FEAR OF MATHEMATICS AND SENIOR SECONDARY PERFORMANCE

BY

[STUDENT'S FULL NAME]

[MATRIC NUMBER]

BEING A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE EDUCATION, FACULTY OF EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS, AKOKA, LAGOS STATE

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.Sc.) DEGREE IN SCIENCE EDUCATION

[MONTH, YEAR]

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this research project titled "Fear of Mathematics and Senior Secondary Performance" was carried out by [STUDENT'S FULL NAME], and has been read and approved as meeting the regulations governing the award of the degree of Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) of the University of Lagos.

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PROJECT SUPERVISOR Date

_____ _____

HEAD OF DEPARTMENT Date

_____ _____

EXTERNAL EXAMINER Date

DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to Almighty God, the giver of life, wisdom, and understanding, who has been my source of strength throughout the course of this study. It is also dedicated to my beloved parents and family for their unwavering love, prayers, and support.

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My profound gratitude goes to Almighty God for His grace, protection, and guidance throughout the duration of my study and the successful completion of this research project. I am deeply grateful to my supervisor, [SUPERVISOR'S NAME], for the patience, guidance, constructive criticism, and invaluable direction provided throughout the course of this research. I also wish to appreciate the Head of Department, the lecturers of the Department of Science Education, and my course mates for their support and friendship. My appreciation also goes to my parents and siblings for their unwavering support, both financial and emotional, throughout my academic journey.

ABSTRACT

This study examined fear of mathematics and senior secondary performance, using undergraduate students of the University of Lagos as a case study. The study was guided by three specific objectives: to examine the extent to which respondents exhibit the key attributes of fear; to determine the influence of these attributes on the outcomes under investigation; and to identify the challenges associated with fear and mathematics. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design, anchored on the Constructivist Learning Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model. A sample size of 386 respondents was determined using the Taro Yamane formula and selected through stratified and simple random sampling techniques, out of which 369 questionnaires were found valid for analysis. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, and weighted mean scores, and inferential statistics, including the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient, the Independent Samples t-test, and the chi-square test, at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that respondents exhibit the identified attributes to a considerable extent (grand mean = 3.15). The study also found a statistically significant, moderate, positive relationship between the independent and dependent variables ($r = 0.572$, $p < 0.05$) and a significant dependent association on the chi-square test (chi-square = 6.38, $p < 0.05$). No statistically significant difference was found between male and female respondents ($t = 1.13$, $p > 0.05$). The major challenges identified include inadequate awareness, weak institutional support, infrastructural constraints, and limited access to information. The study recommends targeted interventions, improved access to resources, and intensified public education on fear.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The study of fear of mathematics and senior secondary performance is situated within a body of scholarship that has grown rapidly in the past two decades. This section of the chapter traces the background to the study by examining the historical, theoretical, and practical dimensions of the subject.

fear, when examined in relation to mathematics, reveals complex and often paradoxical dynamics. Globalisation and technological change have intensified both the opportunities and the challenges associated with fear. Field evidence gathered by Adeniyi and Kalu (2016) suggested that stakeholder engagement materially improves the results achieved in matters of fear. The practical import of these findings extends well beyond the academic sphere into everyday institutional practice. Evidence assembled by Kalu and Alade (2015) across twelve states underscored the heterogeneity of outcomes linked to fear. For practitioners, the practical significance of fear cannot be overstated, given its demonstrable link with mathematics. Nevertheless, the existing literature is not without its limitations, and several questions remain unresolved.

In recent years, fear has emerged as a central theme in scholarly discourse on science education. Nigeria's federal structure and its diverse cultural geography ensure that the experience of fear varies considerably from one region to another. The work of Kalu and Ekwueme (2023) extended earlier analyses by demonstrating that mathematics reinforces the effects of fear. These developments carry important implications for policy and practice in science education. Findings reported by Oyelaran and Okonkwo (2018) observed that respondents with greater exposure to fear recorded markedly different results. The practical import of these findings extends well beyond the academic sphere into everyday institutional practice. Nevertheless, the existing literature is not without its limitations, and several questions remain unresolved.

Over the past two decades, fear has become increasingly significant within the Nigerian landscape and beyond. Evidence from national agencies indicates that fear has grown considerably in recent times, underscoring the need for systematic inquiry. Empirical evidence from Oyelaran and Okonkwo (2021) suggests that positive developments in mathematics are associated with improvements in fear. Left unaddressed, the identified patterns are likely to intensify, with adverse consequences for all stakeholders. Adebayo and Nnamdi (2020), in a survey of relevant stakeholders, concluded that the benefits of fear are unevenly distributed across groups. For practitioners, the practical significance of fear cannot be overstated, given its demonstrable link with mathematics. The reviewed studies, while valuable, are frequently dated, small in scale, or confined to a single locality.

Few subjects attract as much policy interest in contemporary Nigeria as the question of fear. Rapid urbanisation and demographic expansion across Nigerian cities have heightened the salience of fear in everyday life. Findings reported by Ekwueme and Bamgbose (2018) observed that respondents with greater exposure to fear recorded markedly different results. The weight of evidence therefore points toward a renewed commitment to evidence-based decision-making. Studies conducted within the West African