



Polytechnic Student's Attitude and Their Achievement in the Use of English and Communication Course for Learning

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ABSTRACTS

This study determined Polytechnic Student's Attitude and their achievement in the use of English and Communication courses for learning. The study adopted descriptive research of the survey type. The population for this study was made up of all polytechnic students in Ondo-State. Proportional sampling techniques were used to allocate many respondents in each school based on their estimated population using Israel Model. The instrument for data collection was an adapted questionnaire. Descriptive and Inferential statistics were used to answer the research question and test the stated hypotheses with the aid of statistical product and service solution (SPSS) version 20.0. The findings indicated that there is no significant relationship between entry qualification of the Polytechnic students and their attitude to the Use of English and Communication Course. No significant relationship between the attitude of Polytechnic students and their achievement in the use of English Courses. The study concluded that Polytechnic students' entry qualification enhances their attitude toward English and Communication. Therefore, it was recommended that Polytechnic authorities should ensure the provision of infrastructural facilities such as standard libraries well-equipped language laboratories, and modern teaching aids.

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1. INTRODUCTION

English Language, which came in the wake of the early missionaries, has today become deeply entrenched in the country's educational, social and political systems. Patanavanich and Glantz (2021) asserted that the English Language is used to keep government records, issue administrative instructions, and write minutes. And it has also remained the Language of Commerce, Business records, contracts, newspapers, radio, and television. In social settings, the English Language is often used as the means of communication and expression in such instances like weddings, naming's, send-off parties, etc.

In reality, English Language could now be seen as functioning as the language of Nigerian nationalism. Uba (2022) asserted that the English Language is the cornerstone of the Nigerian nation. The English Language has also got world recognition and thus often serves as an international language for communication and deliberations. Ashraf (2022) asserted that the English language is considered to be the most widely used among 4,000 and 5,000 living languages in the world today. It was further revealed that, while there are over 300 million native speakers of English worldwide, over 250 million people in every continent, Nigerian inclusive, use the English Language as a second language for their day-to-day interactions and needs.

In Education English Language plays an integral and vital role. It serves as the basic mode of instruction from the primary level to the tertiary or university level. This is also well attested to by the important role ascribed to the English Language in the National Policy on Education at all levels. The basic mode of instruction end of teaching in the later stage of the primary level is to be English Language and also most instructional materials for most subjects are written in the English Language.

At the secondary level, the National Policy places the English Language at the forefront of the core subjects in both the junior and secondary schools. At the tertiary and University level, the English Language plays a predominant role. The use of English and Communication is a compulsory course for all students in the Polytechnic. This was designed under the General Studies course. The National Policy stresses that the award of degrees will be made conditional upon the passing of the paper of this course".

The importance and need for the Use of English and Communication are highly imperative because most technological and engineering reports, data, and ideas are written in the English Language. Aslan (2022) further stressed the need for mastery of the English Language. They explained that success in graduate work is becoming more and more related to the ability to read appropriate literature (or texts) in English and to take part in international conferences where the Teater part of the contracts take place through the medium of English. It has been rightly argued that where all science is taught in the English Language, a considerably high Standard of Language proficiency is needed for students to Comprehend and manipulate difficult intellectual material and scientific concepts (Saraswaty, 2018). Therefore, the English Language is needed to extract information, interpret data and theories, write technical reports, etc.

Thus, while the use of English and communication course should be geared towards being specific and specialized, the remedial aspect should not be overlooked or played down. Therefore, it should be both fundamentally remedial and developmental. Best *et al.* (2005) emphasized that the course must be both remedial and developmental, where the remedial is only secondary. He expatiated further that the remedial aspect is to cure the ills arising

from an inadequate execution of the secondary school course and examination. Added to this also is the effective background of some of the students admitted.

Their entry qualifications more often than not prove to be a bane some were admitted through the pre-National Diploma course. Others include graduates of Technical Schools, City, and Guild or Federal Craft Certificate holders who might be very defective in linguistic and communicative skills. This category of students is in dire need of the remedial and developmental use of the English and Communication Course.

Some researchers have delved into the relationship between students' attitudes to some subjects and their performance in such subjects. [Madigan and Kim \(2021\)](#) asserted that several studies indicated that the attitude of students was related to student achievement. Likewise, other reports showed the relationship between students' attitude towards Biblical languages and their performance in Christian Religious Studies at the University of Ilorin. They administered an attitude questionnaire to 50 penultimate (i.e. 300 levels) students and 50-final-year students majoring in Christian Religious Studies. she found out that students in the Department adopted an unfavourable attitude towards Biblical Language and their academic performance.

Independent studies carried out by [Min et al. \(2021\)](#) established the fact that a positive attitude facilitated learning (and consequently, achievement) while a negative attitude hindered learning. [Wang et al. \(2021\)](#) posited that attitude to specific school subjects was more related to school achievement than ii general attitudes to school. In this empirical study, he found a significant correlation between attitude and achievement. [Abdelrady et al. \(2022\)](#) in their research into the learners' attitudes to the English Language and Literature, asserted that one of the greatest hindrances to the learning of the English Language Correctly especially in Oral or Spoken English, was the pupil's attitude. She explained further those negative reactions of the pupil's classmates to his errors or mispronunciation tend to make him become withdrawn. And that such pupil Will consequently develop English Language phobia thus militating against or inhibiting his achievement in the Language. Other researchers, while they asserted that negative attitude was one of the factors inhibiting achievement, also identified other interrelated factors.

[Mariamah et al. \(2021\)](#) attributed the negative attitudes of pupils toward Mathematics, to their poor background in primary School. And, some researchers attributed it to emotional disturbances in fear and anxiety. Some researchers also attributed it to the disparity between conceptual and mechanical attainments.

[Schwab et al. \(2021\)](#) believed that the attitude of teachers towards Mathematics influenced the attitude of pupils toward it too. Some researchers believed that a teacher who knows and teaches Mathematics with enthusiasm will in turn influence his pupils positively, while a teacher with poor knowledge and a negative attitude will influence his pupils negatively. This was corroborated by [León-Mantero et al. \(2020\)](#) who posited that the teacher's personality is a contributory factor to pupils' attitude toward Mathematics.

But, [Goss \(2022\)](#) reviewed academic success both in secondary schools and higher institutions. He concluded that there was no significant relationship between academic achievement and personality. And, that it is the attitude that determines success in any discipline and not strictly personality.

[Ahmed et al. \(2022\)](#) worked on the positive attitudes for the acquisition of reading skills and the importance of teachers in promoting such attitudes. They opined that teacher can influence students' attitudes toward school subjects. And in the same vein. [Petrikovicová et al. \(2021\)](#) wrote that teachers who have a negative or neutral attitude toward any school

subject can pass them to young children. Research has revealed that on school subjects generally, students showed various attitudes depending on the goal or benefit they can derive from them. And that attitudinal preference for subjects also depends on such variables as levels of difficulty, interest, teaching method, personality, intelligence, etc.

Some researchers on the attitudes of students towards science emphasized the phenomenon generally referred to as the swing from science. This was attributed to the lessening interest in science and disaffection with science and technology among students. It reported that his swing from science was due to the attitude of pupils toward their subjects of study, their schools, and the teaching they receive in them.

Some researchers conducted a review of research in the area of pupils' attitudes to science, identifying many factors which were discovered to be with pupils' interest in science. There was a positive relationship between attitudes to science and both achievement and social class. Some researchers listened to transcripts of about twenty percent (20%) of the data on pupils' attitudes to Physical Science and found that one of the six reasons why they performed poorly in Physical Science was the difficulty of the Physical Science. From the foregoing, researchers have proved the fact that attitude affects academic achievement. It is of great importance that the child develops positive toward the school and his teacher.

The linguistic and communicative incompetence of the technical graduates is becoming a grave concern of many people. The West African Examination Council and the Higher Education authorities have become alarmed at the increasing failure rate and the declining Language competence of candidates. The author further argued that the situation is aggravated when candidates who have a poor grasp of English usage have to grapple with scientific usage.

Aid yet the nation requires English-Language proficient technocrats. The researcher has observed that most technical and science graduates are grossly deficient in linguistic and communicative ability. This has been observed to hamper their ability to communicate and transfer technology, as well as technological ideas to others. It is evinced in their inability to communicate ideas, facts, or concepts meaningfully in their various professions and establishment for instance; as confidential secretaries, Engineering consultants, Planners, Technicians, technical instructors, medical technologists, e.t.c. This pathetic ineptitude to communicate effectively and meaningfully in English is further aggravated when it comes to interpreting and disseminating technology in simple English to junior and senior secondary school students. The plight of these English Language-deficient technical instructors (teachers) is great.

This is also the case when a polytechnic graduate of Mass Communication (or Journalism) is asked to teach the English Language in the secondary school, and worse still, in the Senior classes. Likewise in other Professions such as engineering consultancy or confidential secretaryship, this inability becomes very glaring.

This is manifested in jumbled and incomprehensible feasibility or technical reports and for the latter, it is a case of haphazardly written minutes of meetings, confusing reports, and misleading or wrongly worded directives. The researcher is also aware of the student's poor performance in the use of English and communication course.

This was suspected to be a result of some interrelated factors such as entry qualification of students, attitude to the course, and home environment. etc Research proved that students were admitted with different entry qualifications. And also, with the consideration of the "quota" system which allows candidates to be admitted according to whether they are from the Educationally advanced or backward area, and also according to ratios allotted to

different states of origin, on general entry qualification. Some works outlined the various entrants into the Polytechnics as follows:

- (i) High School graduates who have not gained admission into the Universities out who have the requisite qualification of 5G.C.E. 0 1level credits
- (ii) Senior School Certificate or WASC/GCE with 4 credit passes.
- (iii) Technical College graduates with credit pass in relevant courses.
- (iv) Grade II Teacher's certificate with Credit passes in relevant courses.
- (v) Special students are sponsored by in-service training by the State government (p. 135).

They revealed that there are some of these students or "second chance" students who made very weak passes between grades 6 and 8 in the G.C.E. 'O' Level examination. And also, the waiver system allows entrants into Engineering or Technology courses with weak passes (between Grades7 and 8) in the English Language.

This has been observed to be one of the major factors affecting the students learning and mastery of the English Language. Such students also tend to show indifference to the Use of English Courses. Technical students show apathy and indifference towards the Use of English Course because they misconstrued it as an ancillary rather than a core course in their field of specializations. They concluded that they tend to fail the course and also perform badly in their core courses because of faulty expression. The problem of this study, therefore, is to examine the type of relationships that exists between students' entry qualification on the one hand, and their attitude to, and achievement in the Use of English and communication program, on the other hand, in two polytechnics in Ondo State.

The main purpose of this study was to examine Polytechnic Student's Attitude and their Achievement in the Use of English and Communication Course for Learning. Specifically, this study;

- (i) Examined relationship between entry qualification of the Polytechnic students and their attitude to the Use of English and Communication Course,
- (ii) Determine the relationship between Polytechnic students' entry qualification and their achievement in the Use of English Course.
- (iii) Determine the relationship between the attitude of Polytechnic students and their achievement in the use of English Courses.
- (iv) Examine the relationship between the Polytechnic students' entry qualification and their attitude to the Use of English.

2. METHODS

This is empirical research. It is a correlational study on the relationships among Polytechnic students' previous performances, attitudes to, and achievement in the Use of English and communication course. The research used a questionnaire; the schools' records of the students' entry qualification in the English Language and their cumulative performances in the Use of English course.

The Sample for this research was two hundred and thirty-four (234) students consisting of males and females. They were selected from two Polytechnics in Ondo state, using a stratified random sampling technique. The two schools are The Federal Polytechnic, Ado-Ekiti. Ondo State Polytechnic, Owo. While one is a State-owned Polytechnic, the other is a Federal Polytechnic. The investigator purposefully selected final year (ND II) students in both institutions.

The parameter for selecting ND II and not ND I, HND I, or HND II was based on the following reasons; The cumulative scores of the ND II students in the Use of English could be obtained, but that of ND I will not be complete. The previous performance in the English Language of the ND II students still has a direct influence on their attitude and achievement. But that of the HND I or II could not be used because of their higher entry qualification. Also, their attitude (i.e. of HND I and II students) to the use of English courses could have been influenced by intervening variables such as experience, maturity, environment, etc.

Therefore, only the ND II students were participants in the study. These students were randomly selected from the two schools.

The main instrument for this empirical study was a questionnaire. The Questionnaire was designed for students in the Polytechnics. These were final year students of the (ordinary) National Diploma i.e., ND II.

The questionnaire was divided into two main sections. Section 'A' was designed to collect personal data on the Sex, Age, Marital status, Name of Institution, Faculty, Department, Year of Study (i.e., level), Residential Status, and Matriculation (or registration) number of each respondent.

Section 'B' contains twenty (20) items on attitudes to the Use of English programs. These are broken into four sub-divisions namely: Attitude to the English Language, Attitude to the Use of English Course; relevancy of the course, adequacy of the course, and the instructional materials needed for the course. Each of the sub-divisions contains five statements (items). There are twenty statements in all, ten items are framed positively and ten items are negatively framed. The items are set on a five (5) points Likert Scale of strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

The other instruments made use of include:

- (i) the graded scores of the student's performances in the English Language (entry qualification) in the various Certificate Examinations such as WASCE, SSCE, GCE, R.S.A., e.t.c. These were collected from the school authorities.
- (ii) The raw scores from the Use of English Communication in English Course Examinations and Pre-N.D Examination on the English Language.

These instruments were considered reliable because they were standardized examinations. The course contents of the examinations leading to the various certificates (entry qualifications) were assessed as follows:

- (i) G.C.E. O/L: Aspects tested include: (1) Lexis and Structures, (2) Registers, (3) Grammar, (4) Vocabulary development, (5) Letter writing and continuous writing, (6) Comprehension, (7) Summary, and (8) Oral English
- (ii) S.S.C.E.: The course content is the same as above.
- (iii) W.A.S.C.E: The course content is as above, only that the aspect of Oral English is left out. Oral English is a new aspect incorporated into both G.C.E. and S.S.C.E.
- (iv) Grade II: The aspects include: (1) Lexis and Structures, (2) Grammar, (3) Rapid reading, (4) Continuous Writing, (5) Comprehension and Summary, and (6) Letter Writing.
- (v) Pre-N.D:- The aspects are (1) Lexis and Structures, (2) Grammar, (3) Register, (4) Essay Writing, (5) Comprehension, (6) Summary, and (7) Literature.
- (vi) Use of English: Aspects tested cover: (1) Language development, (2) Summary, (3) Grammar, (4) Essay Writing, (5) Literature, (6) Communication Skills, (7) Comprehension, (8) Oral English, (9) Letter Writing, and (10) Technical Report Writing.

- (vii) R.S.A.: Aspects include: (1) Lexis and Structures, (2) Registers, (3) Grammar (4) Vocabulary development, (5) Essay Writing, (6) Letter Writing, (7) Comprehension, and (8) Summary.
- (viii) F.C.: Aspects tested are (1) Lexis and Structures, (2) Registers, (3) Grammar, (4) Letter Writing and Continuous Writing, (5) Comprehension, and (6) Summary.

The grades from these examinations were taken as the entry qualification. The examination is standardized and as such, their scores are reliable and comparable. For validation of the instrument, the investigator employed the assistance of experts from the Use of English course to examine the items of the questionnaire for content and face validity. Some items were corrected by the specialists to enhance meaningful and correct responses from the students. The supervisor also scrutinized the questions as suggested by the supervisor and other experienced lecturers. The other instruments were considered Valid because they were standardized and graded results of the school and the public examining bodies.

For reliability of the instrument, implies the consistency, accuracy, stability, and trustworthiness of an instrument. According to [Borg and Gall \(1979\)](#), it is a measure of consistency, the degree to which an instrument can be expected to provide similar results for the same subjects under different conditions. To enhance this, we adopted a test-retest method. The instrument was pilot tested on thirty Polytechnic students from the target population. After two weeks, the same group of students was requested to react to the questionnaire. The test-retest coefficient of reliability was calculated, using Pearson Product moment correlation. The correlation coefficient was 0.81. This implies that there is a positive correlation between the pretest and post-test

The other instruments were considered reliable because they were standardized examinations Conducted by the schools, other professional, and public examining bodies. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential analysis. Mean and standard deviation was used to analyze the research question while hypotheses were tested with Pearson product-moment correlation with the aid of statistical package for social science (SPSS) version 23.0 at a 0.05 level of significance.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on research questions 1-4 research hypotheses one-four were developed. The results related to hypotheses 1-four were formulated for the study in chapter one as shown in the subsequent table. All hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance

3.1. **H₀₁: There is no Significant Relationship Between Entry Qualification of the Polytechnic Students and Their Attitude to the Use of English and Communication Course**

Table 1 revealed the descriptive analysis of Entry qualification and Attitude. The largest mean of 2.04 represents Entry qualification and 2.0 represents Attitude. The bivariate correlation between variables is presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2 shows that there was a statistically moderate positive relationship between Entry qualification and Attitude ($r = 0.22$; $p < 0.05$) at a 0.05 level of significance and for 232 degrees of freedom. Thus, there is no significant relationship between entry qualification of the Polytechnic students and their attitude to the Use of English and Communication Course was not established hence, there was a significant relationship between There is no significant

relationship between entry qualification of the Polytechnic students and their attitude to the Use of English and Communication Course.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of lecturers' entry qualification and attitude.

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Entry qualification	2.04	0.26	234
Attitude	2.0	0.14	234

Table 2. Bivariate correlation between entry qualification and attitude.

Variable	N	X	SD	Df	Calculated r-value	P	Decision
Entry qualification	234	2.04	0.26	232	0.22**	0.00	H ₀ Rejected
Attitude	234	2.0	0.16				

3.2. H₀₂: There is no Significant Relationship between Polytechnic Students' Entry Qualification and Their Achievement in the Use of English Course.

Table 3 reveals that there is a statistically significant, moderate, and positive relationship between Polytechnic students' entry qualification and their achievement in the Use of English Course ($r = 0.043$; $p < .05$). The null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship between Polytechnic students' entry qualification and their achievement in the Use of English Course, Nigeria was rejected.

Table 3. Entry qualification and achievement.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Cal.r- value	p-value	Decision
Entry Qualification	234	3.29	0.63	0.043**	0.000	Ho ₄ Rejected
Achievement	234	3.23	0.69			

3.3. H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between the attitude of Polytechnic students and their achievement in the use of the English Course.

As revealed in **Table 4**, there is a significant low but it is a positive relationship between Attitude and Achievement ($r = 0.06$; $p < .05$). To this effect, the null hypothesis which stated that there is no significant relationship between the attitude of Polytechnic students and their achievement in the use of English Courses was rejected.

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between the Polytechnic students' entry qualification and their attitude to the Use of English.

Table 5 reveals that the relationship between qualification and Attitude is low, but it is positive statistically at a 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis which stated that there was no significant relationship between qualification and internal attitude, in Nigeria was rejected.

Table 4. Relationship between the attitude of polytechnic students and their achievement in the use of English course.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Cal.r- value	p- value	Decision
Attitude	234	3.08	0.86	0.06**	0.02	Ho ₃ Rejected
Achievement	234	1.02	0.19			

Table 5. Entry qualification and attitude.

Variables	N	\bar{X}	SD	Cal.r- value	p- value	Decision
Qualification	234	3.08	0.86	0.67**	0.000	Ho ₄ Rejected
Attitude	234	1.02	0.19			

The results obtained from the chapter four table revealed that there is a significant relationship between the entry qualification of Polytechnic students in English and their achievement in the Use of English course. The calculated r-value was found to be -0.01 while the table value was 0.138 at the 0,05 alpha level. This is quite a low negative correlation which is significant. Hence, we reject the null hypothesis (HO).

Nevertheless, the low negative correlation is significant. To some extent, there is a kind of a negative influence of the students' entry qualification on their academic performance, It was observed in the raw scores that some students who performed well) in their entry qualification, surprisingly performed baily in their Use of English course. This could be one of the probable courses of the low correlation as obtained in the table.

Likewise, the fluctuational tendency of some of the public examinations like the school Certificate Examination whose grading of scores is subject to the plotted graph of the general performance of the students each year. Thus, students whose scores should have been rated low in a particular year could be lucky to be rated high with such a low score when the general performance of students in that year was poor.

As aforementioned, the low negative correlation, though seemingly insignificant is to some extent a reflection of the influence of the entry qualification on the students' academic achievement. The relationship would have been more positively pronounced if not because of the peculiar condition earlier explained. The positive significant correlation between entry qualification and achievements of students has been attested to by some researchers. Some researchers investigated the relationship between 'A' level and degree results. He discovered a strong positive relationship in sciences, Education, Engineering, Languages, and medicine. Conversely.

Some reports have revealed a low correlation between entry qualification and achievement as recorded in this present research. Some researchers investigated the academic achievement of Nigerian undergraduates in higher institutions of learning in the United States in 1966 and 1967. Their previous performance (experience) was measured by their grades in the school certificate Examination to predict their cumulative grade point average. He discovered in his research that both grades in the school certificate and scores in the English Language were not significantly associated with their academic achievement. His finding is quite related to the finding of the present research.

Also, [Abdullahi \(1983\)](#) researched what correlation that existed between Joint Matriculation Examination (JME) results and first-year university examination results. He discovered that while JME Scores in physics, chemistry, and Economics significantly correlated with their university scores in the same subjects, the JME scores in Biology and Geography showed no significant correlation with university scores. Thus, this peculiar insignificant correlation between the JME entry scores and their university achievement scores in Biology and Geography is similar to the findings of this present research.

[Momoh-Olley \(1986\)](#) further confirmed that academic performance in the college depends not on students' entry qualifications, but rather that the experiences in the school influence the students learning. This also corroborates the findings of [Tiffens \(1969\)](#) that a school certificate with credit in English does not necessarily imply that such a student is linguistically competent. This might be the reason why some students in this research who entered with a good credit pass in English performed badly in the Use of English course.

No significant relationship exists between the students' attitude and their academic achievement in the Use of English course. Chapter four revealed that there is no significant relationship between Polytechnic Students' attitude and their achievement in the Use of English course, The calculated r-value yielded 0.032, while the table value yielded 0.138 at 0,05 alpha level. Though there is a low positive correlation but not strong enough to be regarded as being significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀) is accepted.

The results obtained also proved that Polytechnic students generally have a very positive attitude to the use of English courses. These findings were said to be contrary to the views and findings of some people while they confirmed that of others. In the same class, one would have expected a highly positive attitude to correlate with high academic achievement. But the finding of this research disproves this.

Achievement sometimes might be more determined by intelligent or cognitive ability rather than attitude. [Baumel and Berger \(1965\)](#) asserted that pupils' attitude toward technical science is related to intelligence. And that it does necessarily follow that student with negative attitudes will make low grades and vice-versa. Their findings are in agreement with this present one.

There is no significant relationship between the students' entry qualification in English and their attitude to the Use of English courses. Results showed that the calculated r-value was 0.08 and the table value was 0.138 at 0.05 alpha level. This result, therefore, suggests that there is no significant relationship between students' entry qualification and their attitude to the Use of English courses. This implies that students with high entry qualifications in English may have a low positive or even negative attitude and vice-versa. Their research identified some Polytechnic students with high entry qualifications in English but who are nonchalant or negatively disposed towards the Use of English course.

4. CONCLUSION

The study concluded that there is no significant relationship between the entry qualification of Polytechnic students in English and their achievement in the Use of English course and there is no significant relationship between students' entry qualification and their attitude to the Use of English course. The study recommended that the course contents and the mode of teaching are structured to make the course more interesting, relevant to their specialized needs, and viable or practically-oriented rather than being mainly theoretical.

5. AUTHORS' NOTE

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. Authors confirmed that the paper was free of plagiarism.

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