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## **Factors Affecting Students' Attitudes and Interest on Oral Literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study investigated factors affecting students' attitudes and interest on oral literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population of the study comprised language students (Yoruba and English) at school of Languages, Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo Stet, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was Two hundred and fifty (250) respondents, selected through a simple random sampling technique. Fifty (50) respondents were selected from each of the four levels of language undergraduates. Two research questions were raised to guide the study. A self-designed questionnaire titled, "Questionnaire on factors affecting students' Attitude and Interests on Oral Literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria", fashioned on four Likert rating scale; Strongly Agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D) and Strongly Disagreed (SD). The research instrument was validated by an expert in Test and measurement, while its reliability was determined through test retest method at two weeks interval, and 0.71 coefficient reliability was obtained. Data generated on research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (simple percentages and frequency counts). Based on the findings of the study, conclusions were made that religion is not a hindrance to language student's attitudes and interest towards oral literature and so on. Based on the conclusions, the following recommendations were made; firstly, language students should be motivated to develop positive attitudes and interest on oral literature. Also, seminars should be organized for language students in a bid to make oral literature admired by the students.*

**Keywords:** Attitudes, Interest, Oral, Literature

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### **Background to the study**

The dwindling state of oral literature in Africa is as a result of colonialism. The missionaries who arrived Badagry in 1842 brought western civilization into Africa through formal education. The whites came at first as traders and government officials and later took over by enforcing their culture and religion on Africans.

The history of colonialism goes back thousands of years ago. It began around the globe and across time. It the 15th century with the "Age of Discovery" led by the Portuguese and Spanish exploration of the Americas, the Coast of Africa, among others. It is an historical fact that Africa was evangelized through colonial machinery. It is not an overstatement to say that colonialism aided missions in 19th century in Africa. It is also a naked fact and truth to say that missionaries, traders and colonial administrators had common interest in Africa. Missions and colonialism is topical in African ecclesiastical historiography. Africans throughout the continent are living under the pains and consequences of colonialism (Okon, 2014).

Colonialism is the imposition of foreign rule by an external power which culminates in the control and exploitation of the conquered people. Foreign rule can be imposed through political deception and propaganda. Apart from political subjugation and infantile domination of the subject people, economic motivations are often the fundamental reasons for colonial occupation. It is a practice or policy of control by one people or power over other people or areas (Kohn, 2017). In African historiography, colonialism represents the period when Europe conquered and exploited the human and natural resources of the continent through the use of superior military force. Africa did not negotiate for colonial rule because it is unnatural and illogical for any same person to willingly surrender his freedom in preference for servitude.

It cannot also be denied that colonialism aided missionary work in Africa. Even though missionaries came with good intention to evangelize Africa, the timing was bad because missionaries came into Africa along with colonial administrators and traders with the plan to introduce Christianity, commerce and civilization. Africans lived a communal life before the arrival of her colonial masters. The literature practiced during this period is called oral literature (Sarumi, 2001)

Finnegan (2012) says Africa possess both written and unwritten traditions. The former are relatively known at any rate, the recent writings in European languages. The unwritten forms however, are far less widely known and appreciated. This literature is meant to inform the society and inculcate moral

values into younger generations. The introduction of western education has made people lose interest in oral literature because after the departure of the colonial masters, a part of them was left behind in Africa. Those who worked for them continued to live in the ways they had been taught by the whites.

This explains why most Africans neglect their culture and embrace western culture. In the primitive era, parents after giving birth take their wards or children to the diviner who will consult the oracle to know the destiny of the child and what the future of the child will look like, this is called "Akosejaye Omo". There is nothing of such today, people do not want to be associated to African culture or ways, some parents go as far as not encouraging their children to speak indigenous languages at home because they see it as barbaric, they rather encourage their children to speak English Language which is known to be the language of elites and colonial masters. During this period also, beautiful names which glorifies African culture like Abebi, Akanji, Aja, Apeke, Amope among others were given to children but reverse is the case today, we now hear names like Favour, Happiness, Love, Rapture, Beauty among others.

Conrad (1995) says that Africans are barbaric and has no culture of her own but Achebe (2008) replied by saying Africans had a better and organized culture before the arrival of Conrad's kind (i.e. the whites). Achebe explains further to say Africans lived in love and unity but colonialism made "things fall apart". The fact that the interest of students in oral literature as a course is dwindling cannot be over-emphasized. Despite the fact that civilization has done more harm than good, students nowadays see their culture as barbaric, archaic and this make these students lose interest in the course.

Over the years, it is noted that the academic performance of students in oral literature is not encouraging because they are not well grounded in the process. Oral literature in a broad term include ritual texts, curative chants, epic poems, musical genres, folktales, creation tales, songs, myths, spells etc (University of Cambridge, 2011). Oral literature is introduced only to students in higher institution which ought not to be. Since it is said that civilization has made people forget their culture, then oral literature as a course should be introduced at the primary and secondary schools levels so that the younger generations will be reminded of their source and indigenous culture and tradition. Some of the problems of oral literature which affects the interest and performance of students in the course are: superstition, language barrier, lack of interest and so on. The challenges to the learning of oral literature has been a good source of conducting research to many scholars. However, much have not been actually achieved in terms of factors affecting students' attitude and interests on oral literature, thus, necessitated the study.

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## Statement of the Problem

It is a known fact that oral literature has existed in Africa long before the arrival of the colonial masters. African literature as rich as it inculcates moral values, educate and informs younger generations. Due to the emergence of Christianity and western education, students now lack interest in oral literature and this affects their performance academically.

Oral literature was introduced into the school curriculum especially at the higher institution level to awaken and get scholars familiar to the "dead" African culture. The researcher of this study therefore carried out a study on factors affecting students' attitudes and interest on oral literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria.

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## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is on factors affecting students' attitudes and interest on oral literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. examine the influence of religion on students' attitudes and interests towards oral literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria.
2. determine the impact of learning materials on students' attitudes and interests on oral literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria.

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## Research Questions

- i. Is religion affecting students' interest in Oral literature?
- ii. Are availability of learning materials affecting the performance of students in oral literature?

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## Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was implored for the study. The population of the study comprised language students in the School of Education, Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo, Ondo State, Nigeria. The sample size of the study was Two hundred (200) respondents, selected through simple random sampling technique. From each of the four levels (100, 200, 300, and 400) of language undergraduates, fifty (50) were selected from each level. Two research questions were raised to guide the conduct of the study.

A self-designed research instrument by the titled, "Questionnaire on factors affecting students' attitudes and interest on oral literature at Adeyemi Federal University of Education, Ondo State, Nigeria", fashioned on four Likert rating scale of Strongly Agreed, Agreed, Disagreed and Strongly

Disagreed. The research instrument was validated by an expert on Test and measurement, while its reliability was determined through test and retest method. 0.71 coefficient reliability was obtained. Data generated on the research questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics (simple percentage and frequency counts).

## Presentation of Results and Discussion of Findings

### Presentation of Results

**Research Question One:** Is religion affecting students' attitudes and interests on oral literature?

**Table 1: Showing simple percentages and frequency counts on is religion affecting students' attitudes and interests on oral literature**

S/N	ITEMS	SD	%	D	%	SA	%	A	%
1	I cannot further my study in oral literature because of my religion	94	4	86	43	06	03	14	07
2	Superstition about gods and rituals make me lose interest in oral literature	90	45	82	41	08	04	20	10
3	I find it difficult to trace oral literature to my background	84	42	78	39	12	06	26	13
4	I find it difficult to translate oral literature language (i.e Yoruba) to my mother tongue or first language	68	34	62	31	28	14	42	21
5	My parents do not encourage me to participate during festivals in my home town	44	22	56	28	42	21	58	29
6	I think oral literature is religion centered	48	24	80	40	34	17	38	19

The result according to table 4.2 above, shows that the interest of students in oral literature is not too low. 55% of the respondents strongly disagreed that they do not see oral literature as barbaric while 36% disagrees, 4% and 5% indicates that they agree to the fact that oral literature is barbaric. Also from this table, it is discovered that 47% and 34% wish to further their study in oral literature while 3% and 7% don't want to. Item 5 confirms that parents don't encourage them to participate during festivals in their home towns where we have 29% and 21% agreeing to this while 28% and 22% indicate otherwise.

**Research Question Two:** Are availability of learning materials affecting students' attitudes and interests on oral literature?

**Table 1: Showing simple percentages and frequency counts on are availability of learning materials affecting students' attitudes and interests on oral literature**

S/N	ITEMS	SD	%	D	%	SA	%	A	%
7	I find it difficult to translate oral literature sub-genres like Ewi, Oriki to English due to lack of learning materials	52	26	40	20	42	21	66	33
8	Recent technological films encourages my study and performance in oral literature	24	12	36	18	48	24	92	46
9	Adequate learning materials contribute to my poor performance in oral literature	48	24	66	33	24	12	62	31
10	I do not have enough textbooks and materials to enhance my performance in oral literature	34	17	50	25	40	20	76	38
11	I do not have enough learning materials on oral literature as a course and this affects my performance academically	42	21	50	25	38	19	70	35
12	Modern home videos encourages and improves my performance in oral literature.	36	18	34	17	62	31	68	34
13	I find it difficult to understand the content of oral literature due to lack of reading materials	64	32	88	44	20	10	28	14
14	My school does not have enough reference materials for oral literature	32	16	40	20	60	30	68	34

From table 2, it was discovered that 26% and 20% of the respondents do not have difficulty in translating oral literature sub-genres to English while 21% and 33% attest that they have difficulty with translation of oral literature sub-genre to English.

In like manner, 12% and 18% strongly disagreed and disagreed that technological Ins encourage their performance in oral literature while 24% and 46% strongly agree and agree that technological films encourage their performance in oral literature.

Also, in item, 17%, 25% of the respondents disagreed that they have enough textbooks and materials which will enhance their performance while 20% and 38% says they do not have enough textbooks and materials to enhance their performance in oral literature.

In question 8, 13% and 24% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree that their religion forbids them from saying incantations while 34% and 29% agree strongly that they do not say incantations due to their religion.

In conclusion, in question 9, 16% and 20% of the respondents disagree strongly that their schools have enough reference materials to cater for their educational needs in oral literature while 30% and 34% agree strongly that their schools do not have enough reference materials for oral literature and this affects their performance.

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## Discussion of Findings

The result from the above analysis i.e. table 1 shows that the interest of students in oral literature, is not too low because most of respondents claim that they do not see oral literature as against religion, also, that they wish to further their study in oral literature as a course at post graduate levels. Some of the respondents lack interest because their parents do not encourage them to participate during festivals in their home towns. Thus, low interest of students to oral literature can be as a result of religious beliefs of parents and students about oral literature.

The religious belief of people about oral literature (as a literature of the primitive society which deals with traditional religious worship, where incantations are chanted) have contributed largely to students lack of students' interest in the course, due to their exposure to civilization and western religion.

From table 2, respondents claim that some of the factors affecting their performance in oral literature is lack of materials and textbooks. Respondents also attest that lack of reference materials and textbooks affect their performance in the course. Olugbamigbe (2013) is also in support of this fact that students' performance in oral literature cannot be encouraging without the availability of relevant materials and textbooks.

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## Conclusion

The research result has shown that students' interest in oral literature is not too low but their performance in the course is affected. This can be attributed to the difficulty in translation and the belief that oral literature is an uncommon field. Parent's religious belief also contributes to students' lack of interest in oral literature.

Also, from the research analysis, it has been deduced that lack of textbooks and research materials available on the field is a contributing factor to the unwillingness of students to study oral literature and this affects also their performance in the course since they have limited materials to study for the course.

Furthermore, more scholars are needed in the field to conduct researches and to produce more research works and materials majorly textbooks for the utilization of the students offering the course. The development of the field of stud must be noted for it promotes cultural development of students, parents and the society.

In conclusion, the interest and performance of students in oral literature is not at a discouraging level but to improve students' performance in the course, adequate motivation should be given to students and lecturers who teach the course, for this will promote African cultural values and heritage among every member of the society. Parents could not because of their Western religion(s) make their children lose so much interest in oral literature to the extent of it affecting their performance in the course.

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## Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the following are recommended by the researcher:

1. Students should be motivated towards developing interest on study in oral literature
2. Seminars, workshops and symposiums should be organized mainly for students. This will serve as a means of making the field to be popular among students and members of the society.
3. More textbooks should be produced on the field. This will motivate students and improve their interest and performance in the field.
4. A simple portion of the field can be introduced in the secondary school curriculum in order to intimate students with the field as early as possible like its written counterpart i.e written literature.

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