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Using Mathematics Journals to Enrich the Methods Course Experiences of Prospective Mathematics Teachers

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Abstract
This paper illustrates ways to employ Mathematics Teacher Journals to improve the quality of methods course experiences for prospective mathematics teachers. Based upon research conducted in an undergraduate teacher preparation program, this study describes how the author used Mathematics Teacher Journals to mentor prospective teachers in new ways. The study describes the author’s experiences through this educational activity, and how he used it to highlight strategies for change in the methods course. The main topics of methods of the mathematics teaching course were: Problem solving and posing, Teaching fractal geometry. Using dynamic geometry software (Cabri 3D, Geometric Sketchpad) in teaching, Using Graphing Calculator (Casio cf9850+) in teaching functions, and teaching mathematical proof. Selected articles which focused on these topics were chosen from Mathematics Teacher Journal. Student-teachers were asked to develop new ideas based on the articles and show how they could be applied to their teaching practices. By providing a detailed account of the feedback process that led to this result, this paper illustrates how the trainers of mathematics student-teachers can use Mathematics Teacher Journal activities to enrich the quality of their methods courses.
Introduction

Most teacher education programs in mathematics teacher preparation institutes include a combination of mathematical content courses, or content knowledge, and a course centered on pedagogy, also commonly referred to as math methods, whose major goal is to understand how students learn various mathematical concepts and skills and how to teach them particular mathematical ideas. A perusal of the literature (Strawheaker 2005, Burton 2008, and Clarke 2009) suggests that there are common characteristics for each individual entity: mathematics content courses, mathematics methods instruction, and also a field experience, whose timing and methods vary greatly from program to program. Despite the separation of three such experiences in traditional teacher training, pedagogical content knowledge links with subject-matter knowledge to guide the sequence of concept presentation and with general pedagogical knowledge to draw on global techniques of teaching (Marks, 1990).

Student teachers face a clear challenge. “Aspiring elementary teachers must begin to acquire a deep conceptual knowledge of the mathematics that they will one day need to teach, moving well beyond mere procedural understanding” (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2008). In addition, they must be prepared to address the different learning styles and the different developmental levels of a diverse student population. Teacher development programs should ensure that mathematics teachers are fluent in the language of mathematics and have broad and deep knowledge of mathematical content, processes, and contexts.

(Martin, 2007: 119): Indeed, all teachers can improve their teaching of mathematics through self-learning experiences, searching for new trends in mathematics teaching, and involvement in professional development programs.

These elements affect the choices a student teacher makes about what to teach, how to teach it, how to organize the classroom, what techniques to use, how to individualize instruction, and what modifications will be made. All of these decisions are guided by a teacher’s pedagogical content knowledge in concert with subject-matter understanding, in addition to their perception of pedagogical practices, student difficulties, and the expected roles of the teacher, the student and the subject matter.

This study focuses on the use of reading research articles to engender changes both the subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge of the prospective teacher, in situations involving secondary mathematics content.

Objectives:

The objectives of this study were to:

1. Develop a framework for the uses of Mathematics Education Journal articles to enrich a course in Methods of Teaching Mathematics for prospective secondary mathematics teachers.

2. Investigate the enrichment of the uses of Mathematics Teacher Journal to improve mathematics learning literature for prospective mathematics teachers.

Theoretical background

Mathematics Teacher Education Preparation:

Teacher candidates and experienced teachers alike tend to see this course as ‘theoretical’, by which they generally mean ‘vague and impractical’ (Darch, Carnine & Gersten 1988, p. 35). Many mathematics teacher education programs still persist in maintaining the conservative methods developed in the nineteenth century and imposing them on the twenty-first
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century novice teacher, but teacher education program need to progress and find new solutions for how to cultivate teacher competency. This idea has been posited by, for instance, Brown and Borko (1992), who stress that improvements are needed in teacher education.

As long ago as the early 1960’s, Polya advocated radical changes in preparing teachers for mathematics education, but his ideas are only now being reflected in efforts for reform (Kilpatrick 1987). The desire for reform is embedded in the efforts of the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), which has developed guides for the content and pedagogy of teachers through the Curriculum and Evaluation Standards for School Mathematics (NCTM 1989), the Professional Standards for Teaching Mathematics (NCTM 1990) and Principles and Standards for School Mathematics (NCTM 1999). Below are five key principles concerning the mathematical preparation of teachers of all grade levels:

1. Mathematics courses for future teachers should develop “deep understanding” of mathematics, particularly of the mathematics taught in schools at their chosen grade level.
2. Tools for teaching and learning, such as calculators, computers, and physical objects, including manipulative (check this term) commonly found in schools, should be available for problem-solving in mathematics courses taken by prospective teachers.
3. Mathematics courses for future teachers should provide opportunities for students to learn mathematics using a variety of instructional methods, including many we would like them to use in their teaching.
4. Faculty involved in the preparation of teachers of mathematics should engage in study and discussion of how people learn mathematics.
5. Greater communication and cooperation is necessary among all stakeholders in mathematics education (CBMS, 2001).

Instruction in college mathematics classes should involve more than lectures. Instructors should include various techniques for engaging students actively in solving problems. This could include, whenever appropriate, having students solve problems or discuss strategies with a partner or small group, and engaging the whole class in discussion. Instructors and students should be encouraged to solve problems in more than one way, to explain their reasoning, and to describe how the mathematics they are doing today is related to mathematics done earlier. Deep understanding of school mathematics should be a goal of all mathematics courses taken by future teachers, whether they are courses satisfying general requirements for graduation or specialized courses for teachers.

University Methods of Teaching Course Design:

Teachers of mathematics at secondary school level are facing increasing demands in the classroom as secondary school mathematics has become much more challenging. Today’s mathematics curricula require students to demonstrate understanding and competence far beyond bare mathematics skills. Secondary school teachers of mathematics must have greater content knowledge (Ball, 1990).

Teacher education programs must therefore provide experiences that will prepare their graduates for these increased demands. Teacher education programs must make pedagogical content knowledge a priority (Brown & Borko, 1992).

Unfortunately, there is often a gap between the mathematics being presented to pre-service teachers from the mathematics departments and that from the mathematics education department. The mathematics faculty member may be unaware of how the content courses fit into the overall teacher preparation program and, similarly, the education faculty may not have a complete understanding about what mathematical content their teachers know before entering their program.
In our course, the math journal Mathematics Teacher is used to enhance the teaching of specific topics in Methods of Teaching Mathematics II course. The teacher and student together choose an article relevant to a specific topic, with each pair of students (??) working on a different article. The student is given the following tasks:

- to translate the article into Arabic, their language of instruction
- to summarize the main idea of the article
- to explain how they as the teacher could effectively use the information in the article in the classroom
- to explain what modifications to the ideas need to be made so that it can be successfully implemented in the classroom, in the light of the reformed mathematics focus on problem-solving, conceptual understanding, mathematical proof, and mathematical thinking
- to explain how can these ideas can be practically implemented in classroom teaching.

The use of Mathematics Teacher Journal in this way provides opportunities for students to develop mathematical problems, explore student responses, and connect these with the content they have learned. Journals are a means for pre-service teachers to develop strategies for teaching mathematics. They allow pre-service teachers to explore mathematical concepts and thinking both receptively and proactively, covering most of the principles in the Mathematics Teaching Methods course.

**Methods of Teaching Mathematics course:**

The aims of this preparatory course for secondary mathematics teachers are five-fold, as follows:

- to take an in-depth look at the fundamental ideas and applications of secondary school mathematics;
- to provide methods for teaching secondary school mathematics;
- to provide techniques for assessing the learning of mathematics;
- to present issues related to current reform in secondary school mathematics;
- to become familiar with professional journals.

One key principle underlying this course is that content and teaching methods for secondary school - or any other - mathematics – must be learned together, as integration provides a deeper, more meaningful understanding of both teaching and of mathematics. As a result, we do a certain amount of direct maths teaching so that students can see the context for learning how to teach each topic or concept.

Another important factor in understanding and teaching mathematics is the ability to provide meaningful examples and illustrations of mathematical concepts, and as a trainer I always ensure that I am able to explain concepts with examples from everyday and local life.

The pre-service teachers in the mathematics methods course spend two hours of the course time each week in theoretical lectures, and another two hours working in microteaching situations in the area of teaching secondary mathematics. During microteaching times, students are involved in observing how experienced math teachers approach problem-solving and how they address their mathematical thinking.

The course consists of three main components; teaching methods with the mathematics topics, which addresses the core content (number, geometry & measurement, probability & statistics, algebraic ideas, mathematical concepts, mathematical skills, mathematical relationships, problem solving, communication, connections, representation); major teaching methods (use of problem solving, cooperative group work, use of technology, use of physical models), and forms of assessment (tests and quizzes, performance tasks, portfolios, journals). We focus on how to
incorporate the core concepts into the course content and how to enrich traditional instruction with the teaching and Mathematics Teacher articles.

The main topics of the course on Methods of Teaching Mathematics are: Problem solving and posing, Teaching Fractal Geometry, Using dynamic geometry software (Cabri 3D, Geometric Sketchpad) in teaching, Using Graphing Calculator (Casio cf9850+) in teaching Functions, and teaching mathematical proof.

The articles from Mathematics Teacher Journal were selected based on the following principles:

• The article is related to a topic in the course.
• The article contains practical ideas which can be used in our math curriculum.
• The article contains creative and attractive ideas which will encourage our students to think in the same ways.

Methodology

Participants

A total of 34 mathematics student teachers participated in the study; they enrolled on "Methods of Teaching Mathematics II" course during fall semester 2010. All were asked to do the following: work in pairs with each pair choosing an article from "Mathematics Teacher" Journal, and then prepare a report about the content of that article. The assignment tasks/questions were as follows:

• Translate the main idea into Arabic
• How would you implement this idea in our mathematics curriculum?
• How would you develop this idea to make your mathematics teaching more effective?

The students all gave presentations of their reports during the course, with class discussion and links to other readings following each session. All the articles were collected and the presentations and reports analyzed on three main points: how well the idea was presented; how well the idea could be implemented into our local mathematics curriculum; and the creative development of the idea.

Teaching materials

The resources needed for the course were available to all students: mathematical manipulative, multiple types of technology, curricula materials used by schools, books, journals, and articles that discuss research in mathematics education and applications of mathematical content. Mathematics Teacher Journal is available for all students in the main SQU library; they also all have access to the journal’s website. Students worked in pairs to choose suitable articles, under the supervision of the author. They were also asked to prepare all the materials necessary to present the idea in class. Seventeen articles were developed and presented (Appendix II).

Instrument

The author designed a questionnaire to find out how effective the use of Mathematics Education Journal articles were in developing student-teachers ideas of Teaching Mathematics for prospective secondary mathematics course. A list of 18 statements were written so that participants could respond to each statement using a Likert-type five-part scale of Strongly agree (4), Agree (3), disagree (2), Strongly disagree (1), or uncertain (0).
Data collection

The questionnaire was administered to the participants at the end of teaching "Methods of Teaching Mathematics II" course in which they had analyzed and presented their work on the "Mathematics Teacher Journal" articles.

The survey results were analyzed and descriptive and frequency statistics were conducted to determine the degree of benefit participants found in using the articles in this way.

Results and Discussion

The results of the questionnaire can be seen in table (1). These showed that students would like to see a similar specialist journal in Arabic, item 1(3.97, 0.171), and felt that the articles did develop their mathematical thinking 2 (3.56, 0.561). Items 3(3.56, .561), 4 (3.53, .563 ), 5(3.50, .615), 6 (3.44, .660), and 7 (3.38, .604) showed that students felt that the articles contained valuable ideas, and enriched their cognitive level of mathematics; they also showed confidence in implementing the ideas in the articles in their teaching style. Items 16 (2.35, 1.228), 17 (2.15, .925), and 18 (1.62, 1.129) showed that students disagreed that the articles’ ideas are hard to use because of differences in the learning environment; this was not seen as a problem. The results also showed that students were very excited by the new ideas and the way they were presented in the articles, and that they were using some of these ideas in their teaching practice.

Table (1): Mean and Std. Deviations of Questionnaire
Mathematics Teacher articles in developing student-teachers ideas about mathematics teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item#</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I wish to find a similar specialist journal in Arabic language.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.97</td>
<td>.171</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Articles developed my mathematical thinking.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Articles ideas were excellent</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>.561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M.T. articles contain valuable ideas.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>It is easy for me to implement articles ideas in my teaching style.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>.615</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In the future, I'll try to present my work for my teaching colleagues.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.44</td>
<td>.660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>There was enrichment of the cognitive level of mathematics.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>I need a suitable learning environment to apply the ideas in the articles.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>.734</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>This work developed my confidence about being a mathematics teacher.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.24</td>
<td>.741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Developing the ideas from the article helped me in developing my mathematical thinking, developing mathematical thinking</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>I need a lot of time to read additional articles.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.18</td>
<td>.936</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>The content of the articles was new to me. Experience for me.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>.702</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I'm thinking of writing a similar article in the future.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>.965</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>The chosen articles were very close to the course topics.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.88</td>
<td>.844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>The articles were chosen according to subjective criteria.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>.806</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>The biggest difficulties I faced were the articles’ language.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>I did find it hard to make my presentation systematic with the article.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>.925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>It is hard for me to apply the articles’ ideas.</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1.62</td>
<td>1.129</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Valid N 34
This connection of mathematics teacher articles with the course lessons created an atmosphere of professional collaboration during the course and creates a model for professional collaboration in the future. The most important results were the content parts of the developed paper; the application of the ideas to our mathematics curriculum, and the way that developing the ideas made students much more effective at mathematics teaching. Students showed that the ideas in the articles were important enrichment activities in the Omani mathematics curriculum, and that they had developed and extended some of ideas in the articles so that they could implement them in other mathematical situations.

Appendix I

Questionnaire
Mathematics Teacher articles in developing student-teachers ideas about mathematics teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Acceptance degree</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>It is hard for me to apply the article ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The chosen articles were so closed to the course topics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>The articles were chosen according a subjective criteria's.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
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<td>I need much time to read additional articles.</td>
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The Kurdish Female Politicians in Turkey and Their Areas of Interest

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Abstract
This article focuses on the female deputies of the pro-Kurdish BDP (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, The Peace and Democracy Party). The activities of the Kurdish female deputies were studied through Hürriyet (Liberty), a Turkish national newspaper with one of the largest circulations. Within the period ranging from a month before the last national election of June 2011 to the end of October 2013, Gültan Kışanak, Aysel Tuğluk, Sebahat Tuncel and Emine Ayna are the female deputies of the BDP that appear in Hürriyet most often. These female politicians generally follow their party’s line, and they support both the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) and its jailed leader Abdullah Öcalan. They criticize the conservative-democratic AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, The Justice and Development Party) and its single-party government. They perceive “democratic autonomy” of Kurds as a “woman’s project”. The female deputies of the pro-Kurdish BDP embrace both their Kurdish and their female identity.

Key words - BDP; Turkey; Kurd; gender politics
Introduction
This article is on the political involvement of Kurdish women, with a particular focus on the activities of the deputies most prominent in the Turkish media. In the academic literature, works focusing on the political involvement of Kurdish women in Turkey are few. This article intends therefore to fill a gap in the literature with a particular focus on the female deputies of the pro-Kurdish BDP (Barış ve Demokrasi Partisi, The Peace and Democracy Party).

First-wave feminism hit Turkey in the early 20th century, and women fought for their civic and political rights. Second-wave feminism hit Turkey in the 1980s, and women fought against problems such as conjugal violence and their misrepresentation in the media. Third-wave feminism took place in the 1990s (Diner & Toktas, 2010). Ramifications inside the feminist movement emerged. Kurdish nationalist women and Islamist women appeared in the public sphere and criticized “mainstream feminists for being ethno-centric and exclusionary of other identities” (Diner & Toktas, 2010). Kurdish women had already worked in the leftist movements of the 1970s as “genderless militants” or “sisters”. However, from the 1980s onwards, they had a different political stand. They first embraced their Kurdish ethnic identity and then their Kurdish female identity. These women seem to suffer from both ethnic and gender limitations and confront a “dual oppression” (Çaha, 2011).

Before addressing the Kurdish women’s movement and the current female Kurdish deputies in more detail, it would be appropriate to discuss what “the Kurdish issue” means in the Turkish political framework.

The Kurdish Issue in Turkey
When the Republic was founded, Turkey adopted a “cultural unity policy” and perceived ethnic elements as “threats to territorial integrity and political unity” (Efegil, 2011). “The Kemalist modernization project (…) aimed to create an ethnically, linguistically and culturally homogeneous nation and nation-state out of the remnants of the Ottoman Empire, which was a multi-ethnic, multi-linguistic and multi-cultural entity” (Yüksel, 2006). This approach eventually created a problem. There were eighteen Kurdish rebellions between 1924 and 1938. In 1984, the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) was established and started its “terrorist” attacks (Çelik, 2010). This armed conflict had a destructive effect on Turkey’s economy and caused more than 40,000 deaths in the 30-year fight (Çağlayan, 2013).

At the beginning of the 1990s, some state officials accepted “the Kurdish reality”, and Turkey, an official candidate for joining the European Union ever since the Helsinki Summit (1999), started to adopt many reforms in order to fulfill the Kurdish demands. Also, the conservative democratic AKP (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, The Justice and Development Party), that had formed a single party government ever since 2002, has worked on the solution-seeking process particularly since 2009-2010. The AKP government first “announced a Kurdish opening”, then “redubbed the initiative as a ‘Democratic Opening’” (Casier, Jongerden & Walker, 2013). Some people welcomed this effort for peace wholeheartedly, whereas others accused the AKP of working against the unity of the country.

As for the pro-Kurdish political parties, they appeared in the political arena in the 1990s. However, the Constitutional Court abolished seven pro-Kurdish parties between 1993 and 2009. It considered that those parties were involved in terrorist activities and worked against the unity of the country (Milliyet, December 11, 2009). The BDP is the pro-Kurdish party in Turkey since 2008. Its members constituted 6,64 percent of the Parliament according to the 2011 national election data (Sabah, June 13, 2011). The BDP claims to work for “democratic rights” in general and underlines Turkey’s need for a new political structure: one that would embrace both cultural and social
diversity. Within the context of democratization, the party fights against the patriarchal mentality and also supports women’s political participation (BDP, 2008).

The armed conflict, its emergence and its results, as well as aspects related to the identity politics and peace-seeking solutions make the Kurdish issue an interesting topic of research for academicians. The following section summarizes academic studies on the Kurdish women’s movement.

**Academic Literature on the Kurdish Women’s Movement**

Most of the academic literature focuses on the Kurdish issue in general, problems of the armed conflict and peaceful co-existence possibilities (Yeğen, 2010; Gunter, 2014; Uslu, 2007; Cengiz & Hoffmann, 2013). There are also several works focusing only on women. To give a few examples, Nerina Weiss worked on the life stories of four Kurdish women, their experience in the pro-Kurdish party, the PKK, and at home. Weiss emphasized the gender strategies adopted by those women living in Eastern Turkey (Weiss, 2010). Ömer Çaha worked on the discourse analysis of journals published by Kurdish feminists. Çaha argued that Kurdish women were excluded “from a general and essentialist understanding of women” (Çaha, 2011). Çağla Diner and Şule Toktaş compared the Kemalist, Islamist and Kurdish women’s movements. They argued that “mainstream Turkish feminism has been influenced and has evolved with the rise of Kurdish nationalism and Islamic revivalism” (Diner & Toktas, 2010). Ceyda Kuloğlu-Karslı worked mainly on the “conflict-induced internal displacement in Turkey” and its impact on Kurdish women. She argued that Kurdish women learned Turkish, learned how to read and write dealing with their problems (Kuloğlu-Karslı, 2013).

Among the researchers who wrote on the aspects related to politics and Kurdish women are Şebnem Cansun, Martin Van Bruinessen and Handan Çağlayan. Şebnem Cansun worked on the pro-Kurdish BDP’s “approach to the gender question” and argued that the BDP placed women’s problems at the top of its priorities, right after the Kurdish issue (Cansun, 2013). Martin Van Bruinessen worked on Kurdish female political leaders. He started with Adela Khanum who lived in the era of the Ottoman Empire, and he then highlighted several Kurdish women including a present-day politician Leyla Zana. Van Bruinessen argued that even though the Kurdish society is highly male-dominated, women in Kurdish society are able to take high ranking political and military positions (Van Bruinessen, 2001).

Handan Çağlayan has several publications on the subject. She defended a political science Ph.D. thesis on “the Kurdish identity from a feminist perspective” in 2006 (Çağlayan, 2012). According to Çağlayan, Kurdish women could not sufficiently “benefit from the fruits of modernization”. Kurdish women did not have access to education and employment opportunities, because of the official language policies and their “linguistic capital” (Çağlayan, 2008). As for political visibility, it was only in the 1990s that Kurdish women appeared in street marches and that “a large number of women went to the mountains to join armed groups” (Çağlayan, 2008).

According to Çağlayan, the Kurdish female politician Leyla Zana who - as an elected deputy - attempted to speak Kurdish in the national Parliament and was thus sent to prison, has a symbolic place for Kurds (Çağlayan, 2008). Çağlayan also discusses the approach of the former pro-Kurdish parties (HEP, DEP, HADEP, DEHAP) in general and argues that women’s emancipation got a place among the prioritized issues of democratization in the 1990s with the DEHAP (Demokratik Halk Partisi, Democratic People’s Party) (Çağlayan, 2007). Çağlayan also draws attention to the practice of a 40 percent gender quota and the qualifications of the female deputies in the DTP (Demokratik Toplum Partisi, Democratic Society Party) and the BDP (Çağlayan, 2013). According to Çağlayan, Kurdish female deputies are elected, not because of the support they receive from the party chair, but because of their own former party experience and the approval of the Women’s Assembly within the
party. Yet, female deputies are not necessarily college graduates or members of the socio-economically upper class. They are rather like ordinary women in the society. Furthermore, the practice of the co-chair system (consisting of a man and a woman) in the pro-Kurdish party lets women have as much say as men in the party’s group meetings at the Parliament (Çağlayan, 2013).

Previous research has focused on general issues regarding the political involvement of Kurdish women. The present study instead examines the interest areas of deputies through a research based on a news search.

The Present Study

This article intends to fill in the gap in the literature with a particular focus on the declarations made by the Kurdish female deputies. The declarations of the deputies are found in Hürriyet (Liberty), a daily national newspaper in Turkey with one the largest circulations. Hürriyet was founded in 1948 and has a daily circulation of approximately 390,000. It is known as the amiral gemi (flagship), one of the leading national newspapers of the Turkish media. It has a liberal approach, and its columnists come from a large spectrum of political backgrounds.

Since the archives of Hürriyet are open only to its own workers and not to the public, the daily national newspapers were accessed at Atatürk Halk Kütüphanesi (Atatürk Public Library) in the Taksim district of Istanbul. Then, Excel charts were produced according to the names of the deputies that appear most frequently and the topics those deputies discussed most often. As for the dates of the research, news ranging from the beginning of May 2011 to the end of October 2013 has been taken into consideration. The last national election in Turkey took place in June 2011. Starting this research one month ahead of time, the intention was to see the context in which the national election was developing. The research had to end at the end of October 2013, because the bookbinding of the newspapers takes several months, and as of March 2014, the last volume of Hürriyet found at the Taksim Library was from October 2013.

The Female Deputies Of The Bdp Appearing In Hürriyet And Their Areas Of Interest

Eleven out of the thirty-six deputies of the BDP are women (Zaman, June 13, 2011). The female deputies of the BDP that appear in Hürriyet most frequently are Gültan Kişanak, Aysel Tuğluk, Sebahat Tuncel and Emine Ayna. Gültan Kişanak (born in 1961) is a journalist and a deputy from Diyarbakır. She is the current co-chair of the party. Aysel Tuğluk (born in 1965) is a lawyer and a deputy from Van. She was the first co-chair of the DTP (Çağlayan, 2013). Sebahat Tuncel (born in 1975) is a graduate of a map-and-land-surveying vocational college. Emine Ayna (born in 1968) is a high school graduate and a former co-chair of the party. All of the women are single except Gültan Kişanak, who is married with a child.

All four women named above have a prison experience. Gültan Kişanak was in prison at the age of 19. She later declared that it was because of the “painful experience she endured in prison that [she] decided to become a journalist and to enter politics”. She claimed that she was physically, verbally, and psychologically abused in prison and that “the Diyarbakır prison was a breaking point in the Kurdish issue (...) that led Kurds to distance themselves from the state” (Bozkurt, December 19, 2012). Aysel Tuğluk had a prison experience for “making propaganda for a separatist terrorist organization” (Çelik, March 25, 2011). Sebahat Tuncel is an exception: she was put in prison for nine months for “alleged membership in the Kurdish guerrilla movement”. Then, she got released, because she was elected deputy, and therefore benefited from an automatic immunity from prosecution according to law (Hacaloglu, August 3, 2007). Tuncel is also publicly known for having “slapped a police chief during a demonstration” in the province of Şırnak in 2011 (Hürriyet, March 22, 2011). Emine Ayna is amongst the members of the “radical wing” within the party (Bozkurt, March 5, 2009). She was sentenced to jail for having made “propaganda for an illegal organization” (English Bianet, June 17, 2011).
Within the research period, Gültan Kişanak, the present co-chair of the party, is the person who appears most often in the daily. This is not surprising, since she is the person at the highest level of the party hierarchy and gives her speeches on behalf of the party.

Table 1: Declarations Of The Bdp’s Female Deputies In Hürriyet Between May 1, 2011 – October 31, 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the politician</th>
<th>Number of news items</th>
<th>Support of Abdullah Öcalan</th>
<th>Support of the PKK</th>
<th>Criticism of the AKP government/Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan</th>
<th>Gender issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gültan Kişanak</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aysel Tuğluk</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sebahat Tuncel</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emine Ayna</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The chart above shows a striking point: Kurdish female politicians embrace the PKK and its jailed co-founder and leader Abdullah Öcalan. For instance, according to Gültan Kişanak, Kurdish people name Öcalan halk önderi (people’s leader) and want him to be free (Hürriyet, October 3, 2012). Kişanak believes that Öcalan is not an ordinary person. Therefore, the governmental approach towards Öcalan is also “the approach towards peace, negotiation and a democratic future” (Hürriyet, October 18, 2012). Kişanak thinks that Kurdish people miss Öcalan and that if they insist “on their determined and combative stand this craving will end soon” (Öztürk, February 11, 2013). She declares that Öcalan is accepted as an interlocutor and that the dialogue process has started (Bozarslan & Sunar, March 4, 2013). Öcalan will be the road-map provider for “an honorable solution” (Dalmaz & Kara, March 19, 2013). Also, Kişanak demands “legal guarantee” for Öcalan, because the current laws perceive Öcalan as “the leader of an illegal organization” and if a public prosecutor proceeds against Öcalan, this will create a problem (Aslan, March 26, 2013).

Within this context, the female deputies of the BDP embrace the PKK both figuratively and literally. In August 2012, PKK militants stopped BDP deputies along a highway in the Şemdinli district of the south-eastern province of Hakkari. This encounter consisted of a chat and hugs. According to Aysel Tuğluk, “this encounter was not illegal, and it was an extremely natural and real situation”. Tuğluk mentioned their happiness with that encounter, how much “it was important for them to listen to [the PKK militants], learning about the conditions under which they were putting up a fight” (Hürriyet, September 11, 2012). In 2011, Sebahat Tuncel gave a ride to the airport to a person apprehended for being a PKK member. Tuncel argued that she had just given a ride to a member of her party (Hürriyet, November 15, 2011). Furthermore, Tuncel got herself a prison sentence for being a member of the PKK (Usta & Armutçu, September 19, 2012).

The female deputies also embrace gender issues, but their gender approach goes hand in hand with the party’s general approach toward the PKK and the concept of “democratic autonomy”. For instance, according to Sebahat Tuncel, the female PKK militant Zilan, who died in 1996 as a suicide bomber, fought against the patriarchal system. There are thousands of women fighters / martyrs in the Kurdish emancipation history. Sebahat Tuncel thinks that women should love each other so that they can fight the patriarchal dominant class (Yavuz, July 2, 2011). Both Aysel Tuğluk and Gültan Kişanak perceived the assassination of three female PKK members in Paris not only as an attack to the peace process, but also as a particular attack against women and women’s liberation struggle (Konuralp & Balıkçı, January 18, 2013; Hürriyet, March 5, 2013). Emine Ayna invites all women in Turkey, and not only the Kurds, to construct “the democratic autonomy”, because “democratic
autonomy is a woman’s project” (Örtkärdeş, July 19, 2011). Gültan Kışanak declares that the BDP is preoccupied with women’s rights (Hürriyet, November 27, 2012).

The female deputies, and mostly the party co-chair Gültan Kışanak, criticize the AKP government for several issues. For instance, according to Kışanak, the AKP tries to cover up the Uludere issue, the killing of thirty-four Kurdish smugglers initially suspected to be PKK militants (Hürriyet, November 27, 2012). Kışanak accuses the AKP government of not doing what it should on the peace project (Hürriyet, September 29, 2013), Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan of not approaching the democratization issue seriously (Hürriyet, October 3, 2012), changing the country’s political agenda at his own will (Hürriyet, November 27, 2012) and using limitless governmental power over people (Hürriyet, June 26, 2013). Emine Ayna accuses Tayyip Erdoğan of “ignoring the rightful demands of the Kurdish people and insisting on war”. She argues that Erdoğan’s declarations result in attacks on the BDP buildings and lynching of the Kurds living in the metropolises (Örtkärdeş, July 19, 2011).

To sum up, the female deputies of the BDP embrace both their Kurdish and female identity. They do not hesitate to criticize the AKP government and Prime Minister Erdoğan.

Conclusion

This study shows that Gültan Kışanak, Aysel Tuğluk, Sebahat Tuncel and Emine Ayna are the female deputies of the BDP, the pro-Kurdish party, that appear in the media most frequently. Amongst those, the co-chair of the party Gültan Kışanak is, not surprisingly, the one who speaks the most on behalf of the party. These four female deputies have all prison experience because of their political stance. The female deputies of the BDP adopt the party’s general approach and support both the PKK and its jailed leader Abdullah Öcalan. Although some people might perceive the PKK militants as terrorists, the female deputies of the BDP embrace them both figuratively and literally. According to them, Kurds owe their current, relatively relaxed political position to the “guerrilla fighters”. In addition, they applaud the female PKK members for their particular courage in fighting the patriarchal dimension of their society. They criticize the AKP government, its chairman and the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan for several reasons, ranging from ignoring Kurdish demands to changing the country’s political agenda at his own will and using limitless governmental power. As for their gender approach, these women perceive “the democratic autonomy project” of Kurds as a “woman’s project”. This approach highlights the link between the Kurdish identity and female identity. Both Kurds and women suffer from oppression, and they argue that they need to change the existing system in order to reach their autonomy. The female Kurdish deputies are visible in the media, and they embrace both their Kurdish and female identity.
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(November 15, 2011). “Partilimi havaalanına bırakmanın nesi garip” (What is odd about giving a ride to my party member), Hürriyet, p. 23.

(September 11, 2012). “Sarılırken barışı kucakladım” (While hugging I embraced peace), Hürriyet, p. 25.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.


(September 29, 2013). “Paketten qundur çikacak” (A pumpkin will come out of the package), Hürriyet, p. 30.

Methods of Assessing Clinical Competence of Physiotherapy Undergraduates in Nigeria

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Abstract
Clinical examinations are being used to determine the clinical competence of candidates on medical and healthcare programmes all over the world. This study investigated the methods of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduates in Nigeria. Forty-seven (35 males, 12 females) physiotherapy educators recruited from all seven academic institutions where physiotherapy is taught in Nigeria, participated in this cross-sectional population-based survey. A self-developed validated questionnaire was used to assess the methods of clinical examinations used in physiotherapy undergraduate training in Nigeria. Questionnaire was administered through a purposive sampling method. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of mean, standard deviation and percentages. Participants were aged 40.9±8.6 years. Majority (89.4%) of the participants had postgraduate qualifications. Nineteen (40.4%) participants reported that they had received formal training on methods of clinical assessment prior to this study. Only 4 (8.5%) of the participants reported that the long case was the method of assessing clinical competence. The OSLER was reported by 6 (12.8%) of the participants. PACES was reported by 7 participants (14.9%) while 6 participants (12.8%) reported the use of OSCE as their assessment method. It was concluded that many physiotherapy educators had not received formal training in the assessment of clinical competence of their students and that there is no exclusive method of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduates in Nigeria.

KEY WORDS: Clinical competence, physiotherapy education, undergraduates programme, Nigeria University
Introduction

Practical clinical examinations are of key importance in the assessment of clinical competence (Ernstzen, 2009). They play a very important role in the certification of candidates before they are allowed to practise their chosen clinical professions and are being used to determine the clinical competence of candidates on medical and healthcare programmes all over the world (Sood, 2001). The essential elements of clinical competence include collection of patient data by an effective history taking and physical examination, identification of the patient’s problem, formulation of differential diagnoses, planning of investigations, management and demonstration of adequate communication skills.

The importance of valid and reliable assessment of student competence and performance is gaining increased recognition. According to Wass et al (2001), society and other stakeholders rightly demand that the final medical examination delivers doctors who are competent and fit to practice as interns. With the increasing focus on the performance of healthcare professionals and on public demand for assurance that they are competent, assessment also needs to have a summative function. Tests of clinical competence which allow a decision to be made about whether a healthcare professional is fit to practise or not are in demand (Wass et al, 2001).

Skill based assessments are designed to measure the knowledge, skills, and judgment required for competency in a given domain. Assessment of clinical skills has formed a key part of medical education for hundreds of years. However, the basic requirements for reliability and validity have not always been achieved in traditional “long case” and “short case” assessments. Skill based assessments have to contend with case specificity, which is the variance in performance that occurs over different cases or problems. In other words, case specificity means that performance with one patient related problem does not reliably predict performance with subsequent problems. These competencies are more difficult to measure, and the extent to which medical schools provide these skills to their graduates has seldom been studied (Dean et al, 2003).

The Long Case (LC), Short Cases (SC), Multiple Choice Questions (MCQ) and Oral Examinations (OE) constitute earlier methods of assessing clinical competence of medical students (Smee, 2003; Gardner et al, 2001; Wass et al, 2001). All of these methods especially the LC have been criticized for their lack of objectivity and paucity of psychometric research (Smee, 2003). The Objective Structured Long Examination Record (OSLER), Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs) and Practical Assessment of Clinical Examination Skills (PACES) are some of the methods introduced in past years (Wass et al, 2001; Newble 2004). The long case has been gradually replaced by the objective structured clinical examination (OSCE) as a summative assessment of clinical skills. OSCE has been used in evaluating clinical competence in health professions education around the world and thought to be more objective, more valid, and more reliable than most other assessment methods (Awaisu et al, 2010).

Evaluation of students’ clinical competence has been studied in several medical schools all over the world (Famuyiwa et al, 1991; Gleeson, 1997; Smee, 2003; Zeller, 2009). In many developed countries of the world, the LC and SC remain as features of both undergraduate and postgraduate assessment of clinical competence (Wass et al, 2001). In the United Kingdom medical schools, oral examinations, OSCE, MCQ, essays have been used in the assessment of clinical competence of medical students. The development of reliable measurements of student performance with predictive validity of subsequent competencies and a simultaneous educational role is a gold standard yet to be achieved (Meagher, 2009). In an effort to improve medical education and assessment of clinical skills, OSCEs have been introduced in both the United States and Canada which evaluate medical knowledge, clinical and communication skills at both graduate and postgraduate level (Wass et al, 2001).
Many studies have also reported many methods of assessment of clinical competence of undergraduate nursing, medical, pharmacy physiotherapy students (Famuyiwa et al, 1991; Gleeson, 1997; Smee, 2003; Zeller, 2009; Awaisu et al, 2010) and postgraduate medical students (Regehr et al, 1999; Townsend et al, 2001; Bearn et al, 2006; Ernstzen et al, 2009). Findings from these studies indicate that there is no single method that is widely acceptable. Clinical education forms a core component of the training of physiotherapy students and clinical competence is a key outcome of physiotherapy programmes worldwide (Ernstzen et al, 2009). Clinical examinations are valuable in determining the clinical competence of candidates on medical and healthcare programmes all over the world. Existing published literature provides evidence on the effective use of the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) as a valid and reliable assessment of students’ competence and performance for best practices. The OSCE has been used worldwide for assessment of clinical skills though the long case is a method of examination in some medical colleges in some developing countries of the world. According to Ernstzen et al (2009), most research on clinical education in physiotherapy focused more on models of teaching physiotherapy clinical skills and less on the methods of assessment of clinical competence.

The first university-based physiotherapy training in Nigeria started at the University of Ibadan in 1964. By 1977, two other Nigerian universities, the University of Lagos and the Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife have started physiotherapy courses. Currently, seven universities offer undergraduate physiotherapy training in Nigeria. There seems to be no investigation on the methods of assessment of clinical competence in the programmes. It is not certain if the programmes use the same method. It is also uncertain whether lecturers in these universities received any formal training on the method(s) they use in assessing the clinical competence of their students. There was therefore the need to survey the methods of clinical examinations being used in the assessment of clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduates in Nigeria and ascertain whether physiotherapy educators had received any formal training on the method(s) they use in assessing the clinical competence of their students.

Methods

This cross-sectional survey involved physiotherapy educators (lecturers) who have had the opportunity of participating in at least one clinical examination in the seven academic institutions where physiotherapy programme is run in Nigeria. The University of Ibadan/University College Hospital Research Ethics Committee approved the study. The rationale and procedure for the study was explained to the participants and their informed consent was sought and obtained. The seven academic institutions were: University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria; Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria; University of Lagos, Lagos, Nigeria; Nnamdi Azikwe University, Nnewi, Nigeria; University of Nigeria, Enugu, Nigeria; University of Maiduguri, Maiduguri, Nigeria; and Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria.

The participants completed a self-developed questionnaire designed to contain information on the methods of clinical examinations being used in physiotherapy undergraduate training in Nigeria. Prior to questionnaire development, a review of the literature was undertaken and general themes, key concepts and attributes on methods of assessing clinical competence were identified. All commonly used methods of assessment were reviewed and selected. These methods included long case examination, short case examination, OSLER, OSCEs, PACES. The key attributes in each of the selected methods were identified. Items on the developed questionnaire were devised based on the key concepts of the different methods of clinical examinations being used from literature. Questionnaire consists of both open and closed ended questions. It is a two-part, 29 item self-administered questionnaire. Section A (11 items) obtained information on socio-demographic variables of age, sex, academic qualifications, years of teaching experience, present post, mode of appointment, student population and clinical courses assessed while section B (18 items) contained...
information on the selected methods (long case examination, short case examination, OSLER, OSCE, PACES) of assessing clinical competence of students. The attributes that were considered for the methods are as outlined below.

All the items on section B were pooled to avoid responder’s bias. The developed questionnaire was assessed for content validity by 3 tutors of biomedical education and 2 physiotherapists who are knowledgeable in questionnaires’ development. The tutors and physiotherapists were faculty members from the Faculty of Clinical Sciences, College of Medicine, University of Ibadan. The developed questionnaire was pre-tested on 5 physiotherapy educators to assess for clarity and ease of understanding of the items.

Data Analysis: Descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation was used to summarize participants’ ages, years of experience. Percentages were used to summarise the gender and categorise responses into the different methods of clinical examinations.

**Results**

Out of the 65 copies of the questionnaire sent out, 47 were returned giving a return rate of 72.3%. Response rates of 100%, 85.7%, 75.0%, 72.7% were reported from University of Ibadan, Nnamdi Azikwe University, University of Nigeria and Bayero University respectively. University of Maiduguri and Obafemi Awolowo University reported response rates of 66.7% and 62.5% respectively while University of Lagos had the least (50%) response rate.

Participants (35 males, 12 females) were aged 40.9±8.6 years. Ten participants (21.3%) were from the University of Ibadan while 5 were from the Obafemi Awolowo University (table 2). Almost two thirds of the participants were lecturer I cadre and above (table 3). Thirty (63.8%) participants had taught physiotherapy for 2-10 years while only three (6.4%) had taught for over 21 years (figure 1). Majority (89.4%) of the participants had post graduate qualifications (table 2). Forty-four (93.6%) participants were full-time physiotherapy educators. The population of students reported in this study ranged from 103 to 338 (figure 2) with 24.3% being final year physiotherapy students (figure 3). The number of clinical courses being assessed by participants ranged from 5 to 20.

Nineteen (40.4%) participants had received formal training in the assessment of clinical competence of students prior to this study (figure 4). Majority (83.0%) of participants reported the use of both practical and oral examinations in the assessment of students’ clinical skills. Almost (97.9%) all participants reported that students go through different stations in the assessment with stations ranging from 3 to 20. Forty-four (93.6%) participants reported that students were assessed through clinical case presentations and 21.3% of participants required all students to present the same clinical cases. A large percentage (80.9%) of participants reported the use of both real and simulated patients in the assessment of their students’ clinical competence. Average duration of assessment of students’ clinical competence reported by participants ranged between 15 and 60 minutes. Almost all (91.5%) participants reported that students were assessed on all the clinical skills. Majority (85.1%) of participants reported that they observed students during history taking and physical examination. A minimum of 5 and maximum of 15 examiners was reported by the participants. Two-thirds of the participants reported that assessment was done through standardized clinical assessment form. Only 4 of the physiotherapy educators who participated in this study reported that the long case was the method used in assessing students’ clinical competence. The OSLER was reported by 6 of the participants. PACES was reported by 7 participants while 6 participants reported the use of OSCE as their assessment method.

None of the seven physiotherapy programs reported the use of a specific method of assessing clinical competence of their students. Practices within these programs varied. There was no single report of an exclusive method of assessing clinical competence of students within each institution. All of the programs consistently administered examinations of three or more stations, with a
maximum of 20 stations. The 6 participants who reported the use of OSCE in their assessment were from Obafemi Awolowo University (3 participants), University of Ibadan (2 participants) and University of Lagos (1 participant) (table 3). The participants who reported the use of long case examinations were from University of Ibadan (2 participants), University of Lagos (1 participant) and Bayero University (1 participant) (table 4).

The 6 participants who reported the use of OSLER in the assessment of their students clinical competence were from University of Ibadan (2 participants), Obafemi Awolowo University (2 participants) and University of Lagos (1 participant) (table 5). Paces was reported as the method of assessing clinical competence of students by 2 participants from each of University of Ibadan, University of Lagos and Obafemi Awolowo University and 1 participant from University of Maiduguri (table 6). No participant reported the use of any of the selected methods from the Nnamdi Azikwe University (Tables 3-6).

Discussion

The younger physiotherapy educators participated more than older ones in this study implying that younger educators are more than the older ones or more of the older ones did not participate in the study. For instance, there are three professors but only one responded. This trend appears not too good. The finding that 42 participants had postgraduate qualifications is in keeping with the high level of requirements for engagement in physiotherapy education in Nigeria. The high level of response rate of participants from the University of Ibadan could be explained by the fact that the researcher is from this University hence was able to ensure completion and return of the copies of the questionnaire.

It appears from the findings of this study that there is no single method of assessing undergraduate physiotherapy students in all the seven institutions where physiotherapy is taught in Nigeria. The varied methods of assessment reported in this study supports the notion of Al-Wardy, 2010 who reported that whatever the purpose, one assessment method will not assess all domains of competency. The reason for this is that each method has its advantages and disadvantages; therefore a variety of assessment methods is required so that the shortcomings of one can be overcome by the advantages of another. Many of the participants in this study reported the use of all the methods of assessment which could be attributable to the proportion of participants reported to have had formal training prior to this study. It is expected that physiotherapy educators from the same institution will report the same methods of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduates in Nigeria. The findings from this study showed that there were disparities in the methods used within the institutions. This probably indicates that the knowledge of the educators on these different methods is low. The differences in the report on the number of items assessed on each of the clinical skills assessed by participants further suggests that physiotherapy educators do not have the understanding of the components of each methods used in the assessment of clinical competence of their students. All these shortcomings indicate the need to train Nigerian physiotherapy educators on the methods of assessing clinical competence of students. Ahmed (2011) opined from his study that a large number of examiners are inexperienced, either from the non-academic hospital staff, or university staff members and are untrained on assessment techniques. Even a distinguished and well-knowledgeable teacher is not necessarily a good examiner or assessor. Faulty methods of assessment can lead to wrong decisions that might be deleterious to the future activity of students and the welfare of the community (Newbie, 1992).

The Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) has been demonstrated as a reliable and versatile tool to assess student clinical competencies, practical and communication skills (Anderson & Stickley, 2002; Wallace et al, 2002). Clinical competence in health professions is an outcome of the curriculum and must include the integration of scientific knowledge with communication skills.
In the assessment of clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduate students in Nigeria, only 6 (12.8%) reported the use of OSCE with 3 participants from the Obafemi Awolowo University. Use of the OSCE in physical therapy education is limited, and research on its outcomes is just beginning. One study of the OSCE with physical therapy students had poor internal consistency and did not predict clinical performance (Wessel et al, 2003). Barman (2005) reported that for a comprehensive assessment of clinical competence, other methods should be used in conjunction with OSCE. Based on personal communication of the researcher with some of the physiotherapy educators, many of them were of the opinion that the OSCE was the commonly used method of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduate students. The large proportion of participants who reported the use of both practical and oral examinations supports the findings of Smee (2003) and Vu et al (2006) who reported that clinical competences are best assessed through the use of both practical and oral examinations in order to assess students psychomotor, cognitive and communication skills. The Objective Structured Clinical Exam (OSCE) has been demonstrated as a reliable and versatile tool to assess clinical competencies, practical and communication skills (Lic, 2009).

It is noteworthy to find out that almost all the participants reported that students were assessed through clinical case presentations. This is in agreement with findings of several authors all over the world. Though almost all participants reported that their students were assessed on all the clinical skills (history taking, communication skills, physical examination skills, Patient management skills), there were differences in their report of the number of items/questions assessed on each of these skills. This explains why OSCE cannot be adjudged as the method of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduates in Nigeria. In a total OSCE, there is a checklist of all the items. A score must be assigned to each item (ACGME, 2000). The range of stations students went through in the assessment reported in this study infers that OSCE cannot be integrated as one of the methods of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduate students. According to ACGME (2000), the number of stations may vary from as few as eight to more than 20 although an OSCE with 14–18 stations is recommended to obtain a reliable measure of performance.

Only 4 of the physiotherapy educators who participated in this study reported that the long case was the method of assessing clinical competence with 2 of them from the University of Ibadan. The long case examinations do not seem to achieve reasonable levels of reproducibility (Norcini, 2001). According to Norcini (2002), the long case should probably not be used to make critical decisions about the competence of a student.

The long case, in contrast to the OSCE, creates a situation of daily life in Medicine with real untrained patients and their presenting complaints in an individual real world manner (Zeller et al, 2003). The long case is considered important to test the holistic approach of a student for a given case is still the method of examination in almost all Indian medical colleges. Because of tradition and its practical application, long case examination will possibly always be an integral component of clinical examinations (Sood, 2001). The OSLER was reported as the method of assessing clinical competence in physiotherapy undergraduate students by 6 of the participants. OSLER has been reported as a powerful tool for detecting defects in clinical skills. This has been noted both in undergraduate and more particularly in postgraduate studies (Gleeson, 1992). PACES was reported by 7 participants as the method of assessing clinical competence in physiotherapy undergraduate students.

Data obtained from this study suggest that majority of the participants observe students during history taking and assessment which agrees with one of the major attributes of OSCE, OSLER and PACES. However, there may be the need to train or retrain physiotherapy educators in Nigeria on all the major concepts of these methods of clinical competence assessment. The range of the student population at the clinical phase of study in all the academic institutions further reiterates
the urgent need to ensure that physiotherapy educators acquire adequate training on the different methods of assessment. Faulty methods of assessment can lead to wrong decisions that might be deleterious to the future activity of students and the welfare of the community (Newbie, 1992). It appears from the finding of this study that there is no uniform method of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduate students. There is therefore the need for a standardization of methods of assessing clinical competence of these students which could be taken as a gold standard for the Nigerian environment.

**Conclusions**

From the outcome of this study, it was concluded that many physiotherapy educators had not received formal training in the assessment of clinical competence of their students and that there is no exclusive method of assessing clinical competence of physiotherapy undergraduates in Nigeria.
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### Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Participants

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<td>12.8</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Senior Lecturer</td>
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Figure 1: Bar Chart Showing Participants’ Years of Teaching Experience

Figure 2: Bar Chart Showing Students’ Population from the Different Institutions
Figure 3: Pie chart showing distribution of participants with or without formal training.

Table 3: Frequency Distribution of Participant’s Responses to OSCE Concept

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
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<th>Yes</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University of Ibadan</td>
<td>8 (80)</td>
<td>2 (20)</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Lagos</td>
<td>5 (83.3)</td>
<td>1 (16.7)</td>
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<td>Obafemi Awolowo University</td>
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<tr>
<td>University of Nigeria</td>
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<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bayero University</td>
<td>8 (100)</td>
<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Nnamdi Azikwe University</td>
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<td>0 (0)</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>41 (87.2)</td>
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Table 4: Frequency Distribution of Participants’ Responses to Long Case Examination Concept

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<td>2 (20)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>University of Lagos</td>
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<td>1 (16.7)</td>
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<tr>
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### Table 5: Frequency Distribution of Participant’s Responses to OSLER Concept

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<tr>
<td>University of Lagos</td>
<td>5 (83.3)</td>
<td>1 (16.7)</td>
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### Table 6: Frequency Distribution of Participant’s Responses to PACES Concept

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<td>University of Lagos</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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The Submission, cultural trauma of America and its Muslim community after 9/11

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Abstract  
Although the post-9/11 decade has reached a total closure, Americans and the world in general are still trying to come to terms with the aftermath of 9/11/2001. While in comparison to other acts of terrorism around the world, the economic and political effects of the attacks were minuscule, the emergence of post-9/11 literature discloses its wide cultural impact. The Submission (2010), a novel by Amy Waldman, is distinctive for exploring the historical origins of a wound that almost permanently split the united multiculturalism of America. It narrates a prolonged controversial process in which the vestiges of cultural trauma are embedded in American history. This study therefore uses the theory of cultural trauma and employs a close reading of the selected text on the states of multicultural and multi-religious American characters, Muslim-Americans in particular, with regards to the social-cultural aftermath of 9/11. It shows the socio-historical elements and the agencies involved in the establishment of this collective trauma, as well as in the process of selecting a coping strategy among each collectivity. Finally, it reveals that by megasizing the memorial, cultural carriers not only increase the ambiguity over the reality of the event, but also delay the process of social recovery. Deaths and births of cultures occur in the construction of collective trauma; although The Submission (2010) carries the past within a fictional frame, it presents a new perspective that is impervious towards blind submissions of any sort.

Key words: cultural trauma, submission, collective coping, post-9/11 decade
Introduction

Not all catastrophic events of history have gained the force to leave behind the enduring scars etched within the respective memories of those who survived them, inasmuch the same way as the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 had affected Americans nationwide, regardless of their creeds, walks of life and social strata. Since the days following the attacks, 9/11 almost immediately became an indispensible part of American English terminology. Archives of images and a dearth of video recordings are still ready to reappear on call, in media and press all around the world, to relive the trauma. A multitude of studies have been carried out to discern the economic and political impacts of this atrocity committed against the United States, yet no cultural study can escape the damage made to the unity among American sub-cultures. Published in tandem with the tenth anniversary of the attacks, The Submission is a post-9/11 novel that explores the origins of a socio-cultural trauma that still to this day haunts the united multiculturalism of America. In her narrative, Amy Waldman as an American skillfully depicts the growing split between America and its Muslim citizens as the main aftermath of the tragedy.

As aforementioned, this research relies on the theory of cultural trauma, as proposed by Neil J. Smelser and attempts to obtain an insight on the plight of Americans who are in various degrees indirectly affected by 9/11, particularly the American Muslim community as depicted in the selected text using a close reading technique. This study thus brings to light the elements, agencies and institutions involved in the process of establishing this form of cultural trauma among/between various communities within the country. It also uncovers the most dominant coping strategy of each community in response to what they conceive and remember as culturally traumatic. As depicted in the novel, the application of finger pointing, in its extreme form, has resulted in an ever-increasing wave of Islamophobia among Americans. This is followed by a surge of panic among American Muslims, who strive to re-establish their identities and rebuild their social ties after the attacks. However, a continuous controversy over the symbolism of this particular memory, especially in the process of commemorating it, has led to an unending cultural war on the international scale. The Submission (2010) narrates the stories of denials and submission, of gashes and dark memories, and recovery that have so far undergone many delays. What’s more, it evokes a new social realism, a nation made to remember the past, lest it should be condemned to repeat it in the future.

Framework

In its Greek origins, the term ‘trauma’ designated a physical injury. Of late, it became the privilege of the psyche to be described in terms of trauma (Caruth, 1996, p. 3). The origins of exploiting the term date back to French Psychiatric conventions. Nonetheless, the major focus on trauma, as a theory, can be found in the collaborative studies of Sigmund Freud and Breuer on the possible connections between trauma and hysteria. He conducted his studies on scientific and clinical model and proposed that hysteria had certain causes, a course of development, a definite outcome, and a sure cure. Freud believed that although the memory of this experience is repressed, “a passive sexual experience before puberty” (Smelser, 2004, p.32) is the certain cause of trauma. This results in incubation or “latency” which Freud regards as the major characteristic of psychological trauma. However, as Freud asserts, the cure is achievable when the patient becomes able, by the help of the psychotrapist, to bring the memory into consciousness and describe it “in greatest possible detail and put the affect into words”. It involves a cognitive process and a verbal catharsis, generally known as “working through” the trauma (Smelser, 2004, p. 33). Nevertheless, Smelser believes that this Freudian explanation of the disorders based on traumatic events, is the indication of Freud’s internal struggle for a more flexible definition of trauma-based disorders. In other words, his proclamations imply that since childhood trauma (the event) occurs at an incomplete stage of development, it is probable to have effects in more developed stages. In fact, trauma may not be effective at all age.
levels. Moreover, this statement reveals his doubt over the idea that trauma is an independently outside event. As Smelser’s puts it, although an assault might be potentially traumatic, its status as a trauma depends on the time and in the context of the occurrence (p.33). Freud later even doubts over the sufficiency of recalling the memories by the patient as a definite cure. It can be concluded from the above argument that Freud’s studies, if were possible to continue until today, would not recognize trauma as an independent outside event. As he later modified his statements: “trauma could be nonevent” (2004, p.34).

Thanks to the psychological examinations of the soldiers who returned from World War I and World War II, the term of trauma became widely recognizable during the 20th century. Yet, it was only after Vietnam War that the term PTSD (Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder or PTSD), which described the long-term effects of traumatic events, became officially established as a medical condition (Caruth, 1995, pp. 2-3). These primary studies on trauma reached their peak in the psychoanalytic studies of Cathy Caruth and later on Dominick LaCapra mid in 1990s in the case of Holocaust. Caruth brought substantial innovations into trauma studies by fusing the elements of deconstruction into her theories of psychoanalytic trauma. These ideas, mainly collected in Trauma: Exploration in Memory (1996) and Unclaimed Experience (1996), shed light on the previous studies on Holocaust (Meek, 2012, p. 347), described trauma as an overwhelming and unexpected experience. like Freud, she also believes that individual’s responses to this kind of incident are usually uncontrollable and delayed. (Caruth, 1996, p. 11). The results of the studies carried on by LaCapra are collected in his well-known book Writing History, Writing Trauma (2001). He is mainly concerned about distinguishing between “acting out”, which is the initial state of being haunted, and “working through” (LaCapra, 2001, p. 21) as the two subsequent stages of recovery from trauma. Later on, in the post-modern era, the concept of trauma become a major concern in the historical, Marxist, linguistic and literary studies through the philosophical approaches of such scholars as Walter Benjamin, Theodor W. Adorno, Jacques Derrida, E. Anne Kaplan and their contemporaries (Meek, 2012, p. 347). E. Anne Kaplan led this new trend of trauma studies into the realm of virtual culture as well as literary and visual arts in her most-known book Trauma Culture which was published in 2005 (Meek, 2012, p. 348).

Over this period the focus has shifted from an inherently disastrous outside event or situation and failure of memory as the source of psychological trauma, to “recollection” and “representation” as the process through which trauma is constructed. This is probably why Kaplan asserts that the arts of the recent century have been preoccupied with “traumatic historical events” (Meek, 2012, p. 348). As this new focus highlights, cultural trauma is not a historically born phenomenon, or that not all catastrophic events of history would qualify as culturally traumatic. Yet, cultural trauma is not a once-and-for-all-time socio-historical product either; cultural trauma requires the deliberate attempts of cultural specialists and carriers to help it break through the prolonged, contested process of symbolization and establishment. As a sound basis, cultural trauma needs to embody an indelible wound on the body culture of a collectivity. But once established as such, it would not be worked through once and forever, either. In fact, continuous attractions and repulsions of groups and individuals, toward a potentially traumatic historical phenomenon, set the stage for always-expanding controversies in the future. As proposed by Neil J. Smelser (2004), cultural trauma can be formally defined as:

A memory accepted and publically given credence by a relevant membership group and evoking an event or situation which is a) laden with negative affect b) represented as indelible, and c) regarded as threatening a society’s existence or violating one or more of its fundamental cultural presuppositions. (p. 44)

In the psychoanalytic realm, the “fighting back” of the affected individuals against their respective traumatic experiences has existed since the earliest findings of Freud. At the cultural
stage, the notion of “coping strategy” is applied to define and classify the stages and modes of collective defense mechanisms. Denial of the threat, conversion of the intrusion into a positive assumption, displacement of the target and blaming the others, and finally remaining ambivalent are among the well-known responses to the situations that are perceived as culturally traumatic (Smelser, 2004, p. 45). What is worth remembering is that, although a collectivity may apply two or more strategies at the same time, with the help of the cultural carriers and authorities, one approach is usually established as the most preferable coping mechanism of that collectivity.

Analysis

Published around the tenth anniversary of September 11, 2001, The Submission revolves around the tragedy as a seminal moment in the history of American culture. Using fiction as a medium of discourse, Amy Waldman explores the “politics of the memorial” of the attacks, which throws “America in argument with itself”, and then results in “the plight of Muslims after the attack” (Waldman, 2010, p. 286). The Submission (2010) narrates the prolonged process of a contestation over a design for the memorial, which is never created, but instead leads to the establishment of a nationwide cultural trauma (Smelser, 2004, p. 37). The narrations bring in a variety of the cultural carriers and agencies, artists, businesspersons, journalists, media, and most importantly politicians, who contributed to the development of this process. Nevertheless, there are more underlying themes at work. Amy Waldman brings the hidden purposes and intentions beyond meta-sizing a memorial to light, and discloses the outcomes, once a collective memory has been established as threatening, negative and indelible.

Backed up with a reservoir of traumatic experiences, deep in its psyche, American society is prepared for the establishment of another collective trauma. The memories of the Great Depression inside the borders, the unfinished project of the Vietnam War and the unsettled justifications of bombarding Nagasaki and Hiroshima (Davis, 2003, p. 128) have remained dormant, but not dead, only to be resuscitated in another national crisis. Amy Waldman (2010) is not reluctant to bring in the Void, another finalist design, in her narration, to reflect the American subconscious. In every single element, the Void “mimicked the Vietnam Veterans Memorial” (p.4). Nevertheless, she indicates that Clair Burwell, the only representative of the families of victims among the jury, unknowingly “loathed” the Void. Clair is almost sure that the other families will dislike it too, because it is time for them to recover from the trauma of 9/11. To her, it looks more like “a great gash in the sky” (Waldman, 2010, p. 4) and is just too dark, vague, and distant from the reality of the events that have transpired from a national tragedy. Her argument is starkly outnumbered due to the overwhelming support for the Void amongst the other members of the jury. They believe that it recreates the destruction of the attacks in its design, and have suggested anger in response, whereas the Garden, another finalist design, indicates America’s deep longing for healing by introducing joy instead. It is this ambivalent socio-cultural context that Smelser (2004) calls trauma-prone, afflicted and shaky in structure (p.36).

Historically, America has always sheltered new citizens of various religious and cultural backgrounds. People like Mo’s parents have turned their backs on their own religion and culture to submit to the secular tenets of the American lifestyle (Waldman, 2010, p. 194). In this multicultural context, the “unity” and “coherence” of America’s many sub-cultures becomes a notable target for culture shocks (Smelser, 2004, p. 38). With regards to the nationalistic side of its culture, American society seems at odds with the very idea of unity among its subcultures, and therefore the coherence that forges meaningful ties among them is corroded. Leila, one of the American Muslim characters in the novel, recalls her own impression of herself as an outsider during her early days as an immigrant in the United States. So, as she puts it, “what’s going on in this country [after the attacks] isn’t so new” (Waldman, 2010, p. 176). Additionally, although many Muslims do prescribe to the American Dream, they “never shied from being Muslims”. As the story goes, the protagonist’s parents have
given their son “the most obviously Muslim name,” Mohammad, “so that it would be the statement of faith, piety and goodness” (Waldman, 2010, p. 194). Therefore, despite the consensus of subcultures about the bigger picture that is American culture, the structure of society remains shaky and vulnerable until the attacks take place. Thereafter, as Mo’s father explains, some Muslims start to doubt whether America is a place for them at all, as they face a general hatred directed against them “just because they were Muslims” (Waldman, 2010, p. 176). In other words, the unprotected integrity of American society fails to survive the cultural intrusion of September 11 2001, and has led to what Smelser (2004) calls the “effect of splitting” (p. 55). As the result, on one hand, Americans will hang signs with statements such as “NO ISLAM ZONE” on their doors (Waldman, 2010, p. 164), whereas on the other hand, Muslims will forbid the presence of “non-Muslims” in their own neighbourhoods (Waldman, 2010, p. 170).

After all, in order for the attacks to be remembered by each collectivity as “threatening” to the cultural presuppositions, and in order for this moralisation to invoke a “negative affect” (Smelser, 2004, p. 44), contributions of socio-cultural specialists, intellectuals, artists, journalist, and political leaders are required. In addition, the status of this memory as culturally traumatic needs to be “continuously and actively” (Smelser, 2004, p. 38) relived, in order to realize its deeply-embedded presence and indelibility. In The Submission (2010), SAFI (Save America from Islam), the Memorial Defense Committee, anti-immigrant groups, along with the MACC (Muslim American Coordinating Council) and three more Muslim organizations play the role of the ‘carriers’ of trauma. They establish and re-establish the memory of the attacks as culturally traumatic for various American communities, especially the Muslims. Waldman (2010) repeatedly states that most of them have not lost anybody in the attacks, and that they are “professional wrestlers of activists” (p. 130) instead.

Although language as an outlet is believed to have therapeutic effects, the power of language can also be applied to associate symbolic interpretation (Jabarouti, 2013, p. 27) with a given event in order to reinforce the trauma it has caused. TV programs, newspaper columns, and internet blogs serve as a means of communicating and repeating the traumatic interpretations. In the story, the main protagonist Mo realises the threat from the brand of language utilised by the media. He notices that his photo in the newspaper has been captioned by a line that has both highlighted and juxtaposed the terms “Architect” and “Terrorist” (Waldman, 2010, p. 173). Although unintentional by nature, the rhetoric used by the American media connects Muslims with terrorism or criminality, and Americans with vulnerability or victimisation. As Waldman (2010) describes, the information released by the press is in many cases the result of personal intentions. She uses Alyssa Spier, the reporter and columnist, to embody this claim about cultural carriers in America. Alyssa “had no ideology, believed only in information, which she obtained, traded, peddled, packaged, and published, and she opposed any effort to doctor her product” (p. 60). To her, this challenge has a thrill as well as the promises of fame and money. As for the more influential carriers, they are Clair, Ariana, Maria, Paul and other members of the jury, who are nevertheless among the most significant intellectuals and artists of the American community. Issam Malik, the executive director of the MACC, its vice president Jamilah Maqboul and other Muslim activists have also made attempts to establish the attacks as damaging to Islamic values and outlooks. The most influential of all, as Waldman (2010) presents, was Geraldine Bitman, the governor. The way she behaved, as Edith Robin explains towards the end of the narration, has made any other opposing attempt impossible (Waldman, 2010, p. 289). When the controversy among the parties and groups reaches its height, Bitman decides to choose a second committee that will choose an ‘appropriate’ design, instead of Mo’s submission. Waldman (2010) informs us of hidden political ambitions at work (p. 102) when she says, “the notion of the public input – the hearing, the comment period, the governor signing off – had been written into the process to give the public the illusion that they would be heard, when in fact they were being led” (p. 104). Political polarization usually occurs as the result of harped ambivalence among the collectivities that undergo potentially traumatic experiences. Once the process of creating
a cultural trauma reaches this level, Smelser (2004) says, it is the group with more political power that establishes its interpretation of the event, as the “whole story” (p.55). After twenty years from the feverish period of selecting a design for the memorial, Mo says, “it all went out well in the end. For everyone but me, that is” (Waldman, 2010, p. 289). The country has moved on and achieved self-correction. Muslim citizens have gained some, if not all, of their rights, yet “Mo was stuck in the past” (Waldman, 2010, p. 287). Still, as Waldman (2010) proclaims, in order for the public to understand the real story of the memorial, “Mo was the missing piece, and the most important” (p.286).

In comparison with the other large-scale tragedies in history, there is no doubt that the literal damage of the attacks remains miniscule, whereas the cultural intrusion is enormous. Obviously, the attacker has the intention of subjecting the American identity and leaving an indelible mark on the collective consciousness, which according to Jeffrey C. Alexander (2004) triggers the “process of trauma creation” (p.1). In their selection of the date, the means, the manner and the location of their target, the perpetrators contributed to the process of symbolization, which was later re-enforced by the American cultural carriers and political authorities. In a movie-like manner, America’s most prominent symbols of power and modernity were destroyed on a day marked on the American calendar since 1987, and by means of high-tech American aircrafts (Redfield, 2007, pp. 56-58). In other words, the attacks were initially planned to demolish the invulnerable image of America as a global super power, and to carve it onto the American memory forever. However, as Waldman (2010) insists in her novel, the “memorializing had metasized” as American society becomes increasingly obsessed with the process of symbolization and naming of the event (p. 286). Redfield (2007) believes that the name “September 11” and its numerical form “9/11”, project too much rhetorical power from their emptiness. “Imperatively and imperially”, they expect the audience to acquire a full knowledge of the event in details. In addition, the capitalization has turned the phrase “September 11” into a calendrical zero point, which re-enforces the American long-term culture of exceptionalism and marginalizing of the ‘others’ (58-9). Waldman (2010) highlights this American habit of “refus[ing] to recognize the existence of others” (Alexander, 2004, p. 1) by rendering the struggles of Muslim characters in retrieving their equal rights as American citizens (p.196). “How could you be dead if you did not exist? (p.70)”, she asks when looking into the plight of such Muslim characters as Asma’s, her son’s and her husband’s. For the same token, in the narrative Mo’s design is rejected and he has to leave the country and follow the path his parents had taken years ago, in reverse. The employment of 9/11 terminology in everyday language, in fact, suggests the rootedness of this experience and its negative effects in the life of the people who have witnessed them, as well as the future generations. In the twentieth anniversary of the competition, Molly who never experienced the attacks in person, recalls it as “a seminal moment in American cultural history” (Waldman, 2010, p. 286).

All the same, the Muslim community of America as depicted in the novel is subjected to a cultural shock and moral panic by the situation that followed the attacks. The majority of the Muslims believe in the righteousness of their religious heritage as much as they love America. They believe that “Islam is a religion of peace,” love, and understanding of others (Waldman, 2010, pp. 59-230-231). After the attacks, however, they undergo a severe intrusion toward their ideological structure. Alyssa Spier begins her column in the newspaper with “the problem with Islam is Islam” (Waldman, 2010, p. 109). Islam becomes the hot topic of media debates and public gatherings of both Muslims and non-Muslims. In a rally arranged by the members of the Memorial Defense Committee and Save America from Islam, a participant says, “Islam is not a religion! It is a political ideology, a totalitarian one” (Waldman, 2010, p. 151). The Garden, Mo’s design, is represented as a paradise for killers and Muslim terrorists. Muslims repeatedly hear that anything associated with Islam, is “painful” and the followers of this religion “have caused enormous pain” (Waldman 270). The cultural attack on the foundations of Islam is to such an extent that some Muslims start to feel
ashamed and begin to reconsider their affiliation with their own religion. Mo even doubts over what if he have had been one of the attackers (Waldman, 2010, p. 29). To put it concisely, Muslims are not only regarded as “second-class citizens – or worse as if they deserved no respect” at all (Waldman 229), but the part of their identity identified through their religion is shattered. As such, Muslims living in America have also experienced a cultural trauma in the crisis that transpired after the attacks.

The employment of the “language of trauma” (Alexander, 2004, p. 2) by the public in everyday life is the symptom of an overwhelming experience, which has been intuitively realized by the collectivity. That is, the event needs to be translated into the language of affect and emotion, so that it becomes irresistibly communicable. As the novel indicates, Muslims are suspected and arrested in many public places immediately after the attacks. Hence, after a while, Mo finds himself “braced for suspicion” (Waldman, 2010, p. 25) in public and at work, while as he later realises that this attempt has made him behave more like a criminal. Smelser (2004) believes this stage is where cultural trauma is linked to the psychological level of general trauma (p. 40). The individuals, who have internalized the threat and the negative feelings associated with it, begin to communicate with it in their everyday social interactions, which according to Epstein (1992) is the reflections of effects. Even though subliminally, he adds, our feelings are transmitted by means of “nonverbal cues”, which carry a more vital message than the verbal ones. “It is indeed difficult to think of any human activity or social event that is not ordinarily accompanied by some degrees of emotional expression (Epstein, 1992, pp. 1-2). In Waldman’s (2010) descriptions, after the event, thousands of large and small flags are festooned throughout the streets of New York, while numerous photos of the attack and its victims repeatedly appear in the newspapers and online, and TV programmes continued to replay the tragedy in detail. This “representational power”, as Redfield (2007) puts it, has contributed to the establishment and embeddedness of the trauma among those who did not actually undergo the event. As Waldman (2010) observes:

The trauma, for Paul, had came later, when he watched the reply, pledged allegiance to the devastation. You couldn’t call yourself an American if you hadn’t, in solidarity, watched your fellow Americans being pulverized, yet what kind of American did watching create? A traumatized victim? A charged-up avenger? A queasy voyeur? Paul, and he suspected many Americans, harbored all of these protagonists. (Waldman, 2010, p. 13)

Just as emotions are universally recognizable, the strategies that individuals apply in response to overwhelming situations are also common among individuals (Jabarouti, 2014, p.161). In other words, coping strategies, like emotional responses, are generally shared and communicated among the members in a collectivity. Nonetheless, as Smelser (2004) asserts, it is possible to distinguish the most preferred strategy of a collectivity in comparison to the others (p.47). As depicted in the novel, the role and decision of the cultural carriers and political authorities is decisive selecting the most prominent coping strategy of each community.

Blocking the invasion, as an initial response to trauma, includes the repression of its memory and the suppression of its affect. Yet, culturally it is rather impossible to directly impose it onto the contemporary public. Yet, in The Submission (2010), the blocking of memory and emotion occurs indirectly and through “carrier groups [who] are the collective agents of the trauma process, (Alexander, 2004, p. 11), for which “the rhetoric is the first step” (Waldman, 2010, p. 174). As Ansar, a member of Muslim American Coordinating Association (MACC) observes, after the attacks, it is as if American society is “locked up in a movie theater, watching Westerns” (Waldman, 2010, p. 80). In order to resolve the situation, he believes it is necessary to break down all the walls that have blinded the public. The terms “September, 11”, “Ground Zero” and “9/11”, as discussed before, also have a hand in the process of denying the reality of this experience and blocking
mourning among Americans, in various ways. Waldman (2010) refers to the role and power of using or not using language many times in her novel. She also makes her protagonist Mo perfectly aware of the power of rhetoric and representation. In the informational interview at the airport, for instance, he finds that “silence” or the “absence of talk” is by no chance, the “material” that the agents use to make him confess. Moreover, the gray partition and the moldy bulletin are used to “shrink the room’s dimensions and maximize its oppressiveness” (Waldman, 2010, p. 27). In another situation, he realises that the tagline of the ad that the MACC had published in support for him is reversely connecting him to terrorism (Waldman, 2010, p. 172). In every memorial, Smelser (2004) observes a binary tendency to both remember and forget the event. Yet when metasized, the memorial tends to distance individuals from the reality of the experience, which not only re-enforces the cultural trauma (53), but also delays the recovery process (Davis, 2003, p. 128). For Muslim characters, as the novels shows, the power of blinders may have faded away, as they are not caught up in the cultural sophistication of America and the obligations of symbolism or pretention. Instead, they try to keep a more inclusive image in mind, so that the attacks will feel less tragic but more real in scale. As one Muslim character indicates, “we keep hearing that it takes three hours to read the names of the dead from this attack. Do you know how long it would take to read the names of a half million dead Iraqi children? Twenty-one days” (Waldman, 2010, p. 80).

In responding to an established cultural trauma, there is also a less problematic and more promising choice of replacing the threatening experience with its opposite (Smelser, 2004, p. 45). In this approach, the negative experience is converted to a chance to re-establish identities, ties and relationships. The potentially traumatic experience of the American Revolution, for example, was never registered as a cultural trauma as it has been remembered as a “heroic myth of origin” (Neal, 1998, p. 23). In the aftermath of 9/11, this approach is adopted by the majority of Muslim Americans and even some of the non-Muslim Americans. In The Submission (2010), on one hand Paul and Clare, the major members of the jury, show an internal desire to reconstruct the shattered social bonds with their fellow Muslim Americans. In spite of that, they realize that “patriarchal exigencies” (Waldman, 2010, p. 8) prevent them. On the other hand, such Muslim characters as Leila and Asma are determined not to end up invisible and ignored. They do not want to “let others define” (Waldman, 2010, p. 176) their identity biasedly and blindly. Leila even tries to encourage Mo to stand up and resist, but he finds no space to re-establish his status in America, and therefore, he decides to leave the country. In his exploration of cultural trauma theory, Alexander (2004), refers to a stage of “moral stance” (p.1), whereby the social groups or sometimes the entire nation not only recognise the source and the cause of trauma, but also take the responsibility of sharing the sufferings of others. As Waldman (2010) indicates, after the attacks, although many of the Muslim individuals try to show mutual understanding and sympathy with the rest of the society, but America “want[ed] to discriminate” (Waldman, 2010, p. 99). In other words, although Muslims try to “show that they want to live in peace in America,” what actually mattered was “[did] America want to live in peace with Muslims” (Waldman, 2010, p. 79)?

Instead, finger-pointing has become the most preferred and well-established approach that Americans take to cope with their national trauma. This mode of defence includes the quality of projecting the responsibility of an undesirable experience to others, who have so far been the most hated ones for any reason. Therefore, this mechanism is normally evoked when the traumatic experience arises from the “possibility of self-blame or guilt” (Smelser, 2004, p. 52). The attacks, as Mo sees it, has “justified America’s suspicion of its [own] Muslims” (Waldman, 2010, p. 287) and its overreaction towards other Muslims around the world. Smelser (2004) believes that if this sense of finger-pointing is intensified, it will be transformed into a more solid form of paranoia, in which the affected individuals deny the reality and the logic of the events. (p.52). As Waldman (2010) depicts it, after the attack, the immediate increase of Islamophobia is to the extent that anything associated with Islam, in sound or appearance, has become painful to Americans. For Muslims,
however, this scapegoating becomes a source of moral panic and collective hysteria that fuel the main threat to their religious values (Thompson, 1998, p. 256). As a result, they “braced for suspicion” (Waldman, 2010, p. 25) far more than necessary and thus over-react. From about a week after the attacks, this behavior appears in Mo:

_The memory of the airport interrogation was unpacked, shaken out, stuffed full of straw to make it life like once again. There was no evidence Roi hadn’t elevated Mo because he was a Muslim but none against it, either. If he had been singled out once, why not again? Paranoia, no less than plasticine, could be molded._ (Waldman, 2010, p. 40)

**Conclusion**

No event of history would register as culturally traumatic, by or in itself, unless it is welcomed by the socio-historical context, the cultural specialist and, more importantly, the political authorities of a community. Unpacked memories of national crisis and depressions, and unfinished military projects around the world have prepared the collective psyche of the American society for the construction of another cultural trauma. In the process of arranging a memorial for the attacks of September 11, 2001, as _The Submission_ (2010) narrates, the memories of previous traumas, vague and dark, penetrate into the consciousness of the American society, and make them feel uncomfortable. In addition, patriotic exigencies urge them to once more look for strategies that are sophisticated enough for the pretensions of the American culture, instead of the strategies that will actually heal them.

However, with the help of the carrier groups and agencies of various American communities especially the Muslims, as well as the direct and indirect interference of political authorities, cultural trauma is once again established in the aftermath of the attacks of September 11, 2001. The trauma, as demonstrated in _The Submission_ is re-enforced in the process of selecting the memorial for the attacks, which is expected to be a “historic signifier” and “a national symbol” (Waldman, 2010, p. 5) that will speak to the future generations and citizens of the world. Despite the initial denial of some of the individuals, the trauma finds its way to their psyche and personality of the communities who identify part, if not all, of their identity with their culture and religion. Just as in the process of establishment, there are a lot of controversies and debates among the organizations and leaders of each community over the most appropriate mode of coping with the established situation. However, it did not matter how much Muslims have attempted to reconstruct their identity and sympathize with the rest of the community they belong to. Neither did it matter that many of the Americans are aware that in order to heal, the society needs “not just any memorial now but the Garden” (Waldman, 2010, p. 13). Instead, what actually matters is the preference of the politicians and their intentions.

Nevertheless, a dual tendency remains forever towards the interpretations and symbolism of the tragedy and its memorial, just to feed the memories of future generations. In the continuation of this cultural play in the twentieth anniversary of the memorial competition, “the plight of the Muslims after the attack” becomes the hot topic of a story in which a Muslim, Mo, is the most important figure (Waldman, 2010, p. 286). In conclusion, the culmination of collective traumatic memories, over time, has transformed American society into a forever expanding repertory of dormant or active memories, and gives it the potential to develop another cultural trauma. However, the omnipresent story of cultural trauma floats forever on the socio-political status and interests of the social groups and political authorities. This is the heritage of the West, whose shadows have lengthened to the East, on the path of westernization.
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Who Pays For And What Pays The European Parliament?

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Abstract
Every five years the electorate of the European Union has the opportunity of electing a new European Parliament. This Parliament is the legislative body of the Union and the voters from 28 member states will elect 750 seats in may 2014. The financing of the European Parliament is a part of the general budget of the European Union. The own income and all the expenditure of the European Parliament is to be found in the budget of the Union. This article examines how much the European Parliament costs. Since 1979 the European Parliament has been directly elected by the electorate.

This article examines the following in further detail:
- How has the appropriation for the European Parliament evolved since 2003?
- What is the budget of the European Parliament spent on?
- Is it possible to compare the costs of the European Parliament to those of other Parliaments?
- How have the costs of each MEP evolved?

Keywords: E.U. budget, European Union
Introduction

This article is based on primary sources, namely the figures contained in the general budge of the Union. Ultimately the object is to assess the evolution of the costs of the European Parliament (E.P.) since 2003, the year after the introduction of the euro, bearing in mind the dramatic expansion of the EU this century.

Indeed, in the traditional scientific publications concerning the finances of the European Union there is no attention for the budget of the European Parliament.1 Also in the general books2 concerning the Union, there is enough attention about the European Parliament as a political institution but not for E.P. budget. Even the “classic” book concerning the European budget from the former director general budget of the E.U. Commission and old member of the European Court of auditors3 Daniel Strasser doesn’t handle this topic of the E.P. budget.

The European Parliament came into being as a result of the “Treaty establishing the European Economic Community” of 1957 (Treaty of Rome). Prior to the first direct elections in June 1979 it was made up of delegates from the national Parliaments. The number of MEPs has steadily increased as a consequence of the growing number of member states, namely: 410 members in 1979, 434 in 1984, 518 in 1989, 567 in 1994, 626 in 1999, 732 in 2004, 785 in 2009, 766 in 2013 as result of the accession of Croatia and 751 in 2014 including the President of the E.P. who does not have a vote.

The European Parliament has not the formal powers as those of the national legislatures. But over the last years the E.P. is influencing the European Union system in three main ways, namely: the legislative process, the budgetary process and through control and supervision of the executive.

The role of the European Parliament became more political after the first direct elections of 1979. The battle of the budget power started already in 1970 with the first European decision concerning the own resources for the financing of the E.U. general budget.

The budget of the Union

Since the Treaty of Lisbon, the entire general budget of the European Union must be submitted to the approval of the European Parliament. A budget proposal is prepared by the European Commission, which is then submitted to the Council for approval. Afterwards it becomes the draft budget. If the Council and the Parliament cannot reach agreement on the submitted budget a mediation committee is set up. If both parts of the E.U.’s Executive Authority fail to reach agreement in this committee, the European Commission must draw up a new budget proposal and the budget procedure has to be started again.4

The European Parliament also has the authority to grant discharge for the draft accounts. This approval of how the budget is implemented is necessary in order to arrive at a set of accounts containing the final figures of all revenues as well as of the expenditure. When in 1998 the European Parliament refused to grant discharge the result was the resignation of President Santer’s entire Commission.

The own revenues of the Parliament

The budget of the European Union contains a complete overview of the revenues and disbursements of the European Parliament. This general budget is based on the functional budget classification. This counts for the revenues and the outlays of all the E.U. institutions in this budget. The fact that the European Parliament is the first political institution gives it division one in the budget. (f.e. the E.U. Council has number two, the European Commission is number three, the Court of Justice is five etc…). The fixation for the Parliament as the first division in the general budget of the Union is a consequence of the priority position of the legislative power. Examples of the own revenues include, revenue from the tax on the salaries, pay and remuneration of both members and civil service employees, and the contributions by the personnel to the financing of the pension scheme.

The foregoing is clearly the largest source of income of the European Parliament.

According to the European Union’s 2014 budget the own revenues of the European Parliament may be estimated at 155.7 million euros. This sum may be broken down as follows (in millions of euros):
- Tax revenues from the remuneration of MEPs and taxes on the salaries and pay of civil service employees: 81.2
- Pension contributions by civil service employees: 73.5
- Interest: 1

The expenditure of the European Parliament

The main outgoings in the budget of the European Parliaments are those associated with the salaries of the MEPs and the civil service employees. The budgetary picture of the spending (figures from the initial budget for 2014) of the European Parliament is as follows (in millions of euros):

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>- other personnel expenditure (restaurants, day care facilities, medical service, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- logistics (buildings, furniture, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- IT / archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- costs of meetings / conferences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- public information programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- financing of European political parties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- financing of European political foundations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- MEPs’ support staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- former MEP activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- appropriation for the European Parliamentary association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- reserve for unanticipated expenses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the budget appropriations the main items of expenditure in 2014 are as follows:

- EP personnel: 712.2 million euros or 40.56 %
  (Civil service employees, interpreters, personnel management services)

- MEPs 420.5 million euros or 23.95 %
  (All costs and support staff)

- Logistics: 348.8 million euros or 19.86 %

From this it appears that the payroll costs (civil service employees and MEPs) account for more than 64% of expenditure.

Together these three main items account for more than 84% of the total expenditure of the European Parliament.

The European Parliament has its own limited financial resources. These, however, are only a relatively small proportion of the overall expenditure. The following table provides an overview.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Appropriation</th>
<th>Own resources</th>
<th>Total expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1,020,296,850</td>
<td>66,348,525</td>
<td>1,086,644,375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,155,139,529</td>
<td>112,393,557</td>
<td>1,267,533,086</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1,312,595,982</td>
<td>84,864,192</td>
<td>1,397,460,174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,286,479,684</td>
<td>141,250,058</td>
<td>1,427,729,732</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,561,178,170</td>
<td>124,651,223</td>
<td>1,685,829,393</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,693,038,015</td>
<td>174,528,923</td>
<td>1,693,038,015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,613,619,014</td>
<td>143,024,893</td>
<td>1,750,643,934</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,599,848,278</td>
<td>155,783,464</td>
<td>1,755,631,742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: figures based at the E.U. budgets

The own resources come to 8.8% (2014), 8.1% (2013), 10.3% (2012), 7.4% (2011), 9.9% (2009), 6% (2007), 8.8% (2005) and 6.1% (2003).

From this we may conclude that the own resources of the European Parliament always fall between 6 and 10%. In other words the appropriations from the general budget of the European Union constitute the principle source of finance of the European Parliament.

The appropriation

An examination of the 2003-2014 period reveals the following budgetary trend in the growth of overall expenditure (2003 = 100).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>Evolution of total expenditure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>1,086,644,375 = 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>1,267,533,086 = 116.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>1,397,460,174 = 128.6 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1,427,729,732 = 131.3 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1,685,829,393 = 155.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>1,693,038,015 = 155.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1,750,643,934 = 161.1 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>1,755,631,742 = 161.5 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

During the above period the budget of the European Parliament rose by 61%. In other words the rate of increase over the 12 year period under study came to an average of 5% per annum.
These increases are, however, closely linked to the number of new member states. For example there were the expansions of 2004 and 2007. This resulted in an increase in the budget in those years. The increase in 2009 and subsequent years has to do with the fact that the cost of the salaries of the MEPs was assumed by the EP in that year. Hitherto it had been the national parliaments of the EU member states that were responsible for paying MEPs.

Another approach to the budget is to calculate the cost of the European Parliament per elected member.

This calculation only become relevant in 2009 and subsequent years, because it was only then that MEPs started to be paid from Parliament’s budget.

### TABLE: IV  Cost per MEP ( in million euro )

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Cost per MEP</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>(736 members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>(736 members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>(736 members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>(766 members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>(766 members until June 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>(751 members, after 25 May 2014)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In this period, the cost rose from 1.9 million euros per MEP to 2.3 million euros per MEP, or a rise of 20.5%. In view of the calculation shown in Table III (Evolution of total expenditure), this is not a particularly remarkable increase per MEP.

Comparing the cost of the European Parliament with other legislatures is not so easy. The reason why is related with the power of the E.P., namely: the European Parliament has no political or budget competences in matters as defence or social security. Even the “Multiannual Financial Framework” (M.F.F.) for the period 2014-2020 has fixed the outlays to maximum 960 billion euro over this seven years. This gives an average of nearly 140 billion euro a year. Knowing the fact that f.e. the sum of all the Belgian public budgets is already around 190 billion euro a year. The European Parliament has a greater role to play in the E.U. budget procedure since the financial framework require its approval.  

**Comparing with other Parliaments.**

If we do take the costs of national Parliaments in some E.U. member states, then we have the following budget picture of the public price concerning the legislatures.

The comparing study concerns Belgium, the Netherlands, the Federal republic of Germany and the French republic.

Belgium has a federal Parliament with two houses, namely: a direct elected House (150 members) and an indirect elected Senate (71 members). The House has a cost of 163 million euro and the Senate of 80 million euro. This gives for the kingdom of Belgium a public cost of around 243 million euro for 2014 or nearly 1,1 million euro for one federal M.P.

The kingdom of the Netherlands has a centralised state structure and a parliament with two houses, namely: the ‘Eerste kamer’ (75 members indirect elected) and the “Tweede Kamer” (150 members and direct elected by the voters). The total price for 2014 is fixed around 138 million euro in the national budget or 613,000 euro for one member.

The federal republic of Germany has a federal Parliament of two houses. The ‘Bundestag’ with 631 members and elected by the voters and the ‘der Bundesrat’ with 69 members and nominated by the government of the 16 states. The ‘der Bundestag’ has for 2014 a public cost of 748

5 N. Nugent, o.c., p. 215.

7 The figures for this part of the article are all based on the budgets of these Parliaments.
million euro or nearly 1.2 million euro for one M.P. The ‘der Bundesrat’ costs 23 million euro for 69 M.P.’s or 333,000 euro for each member. The budget cost for the global composition of the German federal Parliament (‘die Bundesversammlung’) is nearly 770 million euro or 1.1 million for each member.

The centralized French republic has a national Parliament with two houses. First of all the ‘Assemblée nationale” (House of representatives) with 577 members and elected by the voters. The budget 2014 for the French ‘House’ is fixed at 552 million euro (including the price of the French parliamentary television channel) or 957,000 euro per member. The French Senate ‘ Le Sénat’ is composed by 348 members and elected by an electoral college per department in the French republic. This budget is fixed at 324 million euro or 931,000 euro per senator. The global budget for the French Parliament concerns 876 million euro or 947,000 euro per French M.P.

Comparing with these national Parliaments the global cost of the E.P. and the price per European M.P. is a lot higher in the Union then in the member’s states.

The reason can’t be the number of European M.P.’s. With 751 in the European Union. Indeed the French Parliament has 925 members and the German Parliament has 700 members.

The reason for the more expensive budget concerning the European Parliament is certainly related with the higher wages for the European M.P.’s and the civil servants in comparing with the national situation. This situation is no exemption because in many European countries and E.U. member states the civil servants of the legislatives bodies are much better paid then the civil servants of the departments related with the government. The number of European M.P.’s and the support for the political parties in the E.P. is leading until such a large number of temporary functions which are mostly related with the elected period.

In the budget 2014 there are 1.151 temporary functions. This is the largest number comparing with the other E.U. institutions. Globally there are 2,301 of such temporary functions. (f.e. E.U. Commission with 438, the Court of Justice with 436 persons etc.). This means that 50% of all the temporary functions are related with the Parliament.

Secondly, the fact that the E.P. works at three places with administrations in Brussels, Luxembourg and Strassbourg. The increasing effect for the budget is the monthly move between this three places.

Thirdly, the translation cost of the E.P. documents and meetings in all the official languages of the Union. Therefore an important part of the civil servants in the European Parliament are working as interpreters and translators. on the With the entry of Croatia in 2013 as 28th member state of the European Union, there are now 24 official languages. Only four countries in the European Union don’t have an own language and have official languages like in other member states, namely: Belgium (Dutch, French and German), Luxembourg (French and German), Austria (German) and Cyprus (Greek).

The budget of the Parliament in the general budget.

When we compare the contribution for the European Parliament coming from the overall EU budget with the sum of all expenditures in this budget, we arrive at the following fraction for the years 2013 and 2014.

2013: 1,613 million euros contribution for the Parliament,
2013: 144,450 million euros for the general budget of the EU as a whole,
2013: the cost for the general budget concerning the Parliament is about 1.11 % of the entire E.U. budget.

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8 General budget E.U. 2014, p. 117
2014: 1,599 million euros contribution for the Parliament
2014: 135,504 million euros expenditures for the whole E.U. general budget
2014: the cost for the general budget concerning the E.P. is 1, 18% of the entire E.U. budget.

This shows that the European Parliament is but a small item of the expenditure of the General Budget of the European Union as a whole. These expenditures for the E.P. are linked with the administrative commitments in relation with the M.F.F. They are always nearly 5% of all outlays.

Based on the general budget of the European Union 2014 is the European Parliament is the second greatest cost in the E.U. general budget and this after the European Commission. With a budget contribution of 1,5 billion euro the Parliament is more expensive then other E.U. institutions like the European Council (478 million), external office (481 million), the Court of Justice (308 million), Economic and social committee (117 million), court of auditors (113 million) and the European ombudsman (8,6 million). The calculation of all these contributions coming from the general budget is nearly 2,2% of the total outlays in the E.U. budget. Through that the European Commission is still managing about 98% of this budget.

The financing of the political parties

The European Council of the European Parliament introduced arrangements on the status and financing of political parties at European level in 2003.

This funding serves to finance the political parties at European level. The European regulation of 2003 states that political factions in the European Parliament can only be recognized when they have at least 25 members in the E.P. and that from at least five member states. Once a faction is recognized it may apply for funding from the Parliament and be guaranteed seats in the various parliamentary commissions.

These factions do receive a share of the working resources of the Parliament (e.g. parliamentary staff). In practice these factions are the parliamentary reflection of the European political parties. The European regulation of 2003 on the political parties came into effect as of 2005.

The conditions for recognition as a European political party are the following:

- the party must have legal personality in the member state in which its principal office is established (mostly the city of Brussels);
- the party must be represented in at least one quarter of the member states by members of the European Parliament or by members of national or regional assemblies (this means at least seven states);
- the party must respect the principles of the European Union (human rights, free elections, free press etc. . . .);
- the party have taken part in the elections for the European Parliament or given notice of its intention to do so.

The status arrangement also states the conditions that must be met in order to receive financial support. It’s an obligation that each political party active at the European level must publish an annual statement of its revenues and expenditure. Community resources must be spent on things that are directly related to the political programme and may in no case be used to finance the political parties in the member states.

The largest European political parties following the 2009 elections are:

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European People’s Party (265 seats),
- Progressive Alliance of Socialists and Democrats (184 seats),
- Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (84 seats),
- European Greens / European Free Alliance (55 seats),
- European Conservatives and Reformists (54 seats),

The “Final grants” to the European political parties have evolved as follows since 2005, the year in which these grants were first made.

TABLE: V appropriations for Europe’s political parties (millions of euros)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Appropriations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>13.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>18.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>21.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The figures for 2013 and 2014 are the estimated expenditure. The earlier figures are based on the final grants.

These final grants allows us to see that the appropriations to the European political parties grew during the period 2005 – 2012 by a factor of 2.2 and that this trend will definitely continue in 2013 and 2014.

The rising trend can also be clearly seen from the appropriations per political party (by order of magnitude of the factions).
- “European People’s Party”: from 1.5 million euros in 2004 to 6.4 million in 2012
- “Party of European Socialists”: from 1.2 million euros in 2004 to 4.3 million in 2012
- “Liberal Democrats”: from 0.6 million euros in 2004 to 1.9 million in 2012
- The political group formed by the “European Greens” (from 0.1 million euros in 2004 to 1.3 million in 2012) and the “European Free Alliance” (from 0.1 million euros in 2004 to 0.4 million in 2012)
- “Conservatives and Reformists”: from 0.1 million euros in 2004 to 1.1 million in 2012

The three largest political parties received roughly two thirds of the total appropriation in 2012.

Other political parties that receive an appropriation of this kind in 2014 were: “European Left” (2012: 0.8 million euros), “European Democratic Party” (2012: 0.3 million), the “European Christian Political Movement” (2012: 0.2 million euros) is a Dutch Calvinist group, the “E.U. Democrats” (2012: 0.2 million) is a primarily Danish anti-EU faction, the “European Alliance for Freedom” (2012: 0.3 million) is a Maltese party and the “European Alliance of National Movements” (2012: 0.1 million euros).

The European Political Foundations

An European political foundation (formally political foundation at European level) is a research and advocacy organization attached to a European political party. The purpose of these
foundations is to support the party concerned by means of studies, conferences, seminars, training sessions etc.

Authorized for the first time in the 2008 budget these foundations are financed by the European Parliament. The finance for these foundations was made available in the form of subsidies from the European Commission and that for the first time in October 2007.

Under the parliamentary appropriation system these foundations receive sufficient financial resources to pay 85% of their expenditure. The foundations are expected to raise the rest of their financial requirements themselves from donations, contributions, sales and so forth.

The appropriations paid to these foundations may not be used for campaigning costs at elections or passed back to the related political parties in the member states.

In order to receive resources from the Parliament chapter of the general EU budget, these foundations must abide by a number of conditions:

- they must be legal entities separate from the party organization in the member state in which the party is based;
- abide by the following principles of the E.U., namely: freedom, democracy, respect for human rights, fundamental rights and for the rule of law;
- not pursue profits;
- the composition of the administrative body of these foundations must be geographically balanced over the member states of the Union.

**TABLE: VI** Appropriations for the foundations (2008-2014) (in millions of euros)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Appropriation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>6.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>11.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>13.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The main foundations are linked to European political parties and receive appropriations as follows:

- “Centre for European Studies” (European People’s Party) received an appropriation of 1.3 million euros in 2008 and 4.2 million in 2013;
- “Foundation for European Progressive Studies” (Party of European Socialists), appropriation 1.2 million euros in 2008, rising to 2.8 million in 2013;
- “European Liberal Forum” (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe Party) appropriation 0.2 million euros in 2008, and 1.2 million in 2013.

An analysis of the figures in Table VI shows that the appropriation rose by a factor of 3 in the 2008-2014 period. The three largest European political parties received roughly two thirds of all the appropriations.

**Conclusion**

This brief study calculates the cost of the European Parliament since 2003. The first observation is that the expenses of the parliamentary assembly have risen steadily during the period of the study. The own resources of the European Parliament account for about 10% of its
expenditure. As a result the Parliament must be financed primarily from appropriations from the general budget of the European Union.

Since 2009 the remuneration and pensions of MEPs have been a charge on the budget of the Parliament.

The payroll costs of the MEPS and civil service employees account for over 60% of how the European Parliament’s budget is spent.

Comparing with the national Parliaments of the member states the cost per M.P. in the European Parliament is a lot higher. The reasons therefore are indicated in this article. Other notable expenses are logistics and the subsidies paid to the European political parties and the foundations linked to them. These costs too have risen sharply in recent years.

Here it can be seen that the three largest factions take a good two thirds of the resources. The per capita cost of each MEP rose sharply when the European Parliament took responsibility for their remuneration and pensions, but this expenditure has remained relatively stable since then.

Comparatively speaking the European Parliament with its 751 members is a very large assembly. The numbers could be reduced, which would result in savings on salaries, support staff, pensions and similar. The distribution of the Parliament between the cities of Brussels, Luxembourg and Strasbourg, however, also gives rise to considerable expenditure. The question of whether it would be politically possible to actually act on these suggestions must however be left to conjecture. Indeed the decision-making system of the Union, which requires qualified majorities and a level of consensus among the 28 member states does not make things any easier. The division of the Parliament into a smaller “House” and a Senate would give no assurances of savings, the reason being that every parliament has to bear the fixed costs of logistics, civil service employees, and so forth.

Finally this article also clearly shows that the costs of the European Parliament represent only a small part of the overall expenditure of the general budget of the European Union.
**Evaluation of Promotion of Compressed Stabilized Laterite Bricks in Predicting Its Acceptability for Housing Construction**

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**Abstract**

Compressed Stabilized Laterite Bricks (CSLBs) has been canvassed as a viable alternative to sandcrete blocks due to its affordability and sustainability. However, it has not been widely accepted and used for housing construction as a result of certain inhibitors based on peoples’ perception. This paper examined the correlation between promotions (one of the inhibitors) of CSLBs in the prediction of its acceptability by the urban populace in Lagos State, Nigeria. Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area was purposively selected for this study. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data from 180 randomly selected respondents out of which 139 questionnaires were validly completed. Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics models. Results of the analysis revealed that adequate promotions of CSLBs will significantly (P ≤ 0.05) influence its acceptability by the urban populace. In addition, low cost implication and high aspiration for home ownership were identified as other factors that significantly affected acceptability of CSLBs. It is recommended that public awareness campaign and education by government and stakeholders in the building industry is the key to acceptability of CSLBs for housing construction.

**Keywords:** Acceptability, Compressed Stabilized Laterite Bricks, housing, inhibitors, Nigeria
1.0 Introduction
The significance of housing to human existence cannot be over-emphasized. Apart from being one of the basic needs of human existence in addition to food and clothing, human also place value attachments to housing beyond just mere shelter. The value attachment to housing varies between and among individuals, cultures, and regions as indicated by several studies on housing. Firstly, housing is seen as a measure of a country’s welfare in addition to being an indicator of the social well-being of its citizenry. In this light, Adedokun, Akinradewo, Adegoke and Abiola-Falemu (2011) held forth that the housing sector plays a more critical role in a country’s welfare as it affects not only the well-being of the citizenry, but also the performance of other sectors of the economy. Housing is also an important tool in economic development. Adeniyi (1985) supported this view submitting that it is a measure of the standard of living and level of development of a nation. Likewise, some individuals or households opined that housing is a consumable good which impacts on factors of productivity such as health, sanitation, security, privacy, neighbourhood and community relations (Erguden, 2001; Gichunge, 2001; UN-Habitat, 1993; Pynoos, Schafer and Hartman, 1973). Furthermore, housing also has a socio-cultural significance as opined by Ademiluyi (2010) who recognized housing as one of the greatly cherished material properties in the traditional African setting. This view was supported by Alagbe (2010) who identified that Nigerians place high premium on home ownership because it is a legacy that individuals aspire to bequeath. Consequently, people cannot be separated from their housing developments making housing to be an important aspect of mankind.

This paper investigated the correlation between promotions of Compressed Stabilized Laterite Bricks (CSLBs) as walling material by stakeholders in the building sector in predicting its acceptability for affordable housing construction by the urban populace. The study was motivated by the importance that housing plays in human existence and more significantly because of the deficit and near crisis situation that is being experienced in the housing supply chain particularly for the urban populace in Nigerian cities. While the paper observed recent advocacy for acquisition of indigenous building materials (IBMs) to ameliorate the housing crisis, acceptability of IBMs is an important issue that is yet to be addressed. Researchers have identified some inhibitors responsible for non-acceptance of IBMs. This study examined CSLBs as one of the IBMs and assessed promotion (awareness campaign) as an inhibitor that may aid in predicting the acceptability of CSLBs as a walling material for affordable housing construction.

2.0 Current housing statistics in Nigeria
In spite of the importance of housing to human existence, adequate supply of this commodity has been observed to be lacking in virtually all societies throughout history (UN-Habitat, 1993). The intractable housing problems in Nigeria has generated much discuss and interest in the past three decades which gave rise to calls on governments at various levels to give greater priority to the inherent housing problems. Studies have attempted to enumerate the qualitative and quantitative housing challenges in Nigeria. Current housing statistics in Nigeria as presented by Alitheia Capital (2012) revealed that there are 10.7 million houses in Nigeria, 90 per cent of these are self-built, with little or no mortgage attachment, and 5 per cent have formal title to property. This implies that a highly significant proportion of housing development in Nigeria is done by individuals without financial support from any financial institution, and perhaps without any oversight supervision by approved authorities. This suggests that the houses may not meet qualitative standards leading to growth of undesirable urban developments. This view is supported by Olokesusi and Okunfulure (2000) who identified that housing condition, especially those portrayed by the availability and efficiency of facilities and utilities have been worsening since 1980.
Housing deficit in Nigeria is estimated at 14 million units (Alithea Capital, 2012). It noted that to bridge the Nigerian housing gap, it will cost N49 trillion ($326 billion) at an assumed cost of N3.5 million per unit. Despite the fact that most housing developments in Nigeria are self-built, the report revealed that home ownership in Nigeria is low. 85 per cent of the urban population live in rented housing, spending 40 per cent of their income on shelter. Ogunsemi and Abiola-Falemu (2006) affirmed that about 70 per cent of the Nigerian population are very poor coupled with the fact that some 40 per cent of the country’s population spends about 35 per cent of their income on rent, which is about 16 per cent higher than the 20 per cent recommended by the United Nation. The built environment is dominated by informal housing as 80 per cent of the urban population live in dense settlements with poor infrastructure (Alithea Capital, 2012). Existing formal supply the report says is targeted at the high income earners priced well above over 92 per cent of the population, contributing no more than 12 per cent of demand.

3.0 Theoretical framework

To ameliorate the current housing crisis in Nigeria, there is a need to look inward for acquisition of appropriate IBMs and construction techniques. This is important because the rising cost of building materials has made it impossible to provide affordable housing for the low-income urban residents (Oruwari, Jev and Owei, 2002). It must be noted that housing construction in Africa is largely dependent on imported building materials which contributes significantly to the high cost of housing delivery due to high exchange rates. Oruwari et al (2002) reported that in Africa and Nigeria in particular, there is a need to reduce the import-dependence of the housing sector and at the same time contain the escalating cost of essential building materials. Therefore, they advocated for an acquisition and strengthening of domestic technological capacity to produce IBMs as a solution to reduce the escalating cost of the essential building materials. Their argument rested on the premise that Nigeria is endowed with the required raw materials needed for production. UN-Habitat (1993) also identified that building materials and components constitute 50 – 60 per cent of the total cost of construction inputs in Nigeria. In the same vein, Madedor and Omange (1985) pointed out the need to reduce the cost of walling materials since such constitute a fair percentage of the total building cost. Arising from the argument that wall constitutes a fair percentage of the total building cost, this study focused on CSLBs as an affordable and indigenous walling material.

CSLB is a product derived from earth (mud). Earth is the most basic, and the most ubiquitous, building material known to man (Walker and McGregor, 1996). It has been suggested that at least 50% of the world’s population still live in earth houses (Easton, 1996). However, Sojkowski (2002) identified that potential use of ‘earth’ to build dwellings is hampered by a widespread socio-cultural perception that modern building techniques and materials are substantially better than traditional ones. He noted that earth materials and techniques are perceived as ‘substandard’ or ‘second class’, while modern construction methods and materials are seen as ‘civilised’ or ‘symbols of affluence’. Conversely, CSLBs is a product of scientific research and have significant advantages which addresses most of the inhibiting perceptions associated with traditional earth building technique. The advantages include but not limited to higher compressive strength, improved durability and strength, reduction of ingress of moisture into the block, cheap and affordable, fire resistant, low energy input in processing and handling, environmental appropriateness, regular shape and size as shown by researchers such as Adam and Agib, 2001; Montgomer, 1998; Norton, 1997; Houben and Guillaud, 1989; Bush, 1984. However, a comprehensive literature reviewed by Zami (2011) identified a number of inhibitors responsible for low acceptability of CSLBs. He noted that inhibitors identified were mostly based on perceptions of the researchers because they lack empirical data and validation through a research methodological process.
Summary of literature reviewed in this study revealed that: there is a shortfall in housing supply in Nigerian urban centres which is almost leading to a housing crisis; dependence on imported building materials at the expense of readily available IBMs is a clog in the wheel of housing supply; there is a need to acquire and strengthen domestic technological capacity to produce IBMs; despite the preponderance of arguments that acquisition of CSLBs will make housing affordable, some identified inhibitors limit its acceptability; the identified inhibitors were mostly subject of researchers perceptions rather than of empirical validation through research methodological process. This paper therefore quantifiably assessed the correlation between stakeholders promotion of CSLBs in predicting its acceptability as a walling material by the urban populace. The null hypothesis tested is that there is no significant difference between stakeholders promotion of CSLBs in prediction of its acceptability for housing in a typical Nigerian urban center. It is expected that the result of this study will aid in developing a policy direction that will enhance the acceptability of CSLBs as a walling material and subsequently improve housing delivery among the urban populace.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Study area
The study was carried out in Ibeju-Lekki Local Government Area (LGA) in the Epe Division of Lagos State, Nigeria. The administrative seat was formerly at Akodo but now in Igando-Oloja due to the recent creation of Lekki Local Council Development Area (LCDA). This change aided the rapid development of the LGA as compared to when it was treated as a backwater suburb of the Epe Division. The National Population Commission census result of 1991 estimated the population of Ibeju at approximately 24,000. However, statistics and enumeration conducted recently by Lagos State government estimated the population of the LGA at approximately 54,000. Ibeju-Lekki LGA has a land area of about 646 square kilometres which equals one quarter of the total land mass of Lagos State – the commercial capital of Nigeria. Hence, it is regarded as the fastest growing LGA in Africa and the future of Lagos State (Ibeju-Lekki Official website). These characteristics make it appropriate for this study.

Despite the rapid urbanization of the LGA, Ibeju-Lekki Official website reported that not much has been accomplished in the area of housing. The LGA have a few housing infrastructure developments awaiting implementations in the area. However, private estates such as Eko Akete Estate (proposed to contain over 6,000 housing units when completed), Beechwood Estate amongst others are springing up under the auspices of private developers. Housing development comprising of residential estates in different parts of the LGA necessitated springing up of block (sandcrete blocks) making factories. The preference of sandcrete blocks for walling despite the abundance of earth (Ibeju-Lekki Official website) which is the raw material for CSLBs was the thrust of this study. Although many inhibitors had been identified (Zami, 2011) as factors militating against acceptability of CSLBs, this study investigated the aspect of inadequate stakeholders promotion of CSLBs for housing construction. The study assumed that information about a building material is best disseminated through prototype construction which is easily facilitated by stakeholders (public-private) in the building sector. This is because they are the biggest participants in the building construction industry. Therefore, this study assessed the role of stakeholders’ promotion of CSLBs in predicting its acceptability for housing construction by the urban populace.

4.2 Data collection
The study area was purposively selected due to its characteristics as a budding LGA in the Lagos metropolis as discussed earlier. Data was collected through use of structured questionnaires administered on one hundred and eighty randomly selected respondents within the vicinity of the
LGA. The respondents were briefed on the objective of the study and confirmation gotten of their knowledge of the walling material being studied through use of pictures of completed CSLBs buildings. The questionnaire collected information on the socio-economic status of the respondents, importance they attached to home ownership and their perception of public-private partnership promotion of CSLBs in predicting its acceptability as a walling material. A pretesting of the questionnaire was undertaken in similar neighborhoods before actual data collection took place. Pretest result showed that some randomly selected respondents do not have any idea about CSLBs, yet they completed the questionnaire. Modifications were made by attaching pictures of prototype buildings and by ensuring that only respondents who showed evidence of knowledge of the walling material were selected and administered the questionnaire. Questionnaires returned were validated and 139 (representing 77% response rate) found to be properly completed were used for data analysis.

4.3 Data analysis
Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used to analyze data generated using three main statistical methods. Descriptive statistics using frequency counts and percentages were used to analyze the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents and the importance they attached to home ownership. Six items identified in this category were namely highest educational level, average monthly income, preference ranking of basic human needs, home ownership as a legacy, income status as a function of duration of home ownership and CSLB is inadequately promoted. Secondly, individual mean satisfaction scores were computed for all the 139 respondents to determine strength of influence of each item. Finally, a standard multiple regression analysis was used to explore the relationship between promotion of CSLBs by stakeholders and the other identified socio-economic variables in predicting its acceptability.

5.0 Results and Discussions
5.1 Socio-economic characteristics of respondents and importance attached to housing:
The socio-economic characteristics of respondents and importance they attached to housing is shown in Table 1. Majority of respondents (83.5%) have tertiary education. Monthly income distribution of respondents is concentrated around the middle and high income level with 39.6% and 41.0% respectively while 19.4% are low income earners. This suggests that income status is largely a function of educational background. Result also revealed that majority of respondents (87.1%) agreed that home ownership is a legacy while 11.5% think otherwise. This supports the view of Ozo (1990) who established that the aspiration to own a house constitutes one of the strongest incentives for savings and capital formation in Nigeria. This study further affirms that the importance that Nigerians attached to home ownership transcends issue of just shelter provision but more of a legacy that every individual strive to bequeath. It implies that majority of Nigerians attach premium importance to home ownership and will thus aspire to have one. This aspiration perhaps explain why 9.6 million (90%) of the 10.7 million houses in Nigeria were self-built, with little or no mortgage attachment (Alitheia Capital, 2012).

Respondents were asked to rank the following basic needs in order of importance: housing, health and education. Results revealed that education has the highest mean score of 2.42, followed by housing and health with mean scores of 2.35 and 1.33 respectively. This contradicts findings by Adisa, Agunbiade and Akanmu (2008) study on well-being indices preference among retirees where good health has the highest mean score of 3.69, followed by personal house and sufficient rest/leisure period with mean scores of 3.12 and 3.10 respectively. This is expected because of the nature of respondents who are retirees. The nature of their age will make good health to be a priority to them. However, the authors observed that results from focus group discussions ranked personal...
house a major determinant of one’s well-being closely followed by good health. It can be concluded that the aspiration for home ownership is a legacy for individuals in the Nigeria context. The need to satisfy this aspiration calls for acquisition of affordable and sustainable IBMs to reduce cost of housing construction thereby improving rate of housing delivery. Individual mean score shows that home ownership has the highest – 3.32 which further confirms the importance that respondents attach to home ownership.

Table 1: Respondents’ socio-economic characteristics and importance attached to housing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Frequency (N = 139)</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest education level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below tertiary</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>83.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average monthly income (naira)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 45 000 (low income)</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>19.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 000 – 100 000 (middle income)</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>39.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>101 and above (high income)</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preference ranking</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home ownership is a legacy</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>87.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income status and home ownership</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>duration (years)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>9.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 – 3</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 – 6</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>36.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 and above</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSLB is inadequately promoted</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study sought to know from the respondents the duration to build a typical three bedroom home based on their current monthly income. The result revealed that only 13.0% will complete a home in less than a year, 33.8% between one and three years and 36.7% between 4 and six years. It will take 18.7% of the respondents seven years and above to complete completion of a three bedroom house with their current income. Thou the result may be based on respondents’ perception rather than experience, but it confirms Ferguson (2000) submission that in emerging countries, the low- and moderate-income majority build their own homes incrementally over a period of 5 to 15 years, largely without the support of the formal-sector private and public institutions. Finally, the highest mean score computed was 3.68 which indicated that respondents felt that CSLB is inadequately promoted by stakeholders which in turn affect its low acceptability as a walling material by the urban populace.

5.2 Determinant of stakeholders promotion as a predictor of acceptability of CSLBs

Standard multiple regression was used to assess the ability of four control measures (stakeholders promotion of CSLBs, education level, monthly income, home ownership is a legacy) in
predicting acceptability of CSLBs by the urban populace. As articulated by Pallant (2011), preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity and homoscedasticity. Multiple regression analysis was used to test if stakeholders’ promotion of CSLBs significantly predicted its acceptability as a walling material for housing by the urban populace. The results of the regression are presented in Table 2 and Table 3. The result indicated the two predictors explained 28.3% of the variance ($R^2 = .283$, $F (4, 124) = 12.2$, $p < .001$). It was

Table 2: Model Summary of multiple regression of stakeholders promotion of CSLBs in predicting its acceptability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.532$^a$</td>
<td>.283</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.845</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholders promotion of CSLBs, Home Ownership is a Legacy, Monthly Income, Education Level
b. Dependent Variable: Acceptability of CSLB

Table 3: ANOVA of stakeholders’ promotion in predicting acceptability of CSLBs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>34.915</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.729</td>
<td>12.216</td>
<td>.000$^b$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>88.599</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>123.514</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

a. Dependent Variable: Acceptability of CSLB
b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholders promotion of CSLB, Home Ownership is a Legacy, Monthly Income, Education Level

Table 4 shows the coefficients analysis to evaluate the strength of the significant relationship between the variables in predicting the acceptability of CSLBs.

Table 4: Evaluation of the strength of variables in predicting acceptability of CSLBs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>1.158</td>
<td>.477</td>
<td></td>
<td>.017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>-.125</td>
<td>.071</td>
<td>-.146</td>
<td>-1.742</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Income</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>.069</td>
<td>.011</td>
<td>.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Ownership is a Legacy</td>
<td>.337</td>
<td>.099</td>
<td>.266</td>
<td>3.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders Promotion of CSLB</td>
<td>.457</td>
<td>.085</td>
<td>.422</td>
<td>5.407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It was found that stakeholders promotion of CSLBs significantly predicted acceptability ($\beta = .42$, $p < .001$), as well as home ownership is a legacy ($\beta = .27$, $p < .001$). Therefore, the probability of the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between stakeholders promotion of CSLBs in prediction of its acceptability for housing in a typical Nigerian urban center is extremely small with $p < .001$. The null hypothesis is rejected and the conclusion is that there is a linear relationship between these variables.
This is consistent with theoretical expectations that the more public awareness campaign about a product, the more knowledgeable the public becomes about the product. This explains the reason manufacturers continue with aggressive promotions to sensitize or reaffirm the quality of their product. It is logical therefore that promotion and acceptability are fairly strongly related. Consequently, improving public awareness through public-private partnership promotion will enhance acceptability of CSLBs as a walling material for housing construction by the urban populace. This can be achieved through construction of prototype homes with CSLBs by stakeholders in the construction industry.

6.0 Conclusion

This study has investigated the correlation between stakeholders’ promotion of CSLBs and its acceptability for housing by the urban populace. It was found out that there is a significantly high correlation between promotions of CSLBs by stakeholders in predicting its acceptability. The study also identified a high aspiration for home ownership among respondents. In terms of preference ranking out of the three basic necessity of modern living, home ownership took a close second after education with health issues taking the rear. Despite the aspiration for home ownership and the satisfactory income of respondents, the study showed that it will take majority of respondents a minimum of 4 to 6 years to finance construction of a home using sandcrete blocks. This is a major cause of concern for adequate housing delivery in Nigeria since majority of houses are done through self-built procurement system. The policy implication suggests that stakeholders should exploit alternative IBMs which are affordable, sustainable and readily available. CSLB is one of such materials.

In view of these findings, it is recommended that government and stakeholders in the building construction industry should take the lead to promote the acquisition of CSLBs as a walling material for affordable housing delivery. This can be achieved by initiating prototypes public mass housing construction of CSLB walls across the six geo-political zones of the country. This will encourage acceptability of CSLBs for building construction thereby reducing the level of drawbacks associated with earth as an IBM.
7.0 References


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A Novel Pulse Width Modulation Technique for Power Factor Correction In A Single – Phase Converter

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Abstract:

The application of Pulse Width Modulation (PWM) control scheme for improved Power Factor on the input side of the asymmetrical bridge controlled DC motor is investigated. The choice of this technique is based on its advantages over all other PFC techniques. The PWM scheme is unique in eliminating lower order harmonics by appropriate choice of the number of pulses per half cycle, with an improved Power Factor. Explicit expressions were derived for the behaviour factors – Harmonic factor (HF), Power Factor (PF), Displacement Factor and the Output Voltage of the drive. These expressions were simulated using matlab and the results compared with the Phase Angle Controlled (PAC) drive shows a significant improvement in Power Factor. The Pulse Width Modulation (PWM) is the most efficient of all the power factor improvement techniques and is increasingly being applied to various designs. The scheme is recommended to industrial users of this drive particularly, the Ajaokuta and Aladja Steel rolling mills in Nigeria, Multi - purpose motor controllers for the power industries and other application areas.

Keywords: PMW, Drive, Harmonic Factor (HF), Power Factor (PF), Displacement Factor (DF)
1. Introduction

Various methods of Power Factor Correction Techniques have been presented in previous research work [1-7]. Some of these technique increases Power Factor slightly in the range of 0.82 – 0.956, introduces dc and even harmonic currents in the supply line currents which could cause saturation of supply transformers, apart from improving power factor and reducing harmonics in the source current; they also reduce the ripple in the motor current and discontinuous conduction.

The Pulse Width Modulation (PWM) is the most efficient of all the power factor improvement techniques and is increasingly being applied to various power supply designs for machine controls depending on the needs and specifications of the design. In the current study, it has been applied to control the thyristors of an Asymmetrical Bridge feeding a DC motor load. In Pulse Width Modulation, the converter switches are turned on and off several times during a half circle and the output voltage is controlled by varying the width of the pulses [8-9].

The performance characteristics’ resulting from the various control techniques is contained in Osunde (2012). In some of the control schemes, the harmonic is high in the low – speed region. This is due to high – order harmonics, which are easily filtered out if input filters are used. The important current harmonics that the filter designer needs to consider are those of the lowest order. In this respect, the PWM control scheme has an advantage, because by a proper choice of the number of pulses per half cycle, the lowest – order harmonics can be eliminated [9]. In this research work, the thyristor gating signals are obtained by comparing two signals of different amplitudes and frequency, The behaviour factors of the drive – power Factor (PF), Harmonic Factor (HF) and the Displacement Factor (DF) were simulated using matlab. The result indicates that lower other harmonics are completely eliminated and the relationship of the behaviour factors with the gating signals clearly indicates a unity power factor hence the novelty of this technique.

The PWM control scheme is presently been applied in single – phase traction systems [10]. By having many pulses of the output voltage per cycle of the source voltage, the ripple in the motor current can be substantially reduced and discontinuous conduction can be completely eliminated without using any filter inductance. Thus, the higher pulse number improves the motor performance and efficiency. It also reduces or eliminates the low frequency harmonics in the source current. It should be noted however, that the switching losses in the converter increases with the pulse number. PWM improves the input current power factor of an AC – DC converter feeding a DC motor load to a value of 0.9996.

II. Derivation of the Behaviour Factors

In the sinusoidal PWM control shown in Fig.1, the pulse widths are generated by comparing a triangular reference voltage Vr of amplitude Ar and frequency fr with a carrier half sinusoidal voltage Vc of variable amplitude Ac and frequency 2fs. The sinusoidal voltage is in phase with the input phase voltage Vs and has twice the supply frequency fs. The widths of the pulses (and the output voltage) are varied by changing the amplitude Ac or the modulation index ‘M’ from 0 to 1. The modulation index is defined as:

$$M = \frac{A_c}{A_r}$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)

III. Analysis

The performance of the converter can be determined in two steps: (Rashid 1993; Venkatarammaman and Wang 2004)
(i) By considering only one pair of pulses such that if one pulse starts at \( \omega t = \alpha_1 \) and ends at \( \omega t = \alpha_1 + \delta_1 \), the other pulse starts at \( \omega t = \pi + \alpha_1 \) and ends at \( \omega t = (\pi + \alpha_1 + \delta_1) \) and

(ii) By combining the effects of all points. If \( m^{th} \) pulse starts at \( \omega t = \alpha_m \) and its width is \( \delta_m \), the input current due to ‘p’ number of pulse is found from equation (2) below.

Fig.1: Waveforms of Currents and Voltages for Sinusoidal PWM

In an attempt to evaluate the expressions for the behaviour factors of the drive, the Fourier expression of a sinusoidal input current waveform is considered.

The instantaneous input current to the bridge is expressed in Fourier series as:

\[
i_s(t) = I_{dc} + \sum_{m=1,2,3,\ldots}^{\infty} (a_m \cos \omega t + b_m \sin \omega t)
\]  \hspace{1cm} (2)

And due to symmetry of the input current waveform, there will be no even harmonics and \( I_{dc} \) will be zero:

\[
I_{dc} = \frac{1}{T} \int_0^T i(t) \, dt = \frac{1}{2\pi} \int_0^{2\pi} i(t) \, dt
\]  \hspace{1cm} (3)

If \( \delta_m \) is the width of the pulse, then \( I_{dc} \) can be written in the form;

\[
I_{dc} = \frac{1}{2\pi} \left[ \frac{a_m + \delta_m}{a_m} \int_{\alpha_m}^{\pi + \alpha_m + \delta_m} i(t) \, dt - \int_{\alpha_m}^{\pi + \alpha_m + \delta_m} i(t) \, dt \right]
\]

\[
= \frac{I_a}{2\pi} \left[ \frac{1}{\alpha_m} \left[ (a_m + \delta_m) - (\pi + a_m + \delta_m) \right] \right]
\]

\[
= \frac{I_a}{2\pi} \left[ (a_m + \delta_m) - a_m - \{a_m + \delta_m - \pi - a_m\} \right] = \frac{I_a}{2\pi} \left[ (\delta_m - \delta_m) \right] = 0 \]  \hspace{1cm} (4)
Therefore, $I_{dc}$ equals zero.

The coefficients of equation (2) are:

$$a_{m} = \frac{2}{T} \int_{0}^{T} t_{2}(t) \cos(\omega t) dt$$

$$= \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{0}^{\pi} I_{m} \cos(\omega t) dt - \int_{\pi}^{\pi+\Delta m} I_{m} \cos(\omega t) dt \right]$$

$$= \frac{I_{m}}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \sin(\alpha_{m} + \Delta m) - \sin(\alpha_{m}) - \sin(\pi + \alpha_{m} + \Delta m) - \sin(\pi + \alpha_{m}) \right]$$

For “$n$” even,

$$a_{n} = \frac{I_{m}}{n} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \sin(\alpha_{m} + \Delta m)(1 - 1) + \sin(\alpha_{m})(1 - 1) \right] = 0$$

For “$n$” odd,

$$a_{n} = \frac{I_{m}}{n} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \sin(\alpha_{m} + \Delta m)(1 + 1) + \sin(\alpha_{m})(-1 - 1) \right]$$

$$= \frac{I_{m}}{n} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ 2 \sin(\alpha_{m} + \Delta m) - 2 \sin(\alpha_{m}) \right] = \frac{2I_{m}}{n} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \sin(\alpha_{m} + \Delta m) - \sin(\alpha_{m}) \right]$$

Provided that $\delta_{m} \ll \alpha_{m}$ or that “$p$” $\gg$ 1,

Therefore,

$$a_{n} = 0 \text{ for all “} n \text{”}$$

Similarly,

$$b_{n} = \frac{2}{T} \int_{0}^{T} t_{2}(t) \sin(\omega t) dt = \frac{1}{n} \int_{0}^{\pi} t_{2}(t) \sin(\omega t) dt$$

$$= \frac{I_{m}}{n} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ -\cos(\alpha_{m}) \sin(\alpha_{m} + \Delta m) - \cos(\pi + \alpha_{m} + \Delta m) - \cos(\pi + \alpha_{m}) \right]$$

$$= \frac{I_{m}}{n} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \cos(\alpha_{m}) - \cos(\alpha_{m} + \Delta m) + \cos(\pi + \alpha_{m} + \Delta m) - \cos(\pi + \alpha_{m})$$
For “n” even,

\[
I_n = \frac{I_0}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos(n\alpha_m - \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m)) + \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m) - \cos(n\alpha_m) \right]
\]

\[
= \frac{I_0}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos(n\alpha_m - \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m)) + \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m) - \cos(n\alpha_m) \right] = 0
\]

(9)

For “n” odd,

\[
b_n = \frac{I_0}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos(n\alpha_m - \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m)) - \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m) + \cos(n\alpha_m) \right]
\]

\[
= \frac{2I_0}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos(n\alpha_m - \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m)) \right]
\]

Hence,

\[
i_s(t) = I_{dc} + \sum_{m=1,2,3...}^{\infty} \left( a_n \cos \omega t + b_n \sin \omega t \right)
\]

\[
= \sum_{m=1,2,3...}^{\infty} b_n \sin \omega t
\]

(10)

Since \(I_{dc} = 0\), and \(a_n = 0\) for \(\delta m \ll \alpha m\), then.

\[
\varphi = \tan^{-1} \frac{a_n}{b_n} = 0
\]

(12)

Determination of rms value of the nth harmonic current:

\[
I_{rms} = \sqrt{\frac{a_n^2 + b_n^2}{2}} = \sqrt{\frac{b_n^2}{2}} = \frac{b_n}{\sqrt{2}}
\]

(13)

Substituting for \(b_n\),

\[
I_{rms} = \frac{2I_0}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos(n\alpha_m - \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m)) \right] \frac{1}{\sqrt{2}}
\]

\[
I_{rms} = \frac{\sqrt{2}I_0}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos(n\alpha_m - \cos(n\alpha_m + \delta_m)) \right]
\]

Therefore,

(14)

Determination of rms value of the input current \(I_{x}\).

\[
I_x = \left| \frac{1}{T} \int_{0}^{T} i_x^2(t) \, dt \right|^{\frac{1}{2}} = \left| \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{0}^{\pi} i_x^2(t) \, dt \right|^{\frac{1}{2}}
\]

\[
= \left| \frac{1}{\pi} \int_{\alpha}^{\alpha_m + \delta_m} I_x^2 \, dt \right|^{\frac{1}{2}}
\]

(15)
For “p” pulses,

\[
I_s = \frac{I_a}{\sqrt{\pi}} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ (\alpha_m + \delta_m) - \alpha_m \right]^{\frac{3}{2}}
\]

Displacement Factor (DF);

\[
DF = \cos \Phi_1
\]

but,

\[
\Phi_1 = 0
\]

therefore,

\[
DF = \cos \Phi_1 = \cos 0 = 1
\]

Harmonic Factor (HF);

As previously defined [11-12],

\[
HF = \left[ \left( \frac{I_{z_s}}{I_s} \right)^2 - 1 \right]^{\frac{1}{3}}
\]

Substituting for \(I_{z_s}\) and \(I_s\) gives,

\[
HF = \left[ \left( \frac{\frac{I_a}{\sqrt{\pi}} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ (\alpha_m + \delta_m) - \alpha_m \right]^{\frac{3}{2}}}{\frac{\sqrt{2}I_a}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos \alpha_m - \cos (\alpha_m + \delta_m) \right]} \right)^2 - 1 \right]^{\frac{1}{3}}
\]

\[
= \left[ \frac{I_a}{\sqrt{\pi}} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ (\alpha_m + \delta_m) - \alpha_m \right]^{\frac{3}{2}} \left[ \frac{\sqrt{2}I_a}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos \alpha_m - \cos (\alpha_m + \delta_m) \right] \right]^{-2} - 1 \right]^{\frac{1}{3}}
\]

Input power factor is [11-12];

\[
PF = \frac{I_{z_s}}{I_s} \cos \Phi_1
\]

Again substituting for \(I_{z_s}\) and \(I_s\),

\[
PF = \frac{\sqrt{2}I_a}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos \alpha_m - \cos (\alpha_m + \delta_m) \right] \left( \frac{I_a}{\sqrt{\pi}} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ (\alpha_m + \delta_m) - \alpha_m \right]^{\frac{3}{2}} \right) \times 1
\]

\[
= \frac{\sqrt{2} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos \alpha_m - \cos (\alpha_m + \delta_m) \right]}{\sqrt{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ (\alpha_m + \delta_m) - \alpha_m \right]^{\frac{3}{2}}}
\]
\[ V_{dc} = \frac{1}{\pi} \left[ \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left( \int_{a_m}^{\alpha_m+\delta_m} V_m \sin(\omega t) \, dt \right) \right] = \frac{V_m}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos \alpha_m - \cos(\alpha_m + \delta_m) \right] \] (21)

If we let \( \beta_m = (\alpha_m + \delta_m) \),

Then the maximum dc voltage is \( \frac{2V_m}{\pi} \), which is obtained by varying \( \alpha_m \) and \( \beta_m \) from 0 to \( \pi \).

The normalized dc output voltage \( V_n \) is;

\[ V_n = \frac{V_{dc}}{V_{dc,\text{max}}} = \frac{V_m}{\pi} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos \alpha_m - \cos \beta_m \right] = \frac{1}{2} \sum_{m=1}^{p} \left[ \cos \alpha_m - \cos \beta_m \right] \] (22)

The equation of the rms value of the nth harmonic current was plotted against harmonic numbers for various pulses \( m \); for \( m = 4, 6, 8, 10 \). The results are displayed in Fig. 1(a-d). Also, results of computer simulations of the expressions for Power Factor, Harmonic Factor and the Displacement factor compared with those obtained for the Phase Angle Control are displayed in Figs. 2, 3 and 4 respectively.
III. Results

Fig. 1(a-d): Harmonic Currents for specified Harmonic numbers

(a) Pulse Number “m” = 4
(b) Pulse Number “m” = 6
(c) Pulse Number “m” = 8
(d) Pulse Number “m” = 10

Fig. 2: Variation of Power Factor with Output Voltage of the Bridge

Fig. 3: Variation of Harmonic Factor with Output Voltage of the Bridge
IV. Discussion of Results

A comparison of the behaviour factors with the output voltage for the PAC and the PWM control of the asymmetric drive, clearly shows a better PF (Fig. 2), lower harmonic content (Fig. 3) and a zero displacement which indicates unity power factor.

By a proper choice of the number of pulses per half cycle, the lowest – order harmonics can be eliminated as displayed in Fig. 1(a-d). This is in agreement with Sen (1991) and Rashid (1993). By having many pulses of the output voltage per cycle of the source voltage, the ripple in the motor current can be substantially reduced and discontinuous conduction can be completely eliminated without using any filter inductance. Thus, the higher pulse number improves the motor performance and efficiency. It also reduces or eliminates the low frequency harmonics in the source current.

V. Conclusion

It has been shown that by proper choice of the number of pulses per half cycle, the PWM eliminates lower- order harmonics present in the supply. The input supply current is essentially sinusoidal and the need for input filters to reduce harmonic currents is obviated. The PWM control technique provides an improved power factor close to unity and is increasingly being applied to various machine control schemes.

Fig. 4: Variation of Displacement Factor with Output Voltage of the Bridge
References


Parents’ Involvement with Children’s Homework: A Case Study of Academicians in a Malaysian Institution of Higher Learning

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Abstract

Many parents categorised homework as an additional burden on top of the normal class room activities. A small group of parents however appreciates the concept of homework as they believe it could enhance students’ discipline and academic performance. This study examines the role played by parents in helping their children to complete school’s homework. It aims to identify the methods and frequency of assistance given to children. The study also looks at the parents’ perception while helping their children to complete homework and to trace the relationships between variables including parental feelings of efficacy, frequency of parental assistance and the amount of homework completed. In gathering information and data, a quantitative methodology through online survey was employed. From a total of 56 respondents who are academicians from the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), the study revealed the following findings: i) Provision of structure is at the top of the list of assistance provided by parents, followed by direct involvement and autonomy of supports. ii) With the amount of homework the children were able to complete, no significant relationship between the frequency of assistance and the children age was found. It is concluded that respondents’ self-efficacy is a factor in assisting their children to complete homework. This study expects a more systematic predictive model which could be designed on matters relating to parents’ assistance in completing homework given to their children.

Keywords: Parents’ involvement, homework, provision of structure, direct involvement, autonomy of supports.
Introduction

Homework has been considered as a vital and useful educational supplement that kept on expanding in the educational frontiers (Bembenutty, 2011). It is seen as a common phenomenon. However, the concept of homework might not be so pleasant to many school children. Many of them, ranging from the age as young as those in pre-schools to those in the secondary schools, have been occupied with homework on top of scheduled activities during long school hours. More so, some children may be able to complete the homework by themselves; some may not, which triggers the reason for parents to be involved in this ‘dreadful’ process. Many parents categorised homework as an additional burden. A small group of parents however appreciates the concept of homework as they believe it could enhance students’ discipline and academic performance.

On the relationship between homework and motivation among students, it had been pointed out that “students’ motivation for school tasks declines among older students” (Hong, Peng, & Rowell, 2009; Wigfield et al., 1997). Similarly, Good and Borphy (2003); Warton (2001) found that negative attitudes toward homework had been observed among older students; thus, the decrease in their motivation to complete homework does not seem to be surprising.

While there are debates regarding the positive and negative effects of homework among scholars, parents and students, various studies from small-scale as well as large-scale surveys, had shown that homework to have provided reasonably positive effects on learning (Walberg and Paschal, 1995). This is coherent with the fact that a great number of scholars generally believe that homework enables students to be consistent or to be in the ‘momentum’ of their academic tasks. This is in line with some of the objectives of Islamic education which say that “education is essential as a life-long endeavour and it helps to develop potentials of human’s soul, intelligence and body in an integrated manner” (Langgulung, 1989). One way to meet such objectives is by ensuring children to complete the homework assigned as one form of discipline, said to lead to their personal character building. Cooper (2007) stressed that homework is perceived as having potential effects on students’ academic achievement. He reiterated that there is a positive relationship between the amount of homework students needed to complete and their achievement. The relationship was generally been found to be statistically different from zero indicating that fair amount of homework could lead to improved academic achievement among students who had been able to complete them.

Che Noraini Hashim and Narima Abdul Hamid (2006) considered home is the place where learning begins, and parents are the first and the ongoing educators of their children. Most parents are indeed concerned about their children’s academic performance which they see as an essential in ensuring their children’s success. Therefore parents should be involved in assisting children to complete their homework, since the Islamic teaching suggests its followers to inculcate the value of role-modeling (uswa) in guiding children. This methodology had been implemented by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in his teaching pedagogy. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) used to utter that if lessons were to be learned and acquired, he (the teacher) would have to show them in actions and deeds. To this end, if parents are ‘to quench the thirst’ of seeing their children performed well in their studies, they should be involved with their children’s responsibility to complete the homework.

According to Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler (1995, 1997), parents tend to be involved in their children’s homework for three major reasons: parental role construction, parents’ sense of efficacy for helping the children succeed in school and parents’ perceptions of invitations to involvement. Nonetheless, there is still no conclusive evidence pointing to the fact that homework had improved student achievement and motivation, across the board. While many had agreed that parental involvement is essential for children’s school achievement (e.g. Epstein, 1995) yet, there is disagreement regarding what makes up ‘effective’ parental involvement with homework (Baker, 1997).
Hence, the purpose of this study is to examine and highlight how parents who are in the education field, specifically lecturers perceive their children's homework. It explains parents’ experiences and the frequency of their involvement with homework given to their children. The study also explores how parents’ self-efficacy plays a part in the involvement with their children’s homework. It will specifically be based on the following objectives: to examine the kinds of assistance parents provide in their children’s homework; to identify the relationship between the frequency of parental assistance and their children’s age; to examine parents’ perceived self-efficacy in helping their children in completing homework, and to recognise the relationship among parental feelings of efficacy, frequency of parental assistance and the amount of homework a child completes. Thus, the research questions are as follow:

i. What methods of assistance with homework had been provided by parents for their children?
ii. Is there a significant relationship between the frequency of parental assistance and their children’s age?
iii. How do parents perceive their self-efficacy in helping their children’s homework?
iv. Is there any relationship among parental feelings of efficacy, frequency of parental assistance and amount of homework a child completes?

Review of Literature

In the Malaysian context, studies concerning parental involvement with children’s homework are scanty. The following literature had been reviewed to set the necessary background to this present study. It pointed out the importance of parental involvement in children’s education and discussed the issue of homework in general.

The success of children at school is very much connected to parental involvement in the children’s schooling (Epstein, 1995; Grolnick et. al., 1997; O’Sullivan, 2008). Within the circles of educators and researchers, parental involvement comprises an array of activities amongst the school, family and community. This involvement has been gauged through several aspects such as reading at home (e.g. Morrow, 1989), being present at school occasions (e.g. Stevenson and Baker, 1987) and also assisting with homework (e.g. Walberg, 1984). This is in line with Epstein’s (1995) model, in which he highlighted six categories of involvement (shown in Table 1.), in a comprehensive programme relating to the collaboration of school, family and community.

Table 1: Categories of Involvement in Comprehensive Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type 1</th>
<th>Parenting</th>
<th>Helping all families establish supportive home environments for children.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type 2</td>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>Establishing two-way exchanges about school programs and children’s progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 3</td>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>Recruiting and organizing parent help at school, home, or other locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 4</td>
<td>Learning at home</td>
<td>Providing information and ideas to families about how to help students with homework and other curriculum-related materials.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 5</td>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>Having parents from all backgrounds serve as representatives and leaders on school committees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type 6</td>
<td>Collaborating with the community</td>
<td>Identifying and integrating resources and services from the community to strengthen school programs.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(From Sheldon and Epstein, 2005)

Studies indicate that each type of involvement activity leads to different results (Epstein, 1995) and that parental involvement at home is one of the most effective involvement in children’s education (Hara and Burke, 1998). This links to Type 1: Parenting and Type 4: Learning at home, where parents provide supportive home environment and help children with homework and other curriculum-related materials, which is the focus of the current study.
With regards to homework, Cooper (1989) defines it as “tasks assigned to students by school teachers that are meant to be carried out during non-school hours” (p. 86). However, Cooper (2011) substitutes the phrase “during non-school hours” to “during non-instructional time” because many students work on homework tasks during the school day. In order to “estimate homework’s effects and discover other factors in the school and home environment that might influence its impact”, Cooper (1989) provides some suggested positive and negative effects of homework based on the broad literature. The positive ones include increased understanding, improved attitude toward school and greater self-discipline. On the other hand, the negative effects are loss of interest in academic material, denial access to leisure time activities, confusion of instructional techniques and copying from other students.

Upon his conclusion that homework entails a complex relation of influences, Cooper (1989) outlines a process model of factors influencing the use of homework, as illustrated in Table 2. It will be useful to refer to the model, especially the ‘Home-Community Factors’, an area where parental involvement is directly related.

Table 2: A Model of Factors Influencing the Effect of Homework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous Factors</th>
<th>Assignment Characteristics</th>
<th>Initial Classroom Factors</th>
<th>Home-Community Factors</th>
<th>Classroom Follow-up</th>
<th>Outcomes of Effects</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student characteristics</td>
<td>Amount</td>
<td>Provision of materials</td>
<td>Competitors for student time</td>
<td>Feedback - Written comments</td>
<td>Assignment completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ability</td>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>Skill area utilised</td>
<td>Facilitators - Suggested approaches</td>
<td>Home environment - Space</td>
<td>- Light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study habits</td>
<td>Degree of individualisation</td>
<td>- Links to curriculum</td>
<td>- Quiet</td>
<td>- Materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject matter</td>
<td>Degree of individualisation</td>
<td>- Other rationales</td>
<td>Others’ involvement - Parents</td>
<td>- Siblings</td>
<td>- Other students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level</td>
<td>Completion deadlines</td>
<td>Social context</td>
<td>Use in class discussion</td>
<td>Testing of related content</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade level</td>
<td>Social context</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Positive effects - Immediate academic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Long term academic</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Non academic parental</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Negative effects - Satiation - Denial of leisure time - Parental interference - Cheating - Increasing student differences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to previous studies, Hoover-Dempsey et.al. (2001) reviewed research on parental involvement in student homework. They listed the reasons why parents become involved in their children’s homework; what activities and strategies parents employed throughout their involvement; and showed how parental involvement influenced children’s achievement; and which achievement had been influenced by parents’ involvement.
Hoover-Dempsey et.al. (2001, p. 201) concluded three main reasons why they chose to be involved with their children’s homework, namely:

1. They believe that they should be involved.
2. They believe that their involvement will make a positive difference.
3. They perceive invitations to involvement.

Activities and strategies that parents employed in their involvement include:

1. child-rearing values and assumptions about learning.
2. understanding of the purposes and goals of homework
3. personal knowledge of strategies appropriate for supporting child performance or learning.
4. responses to specific information, from teachers or children, about homework tasks and processes. 

(Hoover-Dempsey et.al., 2001, p. 203)

Hoover-Dempsey et.al. (2001, p.203) also discovered that parental involvement in children’s homework did influence children’s achievement because it provides “modelling, reinforcement, and instruction that supports the development of attitudes, knowledge, and behaviours associated with successful school performance”. Through the above mentioned parental involvement, students directly and indirectly developed positive attitudes toward learning, own positive perceptions of personal competence and ability, and also gained knowledge of personal effective learning strategies (Hoover-Dempsey et.al., 2001).

Previously Grolnick et.al. (1997) attempted to identify factors that determine how parents become involved in their children’s schooling. He then forwarded a hierarchical model of factors at several levels (individual, contextual, institutional). The study found that multiple factors at several levels are necessary to explain parents’ involvement. In addition, these factors vary for different types of involvement. The results could be used to build interventions to assure parent involvement across all families. The need for strong family involvement should start from the time children attended preschool and continued through high school.

Studies by Eagle (1989), Funkhouser and Gonzales (1997), Goodman et. al. (1995), Shields (1995) on the other hand, highlighted the fact that as children get older, the methods and expectations for family involvement must differ and evolve until graduation. The methods of communication between families and the school as children enter middle school must be altered to accommodate multiple teachers and increased independence; nevertheless, parents remain valuable associates in increasing student achievement. Still, through the support of parents in areas ranging from developing homework routines, providing after-school supervision, limiting television viewing, and helping children prepare for college and other post-secondary education, many schools manage to obtain academic success.

A recent study in Malaysia conducted by Vellymalay (2012) aimed to identify the relationship between schools - parents cooperation in increasing Indian parents’ involvement in their children’s schooling. A moderate relationship in school-parents collaboration in enhancing Indian parents’ involvement in their children’s education had been recorded. It was also pointed out that parents’ involvement is deeper if they felt welcome at school, and also when the school is cooperative in discussing their children abilities. In addition, findings also revealed that parents are more involved in their children’s education when they were kept informed about meetings, activities and events that they have to attend.

Another study in the Malaysian setting conducted by Koh and Ong (2010), explained that parents’ actions toward their children are multidimensional in nature. They came out with an instrument named SPAQ1 through a Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The study revealed that the
multidimensional parents’ actions consist of Aspiration, Homework, Conduciveness, Religiosity, Control, Conflict and Closeness.

Pezdek, Berry and Renno (2002, p. 771) examined the accuracy of parents’ assessment of their children’s mathematics achievement and the connection with the time parents spend on children’s homework. The parents predicted their children’s mathematics test performance. Surprisingly, it was found that parents over rated their children’s scores in both studies. Besides that, the time parents spent assisting their children with mathematics homework had no significant relation with the children’s achievement, parents’ forecast of mathematics performance, or the accuracy of parents’ predictions on mathematics performance. It concluded that “Although increasing parents’ knowledge of their children’s mathematics competency should remediate poor mathematics performance of U.S. children, neither homework nor traditional report cards effectively informed parents regarding their children’s mathematics performance”.

Lenka and Kant (2012) explored the connection between parental participation and academic achievement of secondary school children in four districts of India. In the study, they limit ‘parental participation’ to the involvement strategies practiced by the parents on their children’s education at home and school. The study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between parents’ involvement and academic achievement, including in some core subjects of their children.

3.0 Methodology

Employing a quantitative research methodology, this study focused on the respondents from the population of lecturers from the Centre of Languages and Pre-Academic Development, International Islamic University Malaysia, located in Gombak as well as Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia. Among many, the total of 56 lectures teaching either the English Language, Arabic, Bahasa Melayu or Tilawah, responded to the survey within at least one month after the forms were distributed online via google spreadsheet. The rationale of selecting this group of people was to focus on the perceptions of parents who are in the academic field, those expected to be influenced by their self-efficacy based on their academic qualification, as well as their exposure to the academic nature at work.

A set of questionnaire adapted from O'Sullivan (2008) was used as the instrument in the study. The items included were to measure homework assistance provided by parents by using 5-point-Likert scale (1=never, 2=less than once a week, 3=about once a week, 4=more than once a week, 5=every night). In total, there were 26 items which were grouped according to several main constructs as described in Table 3 below:

| Items 1-6 :     | Demographic information                          |
| Items 8-11 :   | Provision of Structure (4 items)                 |
| Items 12-15 :  | Direct Involvement (4 items)                      |
| Items 16-19 :  | Autonomy Support (4 items)                        |
| Items 21-26 :  | Parental Efficacy (6 items)                       |

‘Provision of structure’, ‘direct involvement’ and ‘autonomy support’ are the main ways of how parents get involved with their children’s homework, while ‘parental efficacy’ refers to parents’ perceptions of their self-efficacy in providing help for their children.

In addition, there were also extra information of ‘Frequency of parental assistance’ (Item 7) and ‘Amount of homework the child completes’ (Item 20).

Table 4, illustrates in detail all the items specified in the constructs of the questionnaire explained above.

| Items in Questionnaire | 81 |
| Provision of Structure | How often do you make your child set aside quiet time for doing homework?  
Most of the time, is the television on or off when your child does homework?  
Do you provide incentives for your child to finish his/her homework?  
How often do you make sure your child has a suitable place (i.e., good lighting, minimal distractions) to do homework? | Structure was defined by Grolnick and Ryan (1989) as “the degree to which parents provide clear and consistent guidelines, expectations and rules for child behavior” (p. 144). |
| Direct Involvement | How often does your child’s homework require you or other people (another adult or brother or sister) to be involved?  
How often do you help your child study for tests or quizzes?  
How often do you explain or reword the directions to homework assignments to make sure your child understands what he/she is expected to do?  
How often do you correct your child’s homework before he/she turns it in to the teacher? | Direct parent involvement was defined as “the extent that a parent takes an active part in their child’s life” (p. 144). |
| Autonomy Support | How often do you encourage your child to break difficult homework problems down into smaller parts that he/she can do independently?  
How often do you discuss problem-solving strategies to use for different homework?  
How often do you teach and encourage your child to regulate his/her emotional responses (i.e., frustration, disappointment, anger) to homework?  
How often do you encourage your child to monitor his/her own level of understanding when working on homework assignments? | Autonomy support was defined as the extent to which parents “value and use techniques which encourage independent problem solving, choice, and participation in decisions versus externally dictating outcomes, and motivating achievement through punitive disciplinary techniques” (p. 144). |
| Parental Efficacy items) | I know how to help my child with his/her homework.  
It is hard for me to help my child with his/her homework.  
I understand what my child is supposed to do with his/her homework.  
I know what kind of help my child needs with his/her homework.  
I make a significant difference in my child’s performance in school.  
I believe that when I help my child with his/her homework, he/she understands concepts better. | These 6 items were designed to measure how strongly parents believe that they can influence children’s academic achievement by assisting them with homework. |

Data was keyed-in and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20.0. Descriptive analyses and correlation were generated in order to answer the research questions posed in the present study.
4.0 Results and Discussions

The next section revealed results and followed by discussions against each research question.

RQ 1: What methods of assistance with homework had been provided by parents for their children?

Table 5: Means for the constructs of Provision of Structure, Direct Involvement and Autonomy Support

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>provision structure</th>
<th>direct involvement</th>
<th>autonomy support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.36</td>
<td>3.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>3.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results showed that the means for all three constructs (provision of structure, direct involvement and autonomy support) fell between 3 and 4, indicating that the average of parents assisted their children in between ‘once a week’ and ‘more than once a week’. Parents in this study had provided a fair amount of assistance in all three aspects mentioned. Comparing the result from this study to the one forwarded by O’Sullivan’s (2008) it could be said that provision of structure was the most frequent method of assistance, followed by autonomy and direct assistance.

Looking into the details of each method of assistance, it is found that Item 11 (i.e. How often do you make sure your child has a suitable place: good lighting, minimal distractions, to do homework?), under the Provision of structure showed the highest frequency. Table 6 depicted the results of every item in the three constructs. (Note that the numbers in brackets indicate the sequence (by frequency) of assistance provided by the parents). As stated earlier, parents are found to provide more or less the fair amount of assistance in the three aspects.

The fact that the respondents are more concerned about the comfort they can offer the children in doing their homework supports the study by O’Sullivan (2008) which clearly finds that provision of structure was the most frequent method of assistance, followed by Autonomy & Direct assistance. This is also consistent with Sheldon & Epstein’s (2005) Parental Involvement Framework Type 1 on types of parental involvement with school program: ‘Parenting’ which emphasizes on parents’ efforts in establishing supportive home environments for their children. In addition, Davis’ (2000) study entitled ‘Supporting Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in Your School’ that states that families whose basic needs of food, clothing, and shelter are not being met have a more difficult time helping their children to do well in school.

Table 6: Details of Parent Involvement (sequenced according to frequency)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision of Structure</th>
<th>Direct Involvement</th>
<th>Autonomy Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Item 11: Suitable place (1)</td>
<td>Item 12: You / other people involved (4)</td>
<td>Item 16: Break into smaller parts(10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M=4.11, SD=0.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 8: Set aside quiet time (2)</td>
<td>Item 13: Study for tests /quizzes (5)</td>
<td>Item 17: Problem-solving strategies (9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 9: Television on/off (11)</td>
<td>Item 14: Explain/reword to ensure understanding (6)</td>
<td>Item 18: Regulate emotional responses (8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 10: Give incentives (12)</td>
<td>Item 15: Correct before submitting to Teachers (7)</td>
<td>Item 19: Monitor own level of understanding (3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hence, being educators, respondents may have a great deal of understanding the learners’ needs better, which is related to the concept of conducive learning environment. This findings may lead to the conclusion that being educators too, these parents understand each child as a unique individual and are aware of the importance of meeting their distinct needs in order to prepare and help them reach their fullest potential for their academic and adulthood with a better quality of life.

Apart from providing structures for their children, these parents also employ strategies of direct involvement and autonomy support in helping their children with homework that corresponds with Type 4 of Sheldon & Epstein’s (2005) framework ‘Learning at home’ which stresses on how parents provide information and ideas to families about how to help their children with homework and other curriculum related materials. As educators themselves, they may already have this level of awareness on the specific ways to deal with their children’s homework like rewording, monitoring, asking them to break problems into smaller parts, problem solving and handling them with the appropriate emotion. Information provided by parents would better equip their children to be more successful. This supports the fact that effective communication between parents and children may result in better outcomes for the children.

RQ 2: Is there a significant relationship between the frequency of parental assistance and their children’s age?

The relationship between the frequency of parental assistance & their children’s age was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Result in Table 7 showed that there is no significant correlation between the frequency of parental assistance and the children’s age, \( r = .50, p > .005 \). In other words, how often respondents spend in helping their children with homework is not statistically influenced by how old their children are.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Frequency of parental assistance</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Child’s age</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

These findings seemed to be inconsistent with the findings forwarded by Eagle, E., (1989), Funkhouser, J.E. & Gonzales, M.R (1997), Goodman, J. et al. (1995) and Shields, P. (1995) which found that methods and expectations for family involvement must change and continue to evolve until the day the children graduated since parents are valuable allies in increasing student’s achievement. This indicates that respondents could provide the same amount of parental assistance to their children, irrespective of the child’s age. It might be attributable to the fact that they used more of Types 2 and 5 of Epstein’s parenting styles on ‘Communicating and Decision Making’ that has led to placing more trust to their children by giving them freedom in making decisions.

RQ 3: How do parents perceive their self-efficacy in helping their children’s homework?

Respondents who are educators by profession, perceived their self-efficacy as one of the factors that had contributed to the effectiveness of their involvement and in helping their children with homework. The result from this study had indicated that respondents did believe that they have high self-efficacy in assisting their children’s homework (M = 3.79 and SD = 3.29). The distribution of scores is small, and could be grouped around ‘most of the time’ ranking.

As educators, respondents are undoubtedly possessing high level of perceived self-efficacy in helping their children with homework. The result pointed out that only few parents are facing difficulties in helping their children with homework (M=2.54, SD=1.03) which again indicated that respondents are very positive about their self-efficacy. This corroborates with earlier findings by
Dempsey (2001) that activities and strategies employed by parents in their involvement with their children’s homework were based on parents’ self-efficacy, in areas such as: child-rearing values and assumptions about learning, understanding of the purposes and goals of homework, personal knowledge of strategies appropriate for supporting child performance or learning, responses to specific information, from teachers or children, and about homework tasks and processes. This result is somehow expected from academicians who are the respondents of this study.

RQ 4: Is there any relationship among parental feelings of efficacy, frequency of parental assistance & the amount of homework a child completes?

Table 8: Correlations between Parents’ Self-efficacy, Frequency of Parental Assistance and Children’s Completed Homework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Parents’ Self-efficacy</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Frequency of Assisting with homework</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Amount of homework a child completes</td>
<td>.38</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

The relationship between parental self-efficacy, frequency of parental assistance and amount of homework a child completes was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. From the findings, it could be concluded that there is no significant correlation between the three variables, p>.005. Similar to RQ2, the findings for RQ4 also showed that parents’ self-efficacy, frequency of their assistance and the amount of homework their children managed to complete, are not statistically related.

This contradicts with findings from Eagle, E. (1989), Funkhouser, J.E., & Gonzales, M.R. (1997), Goodman, J. et al. (1995) and Shields, P. (1995) with regard to the supposedly-continuous-evolved methods and expectations for family involvement in promoting student’s achievement. This result could also be detected from the aspect of trust and freedom, which had resulted in independency among the children. Respondents might believe that self-efficacy had helped them in assisting their children with homework without being too rigid with the amount of assistance required by their children.

Conclusion

Despite having quite a small number of respondents, this study managed to shed light on the involvement of academician parents toward their children’s homework. The researchers found that the respondents place almost the same emphasis on the provision of structure, direct involvement and also autonomy support in helping children with homework. The study also uncovered that providing a conducive learning environment is the most frequent way used by many parents, perhaps owing to its most basic necessity. Another significant finding is that there is no distinction in terms of frequency of involvement with homework according to the children’s age. It can be concluded that younger children get the same amount of attention as the older ones, thus age is not a determiner to the frequency of involvement provided by the respondents. Finally, the researchers found that it is rather significant when self-efficacy does not really influence the amount of attention given to the children. Based on the findings highlighted in this study, the writers suggest that future research should explore whether or not the involvement with homework among parents with high self-efficacy and with higher degrees, could give impact on the children’s academic performance. Since the findings in some ways indicate that there is no model in ensuring more systematic monitoring of children homework for parents in Malaysia, it is also imperative to design a predictive model identifying categories of parental involvement which should enhance parents’ skills and self-efficacy.
References


Kathleen, V., Hoover, D., Angela, C. Battiato, Joan M. T. Walker, Richard, P. Reed, Jennifer M. DeJong and Kathleen, P. Jones (Year): Parental Involvement in Homework


