



## Assessment of the Attitude of Students to Study in Upper Basic Schools in Edo State, Nigeria

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**ABSTRACT:** The study assessed the attitude of students to study in Upper Basic Schools in Edo State, Nigeria. One research question guided the study. The researchers conceptualized Senay Sen's (2013) definition of students' attitude to study into a framework upon which the study was hinged. The descriptive (survey) research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 39,560 Basic 9 students in the 317 Upper Basic Schools in Edo State. A sample size of 396 students was selected using the Taro Yamane's formula. However, 362 copies of the instruments were used in the analysis because they were the ones validly entered by the respondents. The simple random sampling technique was applied in selecting the desired sample size for the study. An instrument titled "Attitude to Study Questionnaire" (ASQ) was used in the collection of data for the study. The Cronbach alpha reliability procedure was adopted in establishing the reliability of the instrument, which was .797. The data was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and percentage. To answer the research question, the scores of each respondent in the ASQ was added up and compared with the minimum point of 2.5, set as the benchmark to determine attitude to study. Thus, scores of 2.5 or higher on any item were adjudged to mean positive attitude to study while scores below 2.5 were taken to mean negative attitude to study. In order to ascertain the attitude of students to study, the overall mean of the four aspects of attitude to study was computed. The computed mean was converted to percentage in order to get the proportion of students with positive and negative attitudes to study. The findings showed, generally, that students in Upper Basic schools in Edo State have a positive attitude towards their study. The study recommended that Upper Basic students should be encouraged to set learning goals, develop problem-solving skills and positive beliefs towards learning in order to have positive attitude to study

and that government and concerned stakeholders should collaboratively work towards building a favourable school environment that will stimulate the desire to learn among students in Upper Basic schools in Edo State. The desire to learn will lead to positive attitude to study.

**KEYWORDS:** Attitude to study; Assessment; Upper basic schools

### I. INTRODUCTION

Attitude may be described as the way and manner individuals create ideas, display their feelings and manifest behaviours about a psychological object, social issue or reaction to a given situation. It is a reflection of how an individual feels about something. It is a mindset of how a person thinks and acts. It has to do with beliefs, feelings and dispositions that make people to behave consistently toward people, things, and events. Attitudes are evaluative statements related to a person, object, and event or habitual ways of reacting to situations. It could be negative, positive or neutral. Attitude affects and influences a person's feelings, opinions and dispositions, which invariably influences the person's behaviour.

Furthermore, attitude is a multidimensional construct with three components, namely: affective, behavioural and cognitive components (iEduNote, <https://www.iedunote.com>). The affective component involves a person's feelings, the behavioural component influences how a person acts or behaves and the cognitive component relates to a person's display of knowledge. The affective component of attitude is an emotional reaction towards a subject, object or a person. It is how a person feels when he or she is confronting a subject, object, a person or an institution. It is still a psychological reaction which may be verbal or nonverbal expression of feelings. Such reaction may



be negative or positive. Behavioural component of attitude is the effect of the attitude toward a behavioural intention or how the attitude affects one's behaviour. These may include plans, intentions and commitments to a planned behaviour. Cognitive component refers to the beliefs and thoughts about the subject, the object, the person, the institution, the event, among others. It is about the perception and information of the person toward the subject, object or the person. Therefore, students' attitude to study may be seen as a student's belief, feelings, disposition and behaviour towards his or her studies.

In recent times, parents, guardians and concerned citizens seem to be worried about happenings in the education sector in Nigeria in general, and Edo State in particular. These worries border on incessant cases of violence, bullying, rape, cult activities, stealing, rioting, and very recently, "yahoo boys" phenomenon that now characterize the school system in the country. These issues pose serious challenges to effective teaching and learning in schools because of the escalating nature of these vices and the different dimensions with which they manifest in schools. Schools appear now to be enveloped in an atmosphere of fear and insecurity.

Coupled with the above issues is the seemingly growing decline in quality of graduates turned out yearly from the school system. Many of these graduates lack basic numeracy skills, writing and speaking proficiency in English Language, and the ability to critically think or make wise judgments regarding their own goals. The researchers have also observed that many of these students disobey school rules and regulations, engage in different forms of social vices that undermine the seriousness of their academic pursuit, and also display lackadaisical attitude towards their studies. Many of them go to school late, some have become truants and perpetual absentees, and even when in the classroom, they do not concentrate because of different distractions they cause in the classroom, due to their constant engagement in

social media activities. Some of these students are indolent and disobedient to teachers and even their parents. Schools can no longer vouch for their students as worthy in character and learning because of the different acts of misconduct and frivolousness exhibited by the students, in and out of school.

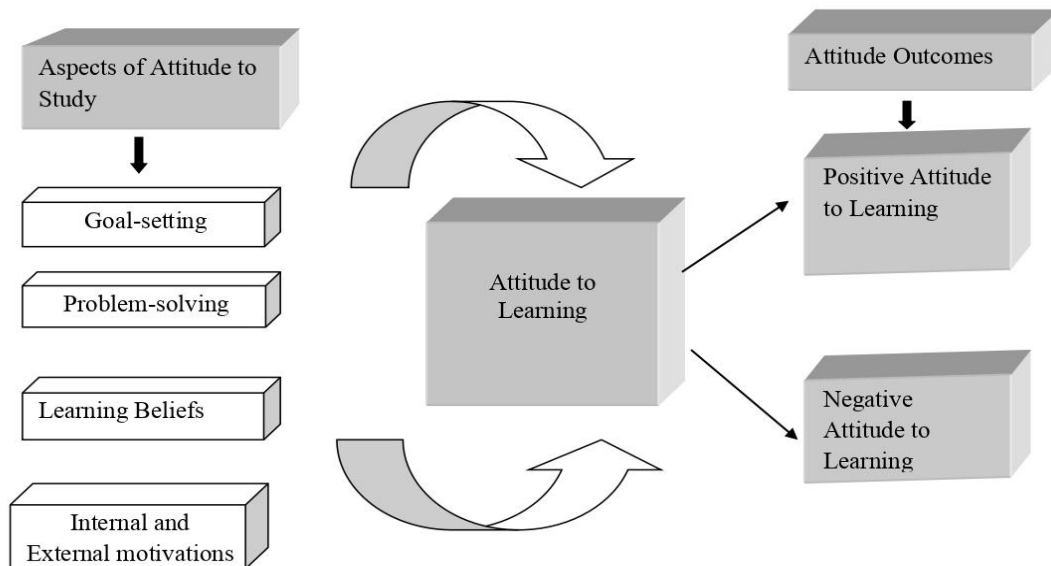
Cases abound in secondary schools in Edo State of teachers being threatened by students in the course of discharging their lawful duties. In some cases, the attacks have been known to be violent. There are also instances where students physically assault their teachers and fellow students with weapons, use abusive and offensive language on them, and even threaten or intimidate their teachers with positions of their 'highly placed' parents. In 2012 at Imaguero College, Benin City, two girls were fighting, and the Biology teacher, a male, was called in to settle the quarrel. After settling the quarrel, as he was about leaving the scene, one of the students was angry and dragged the teacher's tie telling him she has been waiting to deal with him. Also in that same year, male and female students in SSS 3 were caught using Biology Key Point textbook to answer examination questions during NECO examination in Ekperi Grammar School, Etsako Central Local Government Area of the State.

The situation is further aggravated by the general decadence and break down in the value system in the country, which pose serious threats to private and public morality. The Nigerian society today appears to stand on faulty educational, political, economic, and social environment that may not be able to produce a better tomorrow. The impact of this is made manifest in the general behaviour and attitude of the students towards their studies. Many of them seem not to be serious with their studies because of the many attractions and distractions occasioned by the challenges of the school environment. It is against this backdrop that the study assessed the attitude to study of students in Upper Basic Schools in Edo State, Nigeria. The study was guided by the research question: What is the attitude of students to study in Upper Basic School in Edo State, Nigeria?



## II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Attitude to Learning



Source: Jimoh, Dania, Ogheneakoke and Jimoh, (2024)

Senay Sen (2013) defined students' attitude toward learning as their degree of goal-setting, problem-solving skills, belief towards learning, and internal and external motivations for the learning process. As conceptualized in Fig. 1, goal-setting, problem-solving, beliefs in learning and internal and external motivations are different aspects of attitude to learning that collectively determine one's attitude to learning. Students' attitude to learning depends on the extent to which students apply these aspects to the process of learning. When the aspects are intensively applied in learning processes, students' build and develop positive attitude to learning; when not intensively applied in learning situations, they develop and display negative attitude to learning. Attitude to learning, most usually, is measured on two polar extremities of positive and negative.

Goal-setting is the ability of students to create an action plan that will inspire and direct them toward achieving a goal. Goals, unlike desires and momentary intentions, are more deliberate and carefully reasoned intentions. Therefore, setting goals implies that a student has deliberately committed thought, emotion, and behaviour towards attaining the goals. It enables a student focus on acquisition of knowledge, and helps the student to organize his or her time and resources so that he or she can make the best out of his or her

study. Problem-solving ability involves identifying problems, brainstorming and analyzing answers, and implementing the best solutions to the identified problems. Problem-solving enables students to identify and exploit opportunities within the school environment and exert some level of control over the future. It is the process of achieving a goal by overcoming obstacles. Belief towards learning refers to students' subjective judgments about the relation between learning and their values or attributes.

Lastly, internal and external motivation towards the process of learning means the motivation to accomplish a goal that comes from within a student. This is determined by a student's own values and goals. Internal motivation makes it much easier to stay academically motivated and focused. It is that desire to find some internal value in everything that has to do with a student's academics. On the other hand, external motivation towards the process of learning means that motivation to attain a goal that comes from a source outside the self. It is good to be externally motivated by the good things happening around a student's learning environment, however, it is difficult sustaining such motivation when these good happenings around cease. In this study, students' attitude to study was measured by their level of goal setting, problem solving abilities,



beliefs towards learning, and inner and external motivations towards the process of learning.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Attitude is a multidimensional construct. It has three components, namely: affective, behavioural and cognitive components (Binder & Niederle, 2021). The affective component is the emotional or feeling segment of an attitude. It deals with feelings or emotions that are brought to the surface about something, such as fear or hate. It is still a psychological reaction which may be verbal or nonverbal expression of feelings toward the subject, object, the person or the institution. Such reaction may be negative or positive. Attitude is the prevailing tendency to respond favourably or unfavourably to an object, person or group of person, institution or events. Students' attitude towards study is how they approach and monitor their learning, and the consistent behaviours they exhibit. It can be an important factor in a student's academic performance, goal setting, problem solving, and motivation.

Tujyina and Ninuguruzwa (2023) assessed the impact of students' attitude on their engagement and performance in Physics at lower secondary schools in the Rwamagana District, Rwanda. The study adopted a qualitative design. The purposive sampling method was used to select 4 schools and 245 participants. A closed or fixed response interview was designed and administered to the senior three students, physics teachers, and DOSs for data collection. Frequencies and percentages were used in analyzing the data obtained. The findings indicated that the students who attended class regularly and engaged in teaching and learning activities toward the subjects had a more positive attitude toward the subject.

Khamlichi and Chkirbane (2021) investigated the young EFL learners' attitudes towards assessment in light of the recent changes in the Moroccan educational policy. The study specifically sought to identify variables that could be linked to positive or negative attitudes towards assessment. A sample of 184 informants were selected from the region of Rabat-Sale based on specific sociolinguistic variables, that included age, gender, as well as educational level. The study made use of methodological triangulation where both quantitative and qualitative research instruments are used for data collection. The study was based on fieldwork research, which relied on class observation, interviews as well as questionnaires. Results of the study suggested that

despite the students' generally positive attitudes towards the conformity of assessment to what is taught, its authenticity, and its transparency; the teacher's heavy reliance on conventional methods of assessment impacted young learners' learning strategies.

Tripathi, et al (2019) conducted a study to determine the attitude associated with learning communication skills among dental and medical students studying in Universal College of Medical Sciences (UCMS), College of Dental Surgery, Bhairahawa, Nepal. The study adopted a descriptive design using a standardized pro forma, which consisted questions on general information and of communication skills using validated Communication Skills Attitude Scale. Two hundred and thirty one (231) students participated in the study. The results showed that medical and dental students exhibited high levels of positive attitudes towards learning communication skills and low levels of negative attitudes. Also attitudinal scores differ insignificantly in relation to gender.

AM Mujid (2019) investigated the attitude towards learning of English of tenth graders in Sman 1 Abung Semuli Lampung Utara. The study examined the behavioural, cognitive and emotional aspects of attitude. The study adopted the descriptive qualitative research procedure in which the researcher applied an observation as the research instrument to investigate the students' attitude during the learning process. The research subject consisted 32 students of the X IPA 5. The research findings showed that the X IPA 5 students of SMAN 1 Abung Semuli exhibited positive attitude toward learning English. Their positive attitude was reflected in the three aspects of attitude: behavioral, cognitive, and emotional aspects.

Mazana, Montero and Casmir (2019) conducted a study to investigate students' attitudes towards learning Mathematics in Tanzania. The study also sought to ascertain reasons for the liking or disliking Mathematics and the relationship between attitude and performance. The study employed the ABC Model and the Walberg's Theory of Productivity to investigate students' attitudes towards Mathematics and associated factors. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected from 419 primary school students, 318 secondary school students, and 132 College students from 17 schools and 6 colleges in mainland Tanzania using a survey. The data collected were analysed using percentages, means, standard deviations, ANOVA, correlation,



regression and thematic analysis. The results showed that, initially students exhibited a positive attitude towards Mathematics, but their attitude became less positive as the students moved forward to higher levels of education. A significant positive weak correlation between students' attitude and performance was also established. Mathematics' enjoyment and attitude significantly predicted students' performance in our data.

Şenay Şen (2013) examined the attitudes of university students towards learning. The study aimed to analyze the attitudes of university students in terms of different variables by using screening model. The attitudes of university students towards learning were evaluated from the points of four sub-dimensions (the nature of learning, anxiety, expectation, and openness), their genders and academic achievements. The finding revealed that prospective engineers and technical teachers have positive attitudes towards learning.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the descriptive (survey) research design. The population of the study was made up of all the 39,560 Basic 9 students in the 317 Upper Basic Schools in Edo State, Nigeria. A sample size of 396 students was selected using the Taro Yamane's formula for the determination of sample size. However, 362 copies of the instruments were used in the analysis because they were the ones that were validly entered by the respondents. The simple random sampling

technique was applied in selecting the desired sample size for the study. An instrument titled "Attitude to Study Questionnaire" (ASQ) was used in the collection of data for the study. The ASQ had 28 items, 7 items measuring each aspect of attitude to study. The Cronbach alpha reliability procedure was adopted in establishing the reliability of the instrument, which was .797.

The data gathered from the ASQ was analyzed using mean, standard deviation and percentage. To answer the research question, the scores of each respondent in the ASQ was added up and compared with the minimum point of 2.5, set as the benchmark to determine attitude to study. Thus, scores of 2.5 or higher on any item were adjudged to mean positive attitude to study while scores below 2.5 were taken to mean negative attitude to study. In order to ascertain the attitude of students to study, the overall mean of the four aspects of attitude to study was computed. The computed mean was converted to percentage in order to get the proportion of students with positive attitude to study. In this case, the benchmark percentage score to determine positive attitude to study was 62.5%. A percentage proportion below 62.5% was taken as negative attitude to study.

#### V. RESULTS

**Research Question:** What is the attitude of students to study in Upper Basic School in Edo State, Nigeria?

**Table 4.1:** Mean and Standard Deviation on the Attitude of Students in Upper Basic School

S/N	Items	Mean	SD
<b>Goal-setting</b>			
1	I strive to produce work of a high standard	3.45	.75
2	I independently extend my learning outside of the classroom	2.96	.73
3	I define what I intend to achieve in my studies every school year	2.96	.89
4	I organize my study resources in order to achieve my intentions	3.30	.74
5	I hold myself accountable for my academic outcomes	2.90	.87
6	My study activities are time bound	3.15	.81
7	I personally celebrate study successes attained	3.04	.84
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>3.11(77.7%)</b>	
<b>Problem Solving Ability</b>			
8	I analyze information from different sources	3.21	.66
9	I like to approach a subject from different perspectives	3.25	.75
10	I take risks in classroom learning activities	2.92	.83
11	I apply knowledge independently, thinking before asking for help	3.23	.77
12	I prevent my mind from drifting when studying	2.82	.82
13	I endeavour to do my best, not afraid of making mistakes	3.02	.80
14	I use feedbacks to address gaps in my knowledge through revision and homework.	3.10	.87
<b>Cluster Mean</b>		<b>3.08(77%)</b>	
<b>Learning Beliefs</b>			
15	I am generally not comfortable learning in the classroom	2.51	1.09
16	I have a good feeling towards learning	3.51	.60
17	I believe commitment to my studies guarantees me a secured future	3.35	.68
18	I do not get discouraged when learning appears hard or difficult	3.15	.83
19	Learning is a process of making meaning out of the world around me	3.24	.78





20	I place my study above every other thing	3.23	.80
21	I believe my study will yield great benefits for me in the future	3.08	.94
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>	<b>3.15(78.7%)</b>	
	<b>Internal and External Motivation</b>		
22	I enjoy participating actively in class lessons	3.49	.60
23	I persevere even when work is challenging	3.20	.59
24	I come to lessons prepared without being reminded	3.09	.72
25	I enjoy working collaboratively with my classmates	3.03	.88
26	I am inspired by academically successful persons around me	3.41	.67
27	I display high level of enthusiasm for my study	3.13	.90
28	Assessment from my school mates increases my commitment to learning	3.19	
	<b>Cluster Mean</b>		.86
		<b>3.22(80.5)</b>	
	<b>Aggregate Mean</b>	<b>3.14</b>	<b>.79</b>
		<b>78.5%</b>	

The data in Table 1 shows an aggregate mean of 3.14, a standard deviation of .79 and a percentage proportion of 78.5%. The aggregate mean and percentage proportion are higher than the criterion mean of 2.5 and percentage proportion of 62.5% for determining positive attitude to study. This implies that 78.5% of the students in Upper Basic schools in Edo State have a positive attitude to study, while 21.5% have negative attitude to study. The Table also shows the percentage performance of each aspect of the concept of attitude to study. Internal and external motivation has the highest percentage rating of 80.5%; followed by learning beliefs, 78.7%; goal-setting, 77.7% and problem solving ability, 77%.

## VI. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of the study showed that students in Upper Basic schools in Edo State have positive attitude to study. This finding could be attributed to the students' belief in the many benefits associated with learning and education in general. The benefits are economic and social in nature. The economic benefits are the quantifiable and tangible gains directly accruable to learners due education while the social benefits are the immeasurable benefits, such as health, environmental and political awareness, enhanced social status, that learners enjoy due to education. Majority of the students appeared to be conscious of the economic, social and political benefits that education could bestow on them, hence their commitment to study, which invariably manifested in their positive attitude towards study. Furthermore, the students are living in a society where they probably see how learning and education have uplifted individuals' socio-economic status, from low to high status. This would have intrinsically and extrinsically motivated them to develop strong beliefs in learning, which manifested in their positive attitude to study.

The finding agrees with that of Tujiinama & Ntinuguruzwa (2023) who found that students who attended class regularly and engaged in teaching and learning activities toward subjects taught had a more positive attitude toward the subjects. The finding is consonance with that of Khamlichi & Chkirbane (2021) that students' generally have positive attitudes towards the conformity of assessment to what is taught, its authenticity, and its transparency. In the same vein, the finding agrees with that of Tripathi, et al (2019) whose study showed that medical and dental students exhibited high levels of positive attitudes towards learning communication skills. The finding agrees with that of AM Mujid (2019) whose study showed that the X IPA 5 students of SMAN 1 Abung Semuli exhibited positive behavioural, cognitive and emotional attitudes toward learning English. The finding also agrees with that of Mazana, Montero & Casmir (2019) whose study revealed that students in Tanzania initially exhibited a positive attitude towards Mathematics, but their attitude became less positive as the students moved forward to higher levels of education. The finding agrees with that of Şenay Şen (2013) whose study revealed that prospective engineers and technical teachers have positive attitudes towards learning.

## VII. CONCLUSION

Attitude to study is key effective learning by students. Students can only benefit from the teaching learning process when they build and sustain positive attitude towards their learning. Building positive attitude to learning will require students' intensive integration of goal-setting ability, problem-solving skills, positive belief towards learning, and internal and external motivations to their learning process. In addition, fostering positive attitude to study among students requires creating favourable school environment that can stimulate positive attitude to learning. A



favourable school environment positively impacts academic outcome of the students.

### VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the finding and conclusion of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Upper Basic students should be encouraged to set learning goals, develop problem-solving skills and positive beliefs towards learning in order to have positive attitude to study.
2. Government and concerned stakeholders should collaboratively work towards building a favourable school environment that will stimulate the desire to learn among students in Upper Basic schools in Edo State. The desire to learn will invariably lead to positive attitude to study.

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