is most commonly in the form of *taläq* which usually means the unilateral repudiation by the husband of the woman, although it can also be pronounced by a judge.[11] The other significant form of divorce is *khul*, 'an application to a judge, usually by the wife, for dissolution of the marriage. The grounds on which *khul* can take place differ widely from one school to another, with the most liberal regime prevailing among the Mālikis.[12] Dissolution of marriage by divorce, when completed, ends the mutual right of inheritance between husband and wife but preserves it between parents and children. Divorce also raises the question of custody of the children, normally with the mother until the child reaches the age of discernment, when custody passes to the father.

e) Islam and Interfaith Marriage

The basis for Sharia law on mixed marriages is to be found in two verses of the Qur'an. The first is: "Lawful unto you are the chaste women among those who have received the Book" (5:5). Based on the above, Muslim men may marry outside of their faith only if their spouse is Christian or Jewish.[13] In fact, the prophet Muhammad had a Christian wife and Jewish wife. A non-Muslim wife is not required to adopt any Muslim laws, and her husband cannot keep her from attending church or synagogue. However, Islamic women are forbidden from marrying non-Muslim men unless the spouse agrees to convert to Islam. Muslim men are therefore allowed and even encouraged to marry Christian women. Taking a Christian wife spreads Islam by preventing the woman from marrying a Christian man and having Christian children.

The second verse is: "*Do not marry idolatresses (al mushrikāt) till they believe; and certainly a believing maid is better than an idolatress even though she would please you; and do not marry idolaters (al Mushrikīn) till they believe (hata yūminū), and certainly a believing slave is better than an idolater, even though he would please you..*" (2:221).

This verse has two main issues relevant to this work. The first is that some miss-interpret this to imply prohibition against marriage with a Christian woman, since according to them Christianity has the doctrine of Trinity and is therefore polytheist. The second issue is that the verse stipulates that Muslim men and women are allowed to contract marriage with *believers* (*mu'minīn*) and prohibited to marry polytheists (*mushrikīn*). It is worth mentioning that the the Qur'anic verse clearly stresses the totally egalitarian approach in favor of both men and women and which is not confusing at all. The Qur'anic order is addressed to both men and women on an equal footing. Nevertheless, the concept of the believing man and woman to whom Muslim men and women are allowed to get married is still a matter of debate and is not clearly defined in the Qur'anic verse. What kinds of "believers" are referred to? Does it refer only to people who have just embraced Islam that time? Or does it imply the act of believing in its broad meaning, believing in One God and a monotheistic Revelation, which includes believers of other monotheistic religions such as Christianity? Obviously, the verse is open to interpretation as exegetes such as Ibn Kathir interpret the said verse by defining "polytheists" as people who worship idols (*'abadatu al assnām*).[14]

It is however accepted generally that a Muslim woman can only marry a Muslim man. If, however, a Muslim woman marries a non-Muslim man in good faith, then the marriage is immediately null and void when the mistake is discovered. If such a marriage has been entered into knowingly, the man is punishable with 40 lashes, except according to the Mālikis who regard this as serious breach of the Muslims' pact with the dhimmis and would therefore punish the man with death.[15] Most schools also agreed that the witnesses, two males or one male and two females, must be Muslim. Once married, the wife has the same marital rights and duties

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[11] Qur'an 2:229

[12] Adelowo E. D. (1982). Islamic Marriage System and the extent of its adoption by Yoruba Muslims of Nigeria. Ibadan: Orita Journal of Religious Studies Vol. xiv/1: 16-33.

[13] See the interpretation in Tafssir Attabari, p 299, Vol. 17 and Tafssir Ibn Kathir. Christians and Jews are among the people of the scriptures and their women cannot be here clean and their men unclean.

[14] Tafssir Ibn Kathir, p 604, Vol. 14.

[15] Tanzil-ur Rahman, A Code of Muslim Personal Law (2 vols. Karachi: Hamdard Academy, l97)

and is subject to the same law of divorce as are Muslim wives.

A partcu1arly important area of the law relating to mixed marriages has to do with the effects of conversion of one party to Islam (like when a Christian wife becomes a Muslim). In this case, the marriage immediately ceases, if it has not been consummated, otherwise it ceases at the end of the *idda* period unless the husband also converts. Some sects differ here, in that they require a court order to dissolve the marriage.[16]

f) Practical Issues in Christian-Muslim Marriage

We employed unstructured interviews for this section. Respondents are many[17] that we do not consider it necessary to include their names and addresses for lack of space. They were randomly but equally chosen among Christian and Muslim couples, religious officials (pastors, Imams), parents and counselors from some major in the South-West of Nigeria, where Christians and Muslims live together in peace and therefore sometimes experience interfaith marriages more than in other places.

Generally, experiences of our respondents varied and sometimes very complex. Some respondents (couples) share sweet memories of how they met their partners and how love overshadowed religious differences. Some met in schools; places of work and during the National Youth Service Corps. Some were from very strong religious backgrounds (Christian and Muslim) families; while some were not so much committed to their religions before marriage. Respondents cut across different sects and denominations: Sunni, Shia, Anglican, Catholic, Baptist, Pentecostal, Methodist etc. Some were rejected and therefore did not enjoy the official marriage ceremonies of their religions; some enjoyed partial support and got their joining done in the mosque or church; some had traditional marriage ceremonies or went to the registry; and some respondents got married outside the shores of the country before returning home. While some said their parents are both Christians and Muslims of same denomination or different denominations; some had one Christian and one Muslim or non-committed religious parents. Some have married for a long time and have children or still trusting God for children; while some just got married or about to marry.

g) Differences in Religious Understandings of Marriage

Many scholars have submitted that Christians and Muslims have different understandings of marriage.[18] Among these differences are marriage as sacrament as against sacred contract; its divine nature as against its human institution, greater family involvement in mate selection and proscription of dating especially with somebody from another religion, potential legal problems in States where Shari'a (Islamic law) is in force, greater cultural differences and the difficulty in distinguishing what is cultural matters as against the cultural.

As a result of these numerous differences, before any religious officials especially Christian ministers allow interfaith marriages, there is the need to lay out clearly Christian understanding of marriage as a permanent union between a man and a women sharing life for better or worse and fulfilling all their rights and obligations with the aim of ensuring the good of the couple, giving birth and raising children in the Christian way. The core of this marriage is unity and permanence since Christianity does not allow polygyny or polyandry.[19] The minister or the priest needs to make sure that there are no impediments to the marriage by personal knowledge and by reading out the Proclamations to the intending couple. There is need to obtain necessary documents such as baptismal certificates, release letter, pre-nuptial medicals for the spouses and helping spouses to understand marriage and its basic requirements. He must ensure that that the spouses are of marriageable age and thus aware of the full consequence of what they are about to embark upon. The bride and groom need to declare during the ceremony of holy matrimony that they fully accept and consent to live together according to Christian teachings. In the likelihood of the unexpected extreme cases of marital discord, separation or divorce may be permitted. (1 Cor. 7:5) Christians should be taught that the Christian standard is that after such separation or divorce, no remarriage is permissible.

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[16] Taimiyah, Ibn, Fatwas of women, Egypt: Dar a1-Mnarah, 2002 (Translated by Sayed Gad.)

[17] I however thank among others Alhaji Martins Kuye of Epe Central Mosque and Oba M.G. Onakoya of St. Michael Ang. Ch, Ayetoro, Epe; Iya Abdu Lateef (Iya alaso) and Pastor Oyinkansola all of Itaelewa, Ikorodu; Ch. Imam Alhaji Y. A. Odekunle, Ansarudeen Central Mosque, Adedotun from Abeokuta; Alhaji Yekinni Atanda, Ahmadiyya Mosque, 18 old Lagos Rd, Ijebuode; Karimu Ajagbe and Mrs Anike Diekola from Osogbo; Mrs Yinka Adedeji, St. Paul's Yemetu, Ibadan. All these great men and women married their partners from across their religion.

[18] Field, E.P. 1956. What is Marriage? Theology: A Monthly Review Vol. Lix No.431: 188-194; Gehman, H.S. 1972 "Marriage" in *The New International Dictionary of the Bible.* Philadelphia: The Westminster Press; Gesinde. T. 20ll. RELATIONSHIP: Many ideal singles are too busy for Marriage Sunday Tribune Jan. 2. No.1766: 24; Glassock, Ed., 1983. "The Husband of One Wife Requirement in 1 Tim. 3:2" Bibliotheca Sacra 140. Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary; Gurin, A. M., "Dissolution of Marriage and women's Rights Under Islamic Law," University of Benin Law Journal, 2001/2002; Hamby, Stacey 2008. "Why Can't Christians Stay Married?" http: www.faithandvalues. com.; Hastings, Adrian, 1973. *Christian Marriage in Africa.* London: SPCK; Igenoza, A. O. 2003. Polygamy and the African Churches: A Biblical Appraisal of Our African Marriage System. Ibadan: African Association for the Study of Religions.

[19] The Law Commission, Working Paper no. 83, *Polygamous Marriages,* London: HMSO, 1982.

Since Islam permits a Muslim man to marry up to four wives[20] whereas Christianity teaches the ideal of monogamy[21], a Christian girl contemplating marriage to a Muslim should take note of this and if possible take the advantage of the civil marriage at the registry.

h) Marriage Preparation for Interfaith Relations

There is no doubt that Inter-faith marriage is very complex as shown above. Darvey warned that it is better not to marry someone from another religion or culture without being certain it is God's will.[22] Those intending to engage in interfaith relations would need good-quality marriage preparation to help them work through the challenges that may arise after they tie the knot. Apart from the challenges of theological and legal status of interfaith marriages, there are bound to be day-to-day difficulties with differences in moral convictions, worship, and the education of children. Of course, this can be just as true in a marriage wherein there is unity of religion and cult. The fact that a spouse is a co-religionist does not guarantee that his or her fundamental moral values are identical to one's own. But such problems are more likely to arise in an interfaith marriage. The popular opinion is that both the divorce rate and lapse from religious practice are higher in interfaith marriages than in intra-faith marriages.[23] The difficulty such opinion posts is in getting accurate statistics on divorce rate to compare and in determining to what degree the problems in an interfaith marriage arise from the religious differences or from the opposition such marriages incur from other sources.

i) Practical Issues for Consideration in Interfaith Marriage

Since interfaith marriages are on the increase[24] despite the discouragement from the different faith based groups, we set to find out through oral interviews and questionnaire how interfaith couples have been able to cope with the enormous demands of their different faith traditions or communities and foster a spirit of unity despite their religious differences. We sought to know also what the religious officials and different faith communities are doing to help them cope in negotiating boundaries, praying together and raising children.

j) Real and imaginary fears of intending Interfaith Couples

Most of the respondents were afraid of outright rejection of their marital plans by their family, friends and religious communities. They were afraid of what their family and that of their partners will expect as a member of the family. They were afraid of how to cope with the social, economic or religious obligations to be required of them. They were afraid of what to meet if and when they join their wife/ husband's religious festivities and rituals. Some Muslim men fear to see their children baptized, some women feared permanent rejection and perhaps relocation to a completely unknown places or giving up the faith and being rejected by the husband's family.

Some confessed that what they needed most during their time of courtship is somebody willing to take time to understand their feelings and evaluate the arguments for and against their marital plans. Most did not get such help; and indicted many religious leaders for deliberately refusing to understand their plights and fuelling their crises. Here many suggested the need for qualified counsellors who can then take the opportunity to ask the couple some questions to see whether they have considered together the consequences of their wish to join their lives in matrimony and make relevant suggestions.

k) Some Boundaries and agreements reached before Marriage

Most of the respondents had listed and on many occasions discussed and negotiated with their partners certain boundaries before going into marriage. Such includes- maintaining one's religious and cultural identity, that is, no forced conversion to ensure individuals are not forced or pressurised to convert to the other person's religion; whether or not to practice family planning (the number of children or spacing methods for the health of the family); agreement on whether the man could marry more wives or not. Some even signed contracts concerning what gift (s) the husband will give to the wife ("morning gift") on the morning of the ceremony, what religion the children would practice and what would happen to the children should there be separation. Some even went as far as to determine the type of marriage ceremony they would have- church, mosque, registry or traditional; and whether to give and receive wedding rings, Bible or Qur'an and the dressing modes.

As it turned out and in the experiences of many of the respondents, the initial lines drawn have been exceeded and sometimes removed for the sake of continuity of the marriage. Some of these changes were

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[20] Qur'an 4:3

[21] Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:6

[22] Davey, T. 1981. Divorce: the state of the question within the Catholic Church. *The Month: A Review of Christian* Thought and World Affairs Vol. 1365:185-189.

[23] Adeogun, J.O. 2009. The Ecclesia and Youth Sexuality Africa. *Immanuel Journal of Theology*; Vol. l: 5l -63 (c.f. Adelowo E. D. (1982): Islamic Marriage System and the extent of its adoption by Yoruba Muslims of Nigeria. Ibadan: Orita Journal of Religious Studies Vol. xiv/1: 16-33.

[24] Most of our respondents- religious officials (pastors, Imams), parents and counselors claimed to have noticed that younger ones no longer consult or take faith serious as in the past when it comes to their love affairs, which sometimes lead to marriage and the result is that in some cases they marry outside their faith and they think this must be discouraged.

as a result of pressures from different sources but many were voluntarily due to partners' feeling the need to downplay certain aspects of their faith for the sake of harmony.

l)   In what faith are they to raise their children?

One of the most difficult aspects of interfaith marriage is the religion of the children. Both faiths insist that the children of such marriages must be part of their own religious faith group. Such issues will continue to be challenges for those involved in interfaith marriage. But with positive approaches, openness, preparations to meet and resolve challenges and a spirit of welcome to both parties, many ecumenical and interfaith marriages can become intimate and holy reflections of God's love.

There is no doubt that raising children in an interfaith marriage has its challenges. Both partners must sacrifice to accommodate the other's preferences and expectations. For instance, the Bible instructs Christian parents to get involved in what is called Biblical partnership in parenting, that is to raise children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4). For a woman married to a Muslim man, doing this in strictly Christian way becomes difficult because in Islam children born to a Muslim father are automatically born Muslim; except they agreed to raise their children in a single, coherent system of belief, rather than raising them as bi-religious or as "nothing" and then letting them choose later? If they choose one single system, which of the two would that be? If they decided to train them as Christians, for instance, how would the Christian partner teach their children about Jesus? Muslims revere Jesus ('*Isa*) as a great prophet, but do not believe he is divine. Knowing this, does the Christian parent shy away from describing Jesus as Son of God, or praying in Jesus' name, even when the couple has agreed to raise their children in the Christian way? If it had been decided to raise the children as Muslims, would they be taught the doctrine of *tawhid,* the absolute oneness of God, and the Muslim belief that Jesus is only a prophet but not the "Son of God?"

In view of the above, Christian-Muslim couples are truly in need of especially sensitive and informed pastoral care. Reaction to such relationships can be strong, and many couples fear vehement disapproval from their families, ethnic group and/or society at large. Muslim women wishing to marry Christian men face the additional worry of potential ostracism from the faith community, for although Islam permits Muslim men to marry "people of the book" (Christians and Jews); Muslim women marry only within the faith.

m) Legal Aspects of inter-faith marriages

In addition to the religious, social and moral challenges, we have the legal challenge of Inter-faith marriage. This is particularly because in the case of inter-faith marriages there are a few exceptions to the general rules of Islamic marriage. For instance,

according to Islamic law the husband who wishes to make provision for his wife can do so only by gift or by writing a will. However, this is always subject to the rules and regulations in the Sharia- where in case of the death of the Muslim partner, the Christian does not have the right to inherit.

Also, in case of repudiation, divorce or the death of the Muslim partner, the custody of the children can be rightfully claimed by the Muslim family after the children have reached a certain age. How can the Christian partner obtain from the Muslim family the right to take custody of the children if need arises?

Arising from the above, there is no doubt that Christian partners in interfaith marriages must consider before time the kind of contract that they want for their marriage, so as to be guaranteed the right to inherit. They may need to consult a lawyer.

n)   Moments of frustrations

Many couples, particularly female partners from the two religions complain of people deliberately working against their marriages for the sole reason of its being an Inter-faith one. They regretted that sometimes even their own parents, in-laws and religious communities combined together to frustrate their marriage. Some even complain of their partners going back on earlier agreements, returning to their religion or preventing them to return to theirs contrary to their original plan. Those Couples whose religious differences become difficult to work out on their own and feel triangulated by faith communities on a wider level claimed that it had very damaging impact on their relationships and their children. While in some cases it led to divorce, isolation and mistrust; in other cases it led to mental ill-health. Isolation was very prominent among other issues causing regrets; especially when married couple cannot pray together or getting constantly worried about how her partner would react to religious symbols, dressing in a particular way and so on.

o)   Responses of Religious officials and counselors

Many of the religious officials from both religions that responded believed that it is better and safer to marry from one's religion because spouses can hopefully live out their faith fully together within and have the benefits of being able to share religious rites together. Many pastors are particularly of the view that the Bible is clear with the clause of prohibition on the matter as we have in Corinthians, 'do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers." They however add that "Within the Christian context it is not for us to judge, but to offer compassion, guidance and support." They also warn girls that continuing the relationship with the hope to change or convert him is unfair to him and an illusion. Even if he is not practicing now, he may one day. He may become more devout as life circumstances change, such as having children. He may tell you that it

is "okay" for you to be married despite your different faiths. This is because to Muslims, Islam is the final religion and his religion supersedes your relationship with God.

Muslim clerics who responded to interviews insisted that any woman that is truly a Muslim obviously knows in her heart that it is forbidden in Islam for her to marry a Christian man. Many Muslim clerics are however willing to guide a woman, give her sound advice and admonish her not to antagonise her family, because family in any religion is very, very important. Some are of the opinion that because "Islam is about peace, family, family unity and about embracing different cultures and religions, providing support for a Muslim woman who marries a non-Muslim man is important so as not to cast her away completely from the Muslim family.

p) Some practical adjustments

Do partners in interfaith marriages feel they must downplay certain aspects of their faith for the sake of harmony? Are their partners even asking them to do so?

Many respond that they have intentionally chosen not to attempt a synthesis of their different religions. On the other hand, many couples feel that focusing on beliefs held in common increases family unity. One couple admitted that before they got married, each fantasized about what it would be like for the other to convert but in the end, "neither of us was willing to give up our faith because it is the core of our existence and identity…but we have since learnt so much about our different religions, culture and language." Many do not think or see that day-to-day living of Christians or Muslims are so different.

Some partners thought that having agreed to train the children in a particular way; they would be very disappointed if they ever on their own decided to become Muslims or Christians as adults but now they if they did, they will not be bothered.

Some claimed to have adopted friendly language in prayer—"which is not difficult, since Christians and Muslims believe in the same God and both call God merciful, just, compassionate and omnipotent". However, compromise in this way is more complicated as some Muslims cannot agree to pray in the name of Jesus, or even to "God the Father."

While several couples preferred to pray separately to preserve a "safe place" for their own beliefs and practices- fearing a "lowest common denominator" compromise (creedal affirmation of the other partner's religion), others felt more comfortable praying in their own tradition in the presence of the other—like reciting the Lord's prayer at the same time that the other person recites *al-Fatiha* (first chapter of the Qur'an); and praying the *du 'a* (supplicatory prayer), which allows for petitions and more freedom in structure and language and one way of binding their lives together.

While some claimed to have given up some things they loved to do before (such as alcohol, smoking, eating pork and many others) to make their marriage work; many have also joined in celebrating their partners' different religious ceremonies and festivals; have fasted during Ramadan or lent or at least keep away from eating in his/her presence; just as women prepare meals in time during the fasting period.

II. Conclusion and Recommendations

Theological arguments against interfaith Marriages especially that of Christians and Muslims examined in this work are far stronger than arguments in support of the practice. All these arguments strongly backed up by scriptures and traditions not-withstanding, Christians and Muslims men and women are marrying themselves. Even though some parents and religious leaders are unhappy about this; and some interfaith couples are unhappy about some of their experiences, others are enjoying it and see no reason why religious impediments should be place on the way of their love affairs and marriages.

Marriage is about compromise and in an interfaith marriage; there are hard sacrifices to be made. However, partners must be very careful of making too many compromises and relativizing faith. They must take note of the distinction between objective theological concepts and the lived experience of faith, a distinction that can make their living together possible: no forced conversion; prioritize welfare of children and encourage family relationships across both faiths; and ensure people of the other faith are welcomed. Most of these should be settled before the actual ceremony. They need to get everything out in the open. And most of all, they need to choose their partners well. They must be willing and prepared right from the on-set to see the differences as opportunities. They must also put into the relationship concerted efforts to live their daily lives in love and trust that God will continue to guide them on the challenging path they have chosen to forge together; while the rest of us continue to make efforts to support those in inter-faith relations, as they try to keep their faiths alive to consciously stem down the ever rising number of people identifying with no religion.

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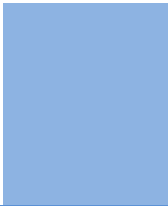
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1. Choosing the topic: In most cases, the topic is selected by the interests of the author, but it can also be suggested by the guides. You can have several topics, and then judge which you are most comfortable with. This may be done by asking several questions of yourself, like "Will I be able to carry out a search in this area? Will I find all necessary resources to accomplish the search? Will I be able to find all information in this field area?" If the answer to this type of question is "yes," then you ought to choose that topic. In most cases, you may have to conduct surveys and visit several places. Also, you might have to do a lot of work to find all the rises and falls of the various data on that subject. Sometimes, detailed information plays a vital role, instead of short information. Evaluators are human: The first thing to remember is that evaluators are also human beings. They are not only meant for rejecting a paper. They are here to evaluate your paper. So present your best aspect.

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3. Ask your guides: If you are having any difficulty with your research, then do not hesitate to share your difficulty with your guide (if you have one). They will surely help you out and resolve your doubts. If you can't clarify what exactly you require for your work, then ask your supervisor to help you with an alternative. He or she might also provide you with a list of essential readings.

4. Use of computer is recommended: As you are doing research in the field of homan social science then this point is quite obvious. Use right software: Always use good quality software packages. If you are not capable of judging good software, then you can lose the quality of your paper unknowingly. There are various programs available to help you which you can get through the internet.

5. Use the internet for help: An excellent start for your paper is using Google. It is a wondrous search engine, where you can have your doubts resolved. You may also read some answers for the frequent question of how to write your research paper or find a model research paper. You can download books from the internet. If you have all the required books, place importance on reading, selecting, and analyzing the specified information. Then sketch out your research paper. Use big pictures: You may use encyclopedias like Wikipedia to get pictures with the best resolution. At Global Journals, you should strictly follow here.

6. Bookmarks are useful: When you read any book or magazine, you generally use bookmarks, right? It is a good habit which helps to not lose your continuity. You should always use bookmarks while searching on the internet also, which will make your search easier.

7. Revise what you wrote: When you write anything, always read it, summarize it, and then finalize it.

8. Make every effort: Make every effort to mention what you are going to write in your paper. That means always have a good start. Try to mention everything in the introduction—what is the need for a particular research paper. Polish your work with good writing skills and always give an evaluator what he wants. Make backups: When you are going to do any important thing like making a research paper, you should always have backup copies of it either on your computer or on paper. This protects you from losing any portion of your important data.

9. Produce good diagrams of your own: Always try to include good charts or diagrams in your paper to improve quality. Using several unnecessary diagrams will degrade the quality of your paper by creating a hodgepodge. So always try to include diagrams which were made by you to improve the readability of your paper. Use of direct quotes: When you do research relevant to literature, history, or current affairs, then use of quotes becomes essential, but if the study is relevant to science, use of quotes is not preferable.

10. Use proper verb tense: Use proper verb tenses in your paper. Use past tense to present those events that have happened. Use present tense to indicate events that are going on. Use future tense to indicate events that will happen in the future. Use of wrong tenses will confuse the evaluator. Avoid sentences that are incomplete.

11. Pick a good study spot: Always try to pick a spot for your research which is quiet. Not every spot is good for studying.

12. Know what you know: Always try to know what you know by making objectives, otherwise you will be confused and unable to achieve your target.

13. Use good grammar: Always use good grammar and words that will have a positive impact on the evaluator; use of good vocabulary does not mean using tough words which the evaluator has to find in a dictionary. Do not fragment sentences. Eliminate one-word sentences. Do not ever use a big word when a smaller one would suffice.

Verbs have to be in agreement with their subjects. In a research paper, do not start sentences with conjunctions or finish them with prepositions. When writing formally, it is advisable to never split an infinitive because someone will (wrongly) complain. Avoid clichés like a disease. Always shun irritating alliteration. Use language which is simple and straightforward. Put together a neat summary.

14. Arrangement of information: Each section of the main body should start with an opening sentence, and there should be a changeover at the end of the section. Give only valid and powerful arguments for your topic. You may also maintain your arguments with records.

15. Never start at the last minute: Always allow enough time for research work. Leaving everything to the last minute will degrade your paper and spoil your work.

16. Multitasking in research is not good: Doing several things at the same time is a bad habit in the case of research activity. Research is an area where everything has a particular time slot. Divide your research work into parts, and do a particular part in a particular time slot.

17. Never copy others' work: Never copy others' work and give it your name because if the evaluator has seen it anywhere, you will be in trouble. Take proper rest and food: No matter how many hours you spend on your research activity, if you are not taking care of your health, then all your efforts will have been in vain. For quality research, take proper rest and food.

18. Go to seminars: Attend seminars if the topic is relevant to your research area. Utilize all your resources.
Refresh your mind after intervals: Try to give your mind a rest by listening to soft music or sleeping in intervals. This will also improve your memory. Acquire colleagues: Always try to acquire colleagues. No matter how sharp you are, if you acquire colleagues, they can give you ideas which will be helpful to your research.

19. Think technically: Always think technically. If anything happens, search for its reasons, benefits, and demerits. Think and then print: When you go to print your paper, check that tables are not split, headings are not detached from their descriptions, and page sequence is maintained.

20. Adding unnecessary information: Do not add unnecessary information like "I have used MS Excel to draw graphs." Irrelevant and inappropriate material is superfluous. Foreign terminology and phrases are not apropos. One should never take a broad view. Analogy is like feathers on a snake. Use words properly, regardless of how others use them. Remove quotations. Puns are for kids, not grunt readers. Never oversimplify: When adding material to your research paper, never go for oversimplification; this will definitely irritate the evaluator. Be specific. Never use rhythmic redundancies. Contractions shouldn't be used in a research paper. Comparisons are as terrible as clichés. Give up ampersands, abbreviations, and so on. Remove commas that are not necessary. Parenthetical words should be between brackets or commas. Understatement is always the best way to put forward earth-shaking thoughts. Give a detailed literary review.

21. Report concluded results: Use concluded results. From raw data, filter the results, and then conclude your studies based on measurements and observations taken. An appropriate number of decimal places should be used. Parenthetical remarks are prohibited here. Proofread carefully at the final stage. At the end, give an outline to your arguments. Spot perspectives of further study of the subject. Justify your conclusion at the bottom sufficiently, which will probably include examples.

22. Upon conclusion: Once you have concluded your research, the next most important step is to present your findings. Presentation is extremely important as it is the definite medium though which your research is going to be in print for the rest of the crowd. Care should be taken to categorize your thoughts well and present them in a logical and neat manner. A good quality research paper format is essential because it serves to highlight your research paper and bring to light all necessary aspects of your research.

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Informal Guidelines of Research Paper Writing

Key points to remember:

- Submit all work in its final form.
- Write your paper in the form which is presented in the guidelines using the template.
- Please note the criteria peer reviewers will use for grading the final paper.

Final points:

One purpose of organizing a research paper is to let people interpret your efforts selectively. The journal requires the following sections, submitted in the order listed, with each section starting on a new page:

The introduction: This will be compiled from reference matter and reflect the design processes or outline of basis that directed you to make a study. As you carry out the process of study, the method and process section will be constructed like that. The results segment will show related statistics in nearly sequential order and direct reviewers to similar intellectual paths throughout the data that you gathered to carry out your study.

The discussion section:

This will provide understanding of the data and projections as to the implications of the results. The use of good quality references throughout the paper will give the effort trustworthiness by representing an alertness to prior workings.

Writing a research paper is not an easy job, no matter how trouble-free the actual research or concept. Practice, excellent preparation, and controlled record-keeping are the only means to make straightforward progression.

General style:

Specific editorial column necessities for compliance of a manuscript will always take over from directions in these general guidelines.

To make a paper clear: Adhere to recommended page limits.

Mistakes to avoid:

- Insertion of a title at the foot of a page with subsequent text on the next page.
- Separating a table, chart, or figure—confine each to a single page.
- Submitting a manuscript with pages out of sequence.
- In every section of your document, use standard writing style, including articles ("a" and "the").
- Keep paying attention to the topic of the paper.
- Use paragraphs to split each significant point (excluding the abstract).
- Align the primary line of each section.
- Present your points in sound order.
- Use present tense to report well-accepted matters.
- Use past tense to describe specific results.
- Do not use familiar wording; don't address the reviewer directly. Don't use slang or superlatives.
- Avoid use of extra pictures—include only those figures essential to presenting results.

Title page:

Choose a revealing title. It should be short and include the name(s) and address(es) of all authors. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations or exceed two printed lines.

Abstract: This summary should be two hundred words or less. It should clearly and briefly explain the key findings reported in the manuscript and must have precise statistics. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations. It should be logical in itself. Do not cite references at this point.

An abstract is a brief, distinct paragraph summary of finished work or work in development. In a minute or less, a reviewer can be taught the foundation behind the study, common approaches to the problem, relevant results, and significant conclusions or new questions.

Write your summary when your paper is completed because how can you write the summary of anything which is not yet written? Wealth of terminology is very essential in abstract. Use comprehensive sentences, and do not sacrifice readability for brevity; you can maintain it succinctly by phrasing sentences so that they provide more than a lone rationale. The author can at this moment go straight to shortening the outcome. Sum up the study with the subsequent elements in any summary. Try to limit the initial two items to no more than one line each.

Reason for writing the article—theory, overall issue, purpose.

- Fundamental goal.
- To-the-point depiction of the research.
- Consequences, including definite statistics—if the consequences are quantitative in nature, account for this; results of any numerical analysis should be reported. Significant conclusions or questions that emerge from the research.

Approach:

- Single section and succinct.
- An outline of the job done is always written in past tense.
- Concentrate on shortening results—limit background information to a verdict or two.
- Exact spelling, clarity of sentences and phrases, and appropriate reporting of quantities (proper units, important statistics) are just as significant in an abstract as they are anywhere else.

Introduction:

The introduction should "introduce" the manuscript. The reviewer should be presented with sufficient background information to be capable of comprehending and calculating the purpose of your study without having to refer to other works. The basis for the study should be offered. Give the most important references, but avoid making a comprehensive appraisal of the topic. Describe the problem visibly. If the problem is not acknowledged in a logical, reasonable way, the reviewer will give no attention to your results. Speak in common terms about techniques used to explain the problem, if needed, but do not present any particulars about the protocols here.

The following approach can create a valuable beginning:

- o Explain the value (significance) of the study.
- o Defend the model—why did you employ this particular system or method? What is its compensation? Remark upon its appropriateness from an abstract point of view as well as pointing out sensible reasons for using it.
- o Present a justification. State your particular theory(-ies) or aim(s), and describe the logic that led you to choose them.
- o Briefly explain the study's tentative purpose and how it meets the declared objectives.

Approach:

Use past tense except for when referring to recognized facts. After all, the manuscript will be submitted after the entire job is done. Sort out your thoughts; manufacture one key point for every section. If you make the four points listed above, you will need at least four paragraphs. Present surrounding information only when it is necessary to support a situation. The reviewer does not desire to read everything you know about a topic. Shape the theory specifically—do not take a broad view.

As always, give awareness to spelling, simplicity, and correctness of sentences and phrases.

Procedures (methods and materials):

This part is supposed to be the easiest to carve if you have good skills. A soundly written procedures segment allows a capable scientist to replicate your results. Present precise information about your supplies. The suppliers and clarity of reagents can be helpful bits of information. Present methods in sequential order, but linked methodologies can be grouped as a segment. Be concise when relating the protocols. Attempt to give the least amount of information that would permit another capable scientist to replicate your outcome, but be cautious that vital information is integrated. The use of subheadings is suggested and ought to be synchronized with the results section.

When a technique is used that has been well-described in another section, mention the specific item describing the way, but draw the basic principle while stating the situation. The purpose is to show all particular resources and broad procedures so that another person may use some or all of the methods in one more study or referee the scientific value of your work. It is not to be a step-by-step report of the whole thing you did, nor is a methods section a set of orders.

Materials:

Materials may be reported in part of a section or else they may be recognized along with your measures.

Methods:

- o Report the method and not the particulars of each process that engaged the same methodology.
- o Describe the method entirely.
- o To be succinct, present methods under headings dedicated to specific dealings or groups of measures.
- o Simplify—detail how procedures were completed, not how they were performed on a particular day.
- o If well-known procedures were used, account for the procedure by name, possibly with a reference, and that's all.

Approach:

It is embarrassing to use vigorous voice when documenting methods without using first person, which would focus the reviewer's interest on the researcher rather than the job. As a result, when writing up the methods, most authors use third person passive voice.

Use standard style in this and every other part of the paper—avoid familiar lists, and use full sentences.

What to keep away from:

- o Resources and methods are not a set of information.
- o Skip all descriptive information and surroundings—save it for the argument.
- o Leave out information that is immaterial to a third party.

Results:

The principle of a results segment is to present and demonstrate your conclusion. Create this part as entirely objective details of the outcome, and save all understanding for the discussion.

The page length of this segment is set by the sum and types of data to be reported. Use statistics and tables, if suitable, to present consequences most efficiently.

You must clearly differentiate material which would usually be incorporated in a study editorial from any unprocessed data or additional appendix matter that would not be available. In fact, such matters should not be submitted at all except if requested by the instructor.

Content:

o   Sum up your conclusions in text and demonstrate them, if suitable, with figures and tables.
o   In the manuscript, explain each of your consequences, and point the reader to remarks that are most appropriate.
o   Present a background, such as by describing the question that was addressed by creation of an exacting study.
o   Explain results of control experiments and give remarks that are not accessible in a prescribed figure or table, if appropriate.
o   Examine your data, then prepare the analyzed (transformed) data in the form of a figure (graph), table, or manuscript.

What to stay away from:

o   Do not discuss or infer your outcome, report surrounding information, or try to explain anything.
o   Do not include raw data or intermediate calculations in a research manuscript.
o   Do not present similar data more than once.
o   A manuscript should complement any figures or tables, not duplicate information.
o   Never confuse figures with tables—there is a difference.

Approach:

As always, use past tense when you submit your results, and put the whole thing in a reasonable order.

Put figures and tables, appropriately numbered, in order at the end of the report.

If you desire, you may place your figures and tables properly within the text of your results section.

Figures and tables:

If you put figures and tables at the end of some details, make certain that they are visibly distinguished from any attached appendix materials, such as raw facts. Whatever the position, each table must be titled, numbered one after the other, and include a heading. All figures and tables must be divided from the text.

Discussion:

The discussion is expected to be the trickiest segment to write. A lot of papers submitted to the journal are discarded based on problems with the discussion. There is no rule for how long an argument should be.

Position your understanding of the outcome visibly to lead the reviewer through your conclusions, and then finish the paper with a summing up of the implications of the study. The purpose here is to offer an understanding of your results and support all of your conclusions, using facts from your research and generally accepted information, if suitable. The implication of results should be fully described.

Infer your data in the conversation in suitable depth. This means that when you clarify an observable fact, you must explain mechanisms that may account for the observation. If your results vary from your prospect, make clear why that may have happened. If your results agree, then explain the theory that the proof supported. It is never suitable to just state that the data approved the prospect, and let it drop at that. Make a decision as to whether each premise is supported or discarded or if you cannot make a conclusion with assurance. Do not just dismiss a study or part of a study as "uncertain."

Research papers are not acknowledged if the work is imperfect. Draw what conclusions you can based upon the results that you have, and take care of the study as a finished work.

- o You may propose future guidelines, such as how an experiment might be personalized to accomplish a new idea.
- o Give details of all of your remarks as much as possible, focusing on mechanisms.
- o Make a decision as to whether the tentative design sufficiently addressed the theory and whether or not it was correctly restricted. Try to present substitute explanations if they are sensible alternatives.
- o One piece of research will not counter an overall question, so maintain the large picture in mind. Where do you go next? The best studies unlock new avenues of study. What questions remain?
- o Recommendations for detailed papers will offer supplementary suggestions.

Approach:

When you refer to information, differentiate data generated by your own studies from other available information. Present work done by specific persons (including you) in past tense.

Describe generally acknowledged facts and main beliefs in present tense.

The Administration Rules

Administration Rules to Be Strictly Followed before Submitting Your Research Paper to Global Journals Inc.

Please read the following rules and regulations carefully before submitting your research paper to Global Journals Inc. to avoid rejection.

Segment draft and final research paper: You have to strictly follow the template of a research paper, failing which your paper may get rejected. You are expected to write each part of the paper wholly on your own. The peer reviewers need to identify your own perspective of the concepts in your own terms. Please do not extract straight from any other source, and do not rephrase someone else's analysis. Do not allow anyone else to proofread your manuscript.

Written material: You may discuss this with your guides and key sources. Do not copy anyone else's paper, even if this is only imitation, otherwise it will be rejected on the grounds of plagiarism, which is illegal. Various methods to avoid plagiarism are strictly applied by us to every paper, and, if found guilty, you may be blacklisted, which could affect your career adversely. To guard yourself and others from possible illegal use, please do not permit anyone to use or even read your paper and file.

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Topics	Grades		
	A-B	**C-D**	**E-F**
Abstract	Clear and concise with appropriate content, Correct format. 200 words or below	Unclear summary and no specific data, Incorrect form Above 200 words	No specific data with ambiguous information Above 250 words
Introduction	Containing all background details with clear goal and appropriate details, flow specification, no grammar and spelling mistake, well organized sentence and paragraph, reference cited	Unclear and confusing data, appropriate format, grammar and spelling errors with unorganized matter	Out of place depth and content, hazy format
Methods and Procedures	Clear and to the point with well arranged paragraph, precision and accuracy of facts and figures, well organized subheads	Difficult to comprehend with embarrassed text, too much explanation but completed	Incorrect and unorganized structure with hazy meaning
Result	Well organized, Clear and specific, Correct units with precision, correct data, well structuring of paragraph, no grammar and spelling mistake	Complete and embarrassed text, difficult to comprehend	Irregular format with wrong facts and figures
Discussion	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
References	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring

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