

ATTITUDES AND SOCIAL RESEARCH DISPOSITION AMONG ACADEMIC IN NIGERIA

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Abstract: An empirical study on attitudes and social research disposition among academics (lecturers) in Nigeria was carried out to find out the impacts of attitudes on levels of disposition to social research among academics. The objectives of this study are to; analyze the impacts of flexible attitudes on academics; examine the impacts of inflexible attitudes on academics; and find out the level of impact differences among academics. Two hypothetical statements were made which are, (i) there will be a significant difference between the impacts of flexible attitudes and inflexible attitudes among academics, and (ii) academics with flexible attitudes will have a high level of disposition to social research. A survey design was used to carry out the study in which a sample was drawn from the population of the study through a simple random sampling technique. A total of 200 respondents were given a questionnaire of 30 items to elicit their responses. Four institutions of higher learning were involved: Lagos State University, Adeniran Ogunsanya University of Education, Yaba College of Technology, and the University of Lagos. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze data from the respondents' findings the results of the data analysis show that respondents from Yabatech (X₃) and AQUE (X₂) and more homogenous than the respondents from LASU (X₁) and Unilag (X₄) who are heterogeneous. More respondents have inflexible attitudes than others who have flexible attitudes. In all only about 25% of the lecturers are disposed to social research meaning that the majority of the lecturers are not research-oriented. There are significant differences between the impacts of flexible and inflexible attitudes among academics. The staff of Yaba College of Technology are more disposed to social research than their colleagues from other institutions. Consideration of participant size and the number of institutions will be of high value for research on disposition to social research and the impacts of attitudes.

Keywords: Flexible; Inflexible; Disposition; Comparative registry and research

1 INTRODUCTION

Several research studies are critical to both knowledge advancement and industrial growth in every human society. Academics are to develop social concepts and theories that could be transformed into practical purposes hopefully for industrial growth and development. Sustainable development is equally a function of social research studies to a very large extent. In light of the above attitudes of academics are critical to the levels of social research studies among academics. Academics as researchers are supposed to be seeing forming attitudes that increase their levels of disposition to research throughout their career periods. Some of the challenges facing academic institutions and economic sectors of Nigeria are the cases of low-level research capacity among academics, low level of funding for social research needs, low level of government (local, state, and Federal) interest in research, and low level of financial power by the individual researcher.

Attitudes obviously play significant roles in an individual's thoughts, feelings, and actions on any subject of consideration. It is a confirmed position that people who exhibit less openness and receptivity to ongoing thoughts and feelings exhibit activation in limbic system structures when they rapidly label thoughts and feelings as either negative or positive [1]. Attitude has to do with a mental or emotional disposition towards something. Attitude could be defined as the tendency to respond to a phenomenon positively or negatively in a consistent and evaluative manner. A positive attitude is optimistic, enthusiastic, and supportive. Negative attitudes are pessimistic critical and resistant. Meanwhile, a neutral attitude is indifferent, important, and unemotional. Attitude can influence behavior, perceptions, relationships, decision-making, and well-being. Attitude can be changed and developed through self-awareness, experience, influence, practice, and mindfulness. Research disposition in this study has to do with attitudes, values, and benefits that individuals hold towards research and the research process and orientation. For the purpose of this study, two types of attitudes are considered. The two types of attitudes are flexible attitude and inflexible attitude or open-minded and close-minded respectively.

Flexible attitude refers to being adaptable, open-minded, and willing to adjust to new or changing situations, ideas, or perspectives. Flexible is a personality trait that describes the extent to which a person can cope with changes in circumstances and thinking about problems and tasks in novel, creative ways. With a flexible attitude, an individual is within to acknowledge and explore different ideas, cultures, perspectives, and concepts. The benefits of a flexible attitude are improved problem-solving, enhanced relationships, increased productivity, better stress management, and personal growth. An inflexible attitude refers to an individual who is not open to new ideas experiences, or perspectives. This individual tends to be stubborn, rigid, and resistant to change, often dismissing or reflecting information that

contradicts his beliefs or values. This individual is intolerant of other's beliefs or values, refuses to listen to opposing viewpoints, is highly defensive, and believes that his ideas or beliefs are always right and unquestionable. Emotions associated with an inflexible attitude are arrogance, ignorance, stubbornness, fear of the unknown, prejudice, and resistance to change.

1.1 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out which of these two types of attitudes (flexible and inflexible) is common and academics and the impact on their level of social research disposition in Nigeria.

1.2 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this empirical study will be to analyze the impact of flexible attitudes on academics; examine the impact of inflexible attitudes on academics find out the level of impact difference among academic's hypothetical statements for this study:

- a. There will be a significant difference between the impacts of flexible attitudes and inflexible attitudes among academics.
- b. Academics with flexible attitudes will have a high-level disposition to social research.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is done through a conceptual framework, theoretical framework, and comparative analysis of the past work done by well-known authors globally

There are several ways in which being inflexible could have effects on relationships. Inflexible people struggle to see other people's perspectives and may dismiss or belittle their ideas or opinions inflexible individuals struggle to form deep connections with others as they are less likely to be open to new experiences. A flexible attitude in the workplace facilitates learning and connection-building, reduces conflict, and boosts professional image. Flexible individuals are characterized by curiosity, humility, the ability to provide constructive criticism, empathy, and fairness in treating everyone's ideas as valuable. Positive emotions and thoughts, strengths, and the satisfaction of basic psychological needs for belonging, competence, and autonomy have been the cornerstone of psychological health. Exact formulas for health have surfaced with an ideal ratio of at least three positives to each negative experience and substantial problems exist when there is a ratio of more than two negatives to each positive experience [2].

There is work suggesting that the key to psychological health, and sustainable well-being is commitment to meaningful challenges that accord with a person's self-concept and varied life domains [3,4]. Considering the links between flexibility and health as well as evidence that an absence of flexibility is linked to certain variants of psychopathology is paramount. These psychological processes span cognitive rigidities such as rumination and worry [5]. Stressful life experiences have a significant influence and individual functioning, which may result in anxiety, confusion, withdrawal, depression, and heightened vulnerability [6]. In respect of the above, vulnerability means that some people are more affected by stressful life events than others [7]. Researchers found that psychological vulnerability was positively associated with anxiety stress [8], self-alienation [9], and social vulnerability [10]. On the contrary, psychological vulnerability had negative correlations with social competence, mindfulness, insight, and resilience factors like social support, and self-efficacy [11,12,13]. Experimental and daily diary research There are impressive longitudinal studies of ego-resilience from childhood to adulthood [14]. A series of studies by Rottenberg, and colleagues has revealed a more complex pattern in depression, with this disorder associated with lower resting [15].

Flexibility refers to several dynamic processes that unfold over time. This could be reflected by how a person; (i) adapts to fluctuating situational demands, (ii) reconfigures mental resources, (iii) shifts perspective, and (iii) balances competing desires needs, and life domains.

3 METHODOLOGY

A survey design was used in this study in which the population of the study is academics (lecturers) from higher institutions of learning in Nigeria. The four institutions in which the sample was selected are all located in Lagos, South West, Nigeria. A questionnaire was designed along the Likert scale of 30 items reflecting the two independent variables (flexible attitude and inflexible attitude). 50 respondents were randomly selected from each of the four universities. A total of 200 respondents from the four higher institutions of learning were contacted with the questionnaire for their responses on all the items of the questionnaire. Lagos State University (LASU), Adeniran Ogunsanya University of Education (AOUE), Yaba College of Technology (Yabatech), and University of Lagos (Unilag).

Statistical tools used for data analysis are descriptive statistics (measures of central tendency and percentages and t-test analysis for the level of difference between two means.

Key: LASU (X_1), AOUE (X_2), Yabatech (X_3) and Unilag (X_4)

The questionnaire was designed on a scale of Strongly Agree (SA) 3 points, agree (A) 2 points, and Disagree (D) 1 point.

4 DISCUSSION

Discussion is based on the measure of central tendency table, descriptive analysis table, table of difference, and the hypotheses stated under the introduction.

Table 1 Measures of Central Tendency

Statistics Institutions	\bar{X}	Md	Mo
LASU (X ₁)	2.3	2	3
AOUE (X ₂)	1.6	2	2
Yabatech (X ₃)	2.5	3	3
Unilag (X ₄)	2.4	2	3

From the above table 1, respondents from LASU show a heterogeneous group in which each of the respondents has divergent opinions on social research disposition. However, respondents from their remaining three institutions show a homogenous group in which they have similar views on social research disposition.

The majority of the respondents are of the view that attitude types have a significant impact on the levels of social research disposition.

From the above table, academics from Yaba College of Technology and the University of Lagos are disposed to social research because the majority of them are in support of flexible attitude as a major factor of consideration when we talk of social research disposition.

Table 2 Descriptive Analysis Table

Statistics Institutions	$\sum x$	Ω	\bar{X}	$\sum x^2$	$(\sum x)^2$	%
LASU (X ₁)	115	50	2.3	295	13225	26
AOUE (X ₂)	80	50	1.6	150	6400	18
Yabatech (X ₃)	125	50	2.5	335	15625	29
Unilag (X ₄)	120	50	2.4	310	14400	27

From table 2 results of the analysis majority of the respondents are individuals with inflexible attitudes translating into saying that they are close-minded individuals who are open to new ideas, experiences, or perspectives. These individuals tend to be stubborn, rigid, and resistant to change, often dismissing or rejecting information that contradicts their beliefs or values. Only 26% from LASU, 18% from AOUE, 29% from Yabatech, and 27% from Unilag have flexible attitudes thus the level of their disposition to social research. These individuals who are favorably disposed to social research are willing to acknowledge and explore different ideas, cultures, perspectives, and concepts. This position is a testimony to the lower number of lecturers than indeed researchers.

The above result supports hypothesis two that says: academics with flexible attitudes will have a high level of disposition to social research. Although they are in lower percentages they confirmed the qualities of social researchers in our higher institutions of learning. People who exhibit less openness and receptivity to ongoing thoughts and feelings (low mindfulness) exhibit activation in limbic system structures when they rapidly label thoughts and feelings as either negative or positive. It takes an individual with a flexible attitude to be emotionally interested in social research.

Table 3 Table of Differences between Groups

Statistics Institutions	Ω	\bar{X}	α	t-cal	t-tab	Remarks
LASU (X ₁) Vs AOUE (X ₂)	50	2.3	0.05	4.781	2.785	Significant difference
AOUE (X ₂) Vs. Yabatech (X ₃)	50	1.6	0.05	6.667	2.785	Significant difference
AOUE (X ₂) Vs Unilag (X ₄)	50	1.6	0.05	5.970	2.785	Significant difference
LASU (X ₁) Vs Yabatech (X ₃)	50	2.3	0.05	1.359	2.785	No Significant difference
LASU (X ₁) Vs Unilag (X ₄)	50	2.3	0.05	0.683	2.785	No Significant difference
Yabatech (X ₃) Vs Unilag (X ₄)	50	2.5	0.05	0.741	2.785	No Significant difference

From the table 3 above there are significant differences between AOUE and other institutions. This shows that there is a wide gap between academics with flexible attitudes from the remaining institutions against those from Adeniran Ogunsanya University of Education.

In other words, we have more researchers from Yabatech, LASU, and Unilag than we have in AOUE. The differences among LASU, Yabatech, and Unilag are not significant in translating into sources they almost equal number of academics that have flexible attitudes with a high-level disposition to social research. This position is in line with hypothesis two which says there will be a significant difference between the impacts of flexible attitudes and inflexible attitudes among academics.

Findings from this study show clearly that:

- a. Majority of academics (lecturers) have inflexible attitudes;
- b. We have a lower number of academics who are of a high disposition to social research
- c. A smaller number of academics (lecturers) have a flexible attitude
- d. The academic staff of Yaba College of Technology are more disposed to social research than their course sorts from other institutions.

This study can be replicated by increasing the number of participants and more institutions. The findings of academics on attitude formulation and change are of the essence to performance on the job and commitment to research activities.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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