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Students Attitude towards Project Writing as Correlate to their Project Scores among Undergraduates in Delta and Edo States.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined Students Attitude towards Project Writing as Correlate to their Project Scores among Undergraduates in Delta and Edo States. The study was guided by two research questions and hypotheses. Using an *ex-post-facto* design, the study sampled 381 final-year undergraduates from a population of 8,020 in Public Universities of the 2023/2024 academic session in Faculty of Education in Delta and Edo States. The research instrument for the study was the questionnaire on "Research (methodology) design and Attitude towards Project Writing among Undergraduates (RDATPWU)". Scores in project was also used as data in the study. Coefficient of determination was used to answer the research questions while linear regression and Fisher Z statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. $P > 0.05$, $= 0.05$ or ≤ 0.05 . Findings revealed that students' attitudes regarding project writing do not significantly correlate their project scores while gender-based project scores are significantly correlated by students' attitudes about project writing. Based on these findings, it is recommended that School management should conduct training sessions or seminars that target certain deficiencies in research or writing abilities found by the study. Enhancing these core abilities could aid in bringing attitudes and results into alignment. School administrators should determine possible factors, such the caliber of mentoring or supervision that could affect project scores.

Keywords: *Students Attitude towards Project Writing, Project Scores, Undergraduates.*

Introduction

A core component of student assessment and knowledge demonstration in the tertiary level is project writing, where it serves as a capstone to students' learning experience. It challenges students to demonstrate the understanding of their research methods, critical thinking, and subject-specific knowledge. Undergraduate Project is a vital requirement of any higher institution in Nigeria for student's graduation. An undergraduate project is an independent activity or task that undergraduates in tertiary institutions carries out (Achor et al., 2018). It is an academic assignment (research) embarked upon by a student towards the completion of his academic pursuit of a first degree, as stated in his first degree curriculum. The complete project of final year undergraduate contains details of five chapters. There is usually a specified format for project writing. Ossai (2016) reported that a good number of universities, including Delta State University, adopt a five-chapter structure for project, dissertation and thesis presentation.

The introduction, review of related literature, research methods and procedure, presentation and discussion of results, conclusion, and recommendations are the five chapters that make up the framework, according to (Egbule & Okobia, 2012).

Project writing is a painstaking exercise that systematically addresses the solution to an identified problem of study. It is usually guided by an approved format for conducting, writing, and presenting an organized research report. Although the format may slightly differ from one tertiary educational institution to another, The National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) (2019) maintained that it is designed to guide students and their supervisors on the acceptable standards expected of them in conducting a project of good quality. However, it is disappointing that some students fail to abide by the guidelines of project writing or to give it the detailed attention it requires.

Some even play down the guidance of their project supervisors while adopting some edge-cutting approaches, which are indeed counterproductive. Such an attitude could result from students' expectations of project supervision. - all of which may be shaped by the students attitude towards the process. Students' attitude towards project writing refers to settled ways of thinking or feeling about project writing, supervision, or project supervisor(s) that affect their research behaviour. Thus, attitude includes cognitive, emotional, and behavioral components. The feeling or emotional part of the attitude has to do with the part of the statement that has an impact on someone else. This pertains to an individual's sentiments and emotions. It addresses sentiments or emotions that surface in relation to a certain topic, such as hate or fear (Tujyina & Ntivuguruzwa, 2023). The tendency for someone to act in a certain way toward an object makes up the behaviour component of the attitude. It speaks to the aspect of attitude that expresses a person's intentions; whether they are short- or long-term (Tujyina & Ntivuguruzwa, 2023).

The cognitive component of attitudes consists of the beliefs, thoughts, and attributes that an individual might identify with an object. It is an attitude's section pertaining to opinions or beliefs.

It has to do with the aspect of attitude that is connected to an individual's general knowledge (Abun, 2019). Cognitive attitude, according to Abun et al. (2019), is the views and thoughts about a thing, a person, an institution, an event, etc. It concerns with the way a person perceives and knows a subject, object, or person. The behavioural component of affective attitude refers to the probability of responding in a particular way toward the attitude object, while affective attitude is an emotional response toward the subject, object, or person.

It is observed that the majority of students working on projects seem to be adversely disposed, as evidenced by their timidity, nervousness, or apprehension during the process. Such a pessimistic attitude toward research might occasionally lead to project abuse, which is causing grave concern.

Drawing from the aspect of the relationship between gender and attitude, Shaukat et al. (2014) realized that the males had substantially more positive attitudes towards research than the females, and significant differences were observed on age, different programmes of study, and university type. Also, Hussain et al. (2016) discovered that among undergraduates there were inconsequential differences between male and female undergraduates' attitudes towards research. According to Siddiqui and Ahmed (2015), observed that gender do not have impact on research attitude but it has to do with individual's competence as correlate to their cognitive skills.

Project scores in Nigerian universities typically refer to marks or grade assigned to student's research project (Ossai, 2016). The scoring criteria can be different depending on the university and department, but it generally includes factors such like the quality of research, presentation, organization, and originality of the project.

Students are usually assessed by a panel of examiners who evaluate their work and assign a score accordingly. According to Ossai (2016), the following grading system is used in line with what is in the Faculty of Education Information Handbook:

Score range	Grade	Points
70% and above	A	5
60% - 69%	B	4
50%-59%	C	3
45%-49%	D	2
40%-44%	E	1
0%-39%	F	0

It is on this basis that this study sought to examine students' attitude towards project writing as correlate to project scores among undergraduates in Delta and Edo States.

Purpose of Study

The key Purpose of this study was to assess achievement in research methodology and attitude towards project writing as predictors of project scores among undergraduates in Delta and Edo States. Specifically, this study aims to:

- i. verify the extent to which students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores;
- ii. examine the extent to which students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores based on gender.

Research Questions

To guide this study the following research questions were raised:

- i. To what extent do students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores?
- ii. To what extent do students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores based on gender?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

1. Students' attitudes towards project writing do not significantly correlate their project scores
2. Students' attitudes towards project writing do not significantly correlate their project scores based on gender

Material and Method

The study employed the correlate research design. The population of the study was 8020 final-year undergraduates in Public Universities of the 2023/2024 academic session in Faculty of Education in Delta and Edo States. A sample of 381 undergraduates was drawn from the universities located in Delta and Edo States. The study employed stratified sampling technique to select the 2 universities and simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample size. This sample size was computed using the Yamane formula at 95% level of confidence. The reason for selecting a sample size of 381 was

justified by a combination of statistical and methodological considerations to ensure the study's findings were accurate, reliable and generalizable. The research instrument for the study was the questionnaire on "Research (methodology) design and Attitude towards Project Writing among Undergraduates (RDATPWU)". Scores in research methodology and project were also applied as data in the study. Coefficient of determination was used to answer the research questions while linear regression and Fisher Z statistics was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. $P > 0.05$, = 0.05 or 0.05.

Result and Discussions

Data Presentation

A total number of 381 copies of the questionnaire were distributed and 241 (63%) copies were returned, completely filled and found useful for conducting the study from which generalization can be made. What happened was that 37% of the questionnaires were not properly filled and any questionnaire not properly filled was considered a waste. Therefore, response rate of 63% is considered adequate for the study

Research Question 1: To what extent do students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores?

Table 1: Coefficient of Determination of the extent to which students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores

Variable	N	R	r^2	$r^2\%$	Decision
Attitude					
	241	0.05	.002	0.20	Weak
Project Scores					

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2025

Based on the output of the linear regression in Table 1, the coefficient of determination (R^2) was 0.002, indicating that 0.20% of the variability in students' project scores can be explained by their attitudes towards project writing. This suggests a weak predictive model, making attitudes towards project writing a weak predictor of project scores in this study. From this result it is an indication that 99.8% of the variation in the undergraduates' project scores is attributed to other factors other than attitudes towards project writing

Research Question 2: To what extent do students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores based on gender?

Table 2: Coefficient of Determination of the extent to which students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores based on gender

Variable	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	R	R^2	$R^2\%$	Decision
Attitude	Male	81	73.95	11.07	0.06	0.003	0.30	Weak
	Female	161	76.06	11.62				
Project Scores	Male	81	65.04	7.59				
	Female	161	63.92	5.58				

Source: researcher's computation, 2025

Table 2 showed the mean score on Attitude towards project for male was 73.95 and that of the female was 76.06, while the mean achievement scores for the male in Project was 65.04 and that of the female was 63.92. Additionally, the investigation revealed that a multiple regression which was conducted to examine the extent to which students' attitudes towards project writing correlate their project scores based on gender. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was **0.003**, which indicates that **0.30% of the variation in students' project scores** can be explained by the combination of students' attitudes towards project writing and gender. This low R^2 suggests that these two variables are **weak predictors** of project scores in this study.

Hypothesis 1: Students' attitudes towards project writing do not significantly correlate their project scores

Table 4:14 Regression output on students' attitude towards project writing do not significantly correlate their project scores

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	65.545	3.747		17.493	0.000
	Attitude	0.037	0.051	0.046	0.719	0.473

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2025

Table 4:14 show the output of the linear regression. Examining the predictor, attitude towards project writing ($B=0.037$, $\text{Beta} = .046$, $t \text{ value} = .719$, $p = .473$). Since the p value calculated is greater than the α of 0.05 therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. This implies that students' attitude towards project writing do not significantly correlate their project scores.

Hypothesis 2: Students' attitudes towards project writing do not significantly correlate their project scores based on gender

Table 4:18: Pearson's correlation and Fisher's Z statistics of the moderating impact of gender on the relationship between Students' attitudes towards project writing and their project scores

Variable	Gender	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	r	Fisher-Z	P-Value	Decision
Attitude	Male	81	73.95	11.07	-0.038	0.6498	0.0048	Reject
	Female	161	76.06	11.62				
Project Scores	Male	81	65.04	7.59	0.167			
	Female	161	63.92	5.58				

Source: SPSS 25. Output, 2025

$p < 0.05$ level of significance

Table 4.18 presents the Pearson correlation and Fisher's Z statistics to evaluate Hypothesis 2, which tests whether students' attitudes towards project writing significantly do not correlate with their project scores based on gender.

From the descriptive statistics, male students ($N = 81$) had a mean attitude score of 73.95 ± 11.07 , while their mean project score was 65.04 ± 7.59 . Female students ($N = 161$) had a slightly higher mean attitude score of 76.06 ± 11.62 , but a slightly lower mean project score of 63.92 ± 5.58 . These results suggest that although females had more positive attitudes towards project writing on average, males performed slightly better in their actual project scores.

The Pearson correlation coefficient (r) for male students is -0.038 , indicating a very weak and negative relationship between attitude towards project writing and project scores. This suggests that among male students, changes in attitude towards project writing had almost no effect on their project performance.

To determine whether gender significantly moderates the relationship between attitude and project scores, a Fisher's Z transformation was carried out. The resulting Z value is 0.167, with a p -value of 0.0048.

Since the p -value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that gender significantly moderates the relationship between students' attitudes toward project writing and their project scores. In practical terms, the effect of students' attitudes on project performance is significantly different between male and female students.

Although both male and female students showed relatively high attitudes towards project writing, and males slightly outperformed females in project scores, the statistical test confirms that gender significantly influences how students' attitudes affect their project performance. This suggests that educational interventions or support programs aimed at improving project outcomes may need to be tailored differently for male and female students, taking into account how each gender's attitude translates into academic performance.

Discussion

Finding of the study revealed that students' attitudes towards project writing do not correlate with their project scores. The reason for this is that project writing involves the students, his or her supervisor and the type of project the student is carrying out. A student who has negative attitude towards project writing but has a proficient supervisor who has proper understanding of project writing will perform well in his or her project due to the guidance of the supervisor. Apart from the input of the mentor or supervisor, the financial capability of the student is also a factor, to sources for material in the internet or offline is also financially draining so it take a student who is financially stable or empowered to meet up that capability. This finding was contrary with Ossai (2016) who said achievement in research project is affected by the attitude of the student.

Furthermore, the finding showed that the null hypothesis stating that Students' attitudes towards project writing significantly do not correlates their project scores based on gender was rejected. Thus, the researcher concluded that gender-based project scores significantly correlates students' attitudes about project writing. The reason for this finding is that research attitude of students can be dictated by their individual gender and their competence in relation to their cognitive skills such as understanding, reading, writing and being able to reproduce knowledge that has been learnt in the course of their study. Many factors can be responsible for this such as cultural belief, religious belief and soon. Some cultural belief will not permit the female to study hard like their male counterpart and this can affect the achievement of the female in research or project writing. The study result is in agreement with Shaukat

et al. (2014), the authors realized that the males had substantially more positive attitudes towards research than the females. This study result is contrary to the study undertaken by Siddiqui and Ahmed (2015) who were of the view that gender do not have impact on research attitude but rather on their individual competence in relation to their cognitive skills.

Conclusion

Conclusively, attitude of students towards project writing did not play a significant role to their project outcome nether did their technical deficiencies on their project outcome. Also it was concluded that gender based attitude towards project writing played a crucial role on student outcome in project.

Recommendations

- i. School administrators should determine possible factors, such the caliber of mentoring or supervision that could affect project scores.
- ii. School management should conduct training sessions or seminars that target certain deficiencies in research or writing abilities found by the study. Enhancing these core abilities could aid in bringing attitudes and results into alignment.

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