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LONDON JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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# Examining Pre and In-Service Teachers Views of their Preparation for Inclusive Education

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## ABSTRACT

The concept of inclusive education (IE) suffered many challenges some of which have been linked to teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding to teach in an IE environment. In Samoa, it is now almost two decades since the inclusive education (IE) phenomenon has been introduced into its education system, however it is still not clear how teachers feel about their preparation to teach in an IE environment. This qualitative research examined teachers' views concerning their teacher preparation for IE. Using an open ended questionnaire, data was gathered from 94 pre and in-service primary school teachers who were in 2022 trained within the faculty of education (FOE) at the National University of Samoa. Findings indicated that teachers needed adequate IE courses to prepare them to teach in an IE classroom as the single IE course that is currently offered by the faculty is not sufficient to provide them with the requisite knowledge and skills to teach in an IE environment. Findings also suggested that limited IE knowledge suffered from the absence of an IE program and lack of opportunity for teachers to practice learned skills within an IE environment which in turn affected their confidence to teach in such context. This has greater implication on teacher training preparations, hence the need for the training institution to develop programs in IE so teachers are well equipped to work in such context is very crucial.

*Keywords:* NA

*Classification:* DDC Code: 370

*Language:* English



Great Britain  
Journals Press

LJP Copyright ID: 573350  
Print ISSN: 2515-5785  
Online ISSN: 2515-5792

London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 23 | Issue 14 | Compilation 1.0



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# Examining Pre and In-Service Teachers Views of their Preparation for Inclusive Education

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## ABSTRACT

*The concept of inclusive education (IE) suffered many challenges some of which have been linked to teachers' lack of knowledge and understanding to teach in an IE environment. In Samoa, it is now almost two decades since the inclusive education (IE) phenomenon has been introduced into its education system, however it is still not clear how teachers feel about their preparation to teach in an IE environment. This qualitative research examined teachers' views concerning their teacher preparation for IE. Using an open ended questionnaire, data was gathered from 94 pre and in-service primary school teachers who were in 2022 trained within the faculty of education (FOE) at the National University of Samoa. Findings indicated that teachers needed adequate IE courses to prepare them to teach in an IE classroom as the single IE course that is currently offered by the faculty is not sufficient to provide them with the requisite knowledge and skills to teach in an IE environment. Findings also suggested that limited IE knowledge suffered from the absence of an IE program and lack of opportunity for teachers to practice learned skills within an IE environment which in turn affected their confidence to teach in such context. This has greater implication on teacher training preparations, hence the need for the training institution to develop programs in IE so teachers are well equipped to work in such context is very crucial.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusive education (IE) has become the buzz word of the 21<sup>st</sup> century where many countries including Samoa, scrambled to develop and implement inclusive policy within their education

system. Inclusive education suggests that all 'students regardless, of disability status, benefit from and should have access to grade level standards and opportunities in the general education classroom, (Courtade, Spooner, Browder, & Jimenez, 2012). Inclusive education however comes with a lot of challenges in terms of available facilities and trained teachers. Hence, for inclusive education to work, necessary preparation is crucial not only in physical facilities but of the utmost import in teacher preparation. According to Forlin (2010) 'a reconsideration of teacher training practices and programs is a significant priority in teacher education research to warrant that future teachers are ready to practice inclusive teaching.' The concern for researchers of this paper is that only one course on inclusive education is offered by the faculty of education (FOE) in their teacher preparation program. It begs the question, how adequate is this one course to fully prepare teachers to teach in an IE classroom?

## II. STUDY CONTEXT

When the concept of special education was first coined in the mid 1990's in Samoa, it was a new concept to many individuals, however Samoa indicated its commitment to this new phenomenon by including it as one of its policy goals in its Education Policies 1995-2006. Samoa's educational policies and planning today are influenced by global mandates such as the Education For All (EFA), United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Education for Sustainable Development strategies (ESD) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), as well as regional commitments such as the Forum Basic Education Action Plan (FBEAP), the Pacific Region Initiative for the Delivery of Basic education (PRIDE) and the Pacific Plan

(Government of Samoa, 2006, p. 11). As such, national policy goals in relation to special education, emphasised the importance of training teachers in the area of special education (Samoa Education Policies 1995-2006) which resulted in the Western Samoa Teachers College (WSTC) developing a diploma program in special education in 1995. The diploma program consisted of one general introductory course plus four specialized courses in Special education. In the mid 2000, the introduction of the inclusive education phenomenon at the global level was a paradigm shift from specialization to inclusion of children with special needs into the regular classrooms. National and educational policies were redirected towards a more inclusive type of teaching and learning environment, which resulted in the modification of the introductory special education course to be more inclusive in nature. In 2014, program restructuring within the faculty of education (FOE) led to the discontinuation of the diploma program in special education. When the diploma program was discontinued, so too were the 4 special education courses with the exception of the introductory course (aka 'inclusive education') which was retained and modified to be offered as a compulsory course for all individuals who wished to pursue the teaching the profession. This one inclusive course is the only course that is currently offered as a compulsory course for teachers in the bachelor and graduate diploma programs. The rationale was for every teacher to have at least some knowledge of IE. This begs the question, "Is the single introductory course on IE sufficient to prepare preservice teachers to teach in an inclusive classroom? With the many criticism from the public arena concerning teacher quality, the researchers are seriously concern that the single course that FOE currently offers is far from adequate in preparing teachers for IE. This study was aimed at examining teachers' views on their teacher preparation program with regards to preparing them to teach in an IE environment. The main question that guided the study was:

- What are teachers' perceptions concerning their preparations to teach in an inclusive education environment?

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The importance of preparing teachers so they become effective in supporting learning needs of students within an inclusive environment cannot be overemphasized. Amongst factors that were found to impede inclusive education (IE) is limited knowledge in IE, which seemed to affect teachers' attitude towards IE. It has been argued that teachers' attitudes can determine the day-to-day practices of classroom teachers and according to Alieto (2018) attitude can act as either a facilitating or debilitating factor. A number of studies that investigated school educators' attitudes toward inclusive education (e.g., Forlin, 2004; 2003; Forlin, Jobling & Carroll, 2001; Loreman, 2002; Subban & Sharma, 2006) indicated that teachers in general appear to be more supportive of IE rhetorically but have misgivings in the actual implementation. Factors that seem to influence teachers' attitudes were related to the educational environment (support services, classroom layout, class size, curriculum, funding and time); the student (severity of disability, lack of time to teach student with disability); as well as the teacher training (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002; Bradshaw & Lawrence, 2006).

A meta-analysis which involved 28 survey reports was executed by Shruggs and Mastropieri (1996) between 1958 and 1995 which concerned with teacher attitudes towards mainstreaming in USA, Canada and Australia, found that although two thirds of teachers were generally supportive of the integration concept, one third or less believed that they had insufficient time, skills, training and resources necessary to address the needs of students with disabilities. Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher & Saumell (1996) also identified high class numbers, funds, teachers' overload and issues related to standardized evaluation to affect teachers' attitude towards IE. Moreover, factors related to teachers' workload (Brennan, 2002), class size, limited resources and teacher training (Lifshitz, Glaubman & Issawi, 2004) were also indicated to inhibit successful inclusion of all students.

Furthermore, challenges related to time plus acquiring appropriate resources to support certain disabilities in the classroom (Harris & Stephenson, 2003; Jahnukainen & Korhonen, 2003; Jenkins, 2002; Westwood, 2003) were also found as barriers to IE. As reported by Sutherland (2000) the high school teachers expressed feelings of helplessness as they felt that they did not have the time or the expertise to deal with the high needs of these students. This notion of teacher helplessness was also reported by Watson (2004) in a study of secondary teachers. He stated that teachers feel, 'isolated, frustrated, and overburdened' (p. 11), in trying to meet the needs of students with learning difficulties in the mainstream.

With regards to severity of student's disability as impacting on attitude, Campbell, Gilmore, and Cuskelly (2003) argued that teachers have a certain attitude towards and treatment of specific students in their class due to factors such as severity of the student's disability, the challenges posed by the student behaviour and the lack of time to teach these group of students. In the same vein, Hastings and Oakford (2003) argued that irrespective of teaching experience, the severity of disability showed an inverse relationship with positive attitudes in that, the increase in severity the decrease in positivity in teachers' attitudes. It appears that (Fyssa; Vlachou, Avramidis, 2014; Pappas, Papoutsis, Drigas, 2018; Rakap, Kaczmarek, 2010) teachers are more acceptable of students with mild disabilities as opposed to students with more severe disabilities and challenging behaviour. Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma (2011) seemed to share the same sentiment that teachers seemed to have no reservations in integrating students with learning difficulties who do not seem to require extra support.

The literature in affirming the impact of teacher attitude on the implementation of IE programmes and policies (Sharma, Loreman & Earle, 2006) highlighted teacher limited knowledge as one of the significant factors which affect these attitudes, hence what Idol (1997) suggested makes a lot of sense if teachers are to be able to survive within an IE setting. He submitted that teachers need

additional tools and skills to cope with the social and emotional problems that accompany inclusive schooling (1997). A UNESCO study that was focused on school improvements was conducted on teacher education in 14 countries in 1980. The study targeted teaching strategies for inclusion and found that the majority of teachers were willing to accept learners with special needs in their classes but they lacked the confidence due to limited training. Lack of training preparation and experience in dealing with students with special needs can greatly affect teachers' attitude towards IE as also noted by Chhabra, Srivastava, & Srivastava (2010). They indicated that the teachers' negativity towards IE, stem from a sense of unpreparedness which led to a feeling of dread and additional stress as they were already coping with a diverse set of student needs.

Training is something that is crucial for teachers as it helps them with the strategies to deal with learners who have special needs (Salend, 1984). By the same token, Avramidis, Bayliss and Burden (2000) maintained that gaining substantial training in special education led to a significantly higher positive attitude than those who received no training about inclusion. If teachers are well prepared (through training), they are in a much better position to manage emotional and behavioural issues (Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma, 2011) that they may encounter within the IE classroom. Therefore it is important to make available inclusive education courses for professional development of teachers as this not only diminishes teacher resistance to inclusive education practice but eases their anxiety (Avramidis, Bayliss, Burden, 2000 & Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007).

Based on the literature being reviewed the importance of training as it relates to changed attitude (Avramidis & Norwich, 2002) and to manage an inclusive classroom cannot be overstated. The limited IE courses that are available to prepare teacher trainees at FOE is a great concern for lecturers involved in this study; hence the need to find out from the currently trained teachers their own views concerning their preparations for an IE classroom environment. Previous research that were undertaken on IE in

Samoa were based on the perspective of policy makers, and practitioners' (Tufue-Dolgoy, 2010) however, no research had been conducted on views of pre and in-service teachers with regards to their training preparations for IE, hence the impetus for the current study.

#### IV. PURPOSE

The purpose of this study was to explore participants' views about their teacher preparation pertaining to inclusive education and their preparedness to teach within an IE classroom. The objectives were two folds:

- To explore novice and practicing teachers' experiences of their teacher preparation to teach in an inclusive education environment;
- To examine factors that may facilitate and/ or inhibit a teachers' practice within an inclusive education setting;

The focus question that guided this study was:

- What are pre service and practicing teachers' views with respect to their teacher preparation as it pertains to inclusive education?

The following research questions were explored in this study:

- How could educational preparation (training etc) be improved to more fully prepare teachers for an inclusive classroom?
- Do you feel you have had sufficient preparation to teach children with special needs in a classroom?
- What are your views concerning the value of the current IE course (offered by FOE) in preparing teachers for an IE classroom?
- What type of support would be helpful to you to teach in an inclusive classroom?
- What do you think are factors that could facilitate inclusive practices or make inclusion successful?
- What do you think are factors which could inhibit inclusive practices or lead to failure for inclusion?
- What do you see as some of the challenges that concerns you most teaching in an inclusive classroom?

#### V. METHODOLOGY

The study utilized a qualitative phenomenological approach to gather information using open ended questions. Phenomenology is an approach to qualitative research that targets the cohesiveness of a specific group's lived experiences. It aims to describe the nature of the particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). We employed this design as it provided the opportunity for participants to describe the meaning of their lived experiences regarding the phenomenon which in this case is their experience of their teaching preparation in IE. The hermeneutical phenomenology was used in that it depends on the researcher's interpretations of what the individuals lived experience means (ibid). The gathering and presentation of explanations and descriptions from teachers' responses were classified into responses that show evidence of similarity or uniqueness. These were reclassified to enable a manageable analysis of data. Purposive criterion sampling was used to identify 94 pre and in service teachers who were undergoing teacher training in the bachelor of education program at FOE, NUS, in 2022. An open-ended survey questionnaire comprising of 7 questions were distributed to the 94 participants. Participants were approached during their course of study at the university and were given a cover letter and consent form explaining their rights as participants. Written consent were obtained and each participant were assigned a pseudonym. They were required to fill in the survey form and submit within a week. A phenomenological analysis of the interview transcripts was conducted. The data was read and reread and discarded for like phrases and themes that were then grouped to form clusters of meaning (Creswell, 2013). Through this process the researcher may construct the universal meaning of the event, situation or experience and arrive at a more profound understanding of the phenomenon.

The result of this study is significant as it will inform our program development and practices as teacher educators at the National University of Samoa. Similarly, the results will assist policy makers at the MESC in relation to means in which

they could support teachers in inclusive education classrooms.

## VI. FINDINGS

This research was aimed at examining pre and in service teachers' views of their teacher preparations in inclusive education. After analysis of data, a number of categories emerged as they

relate to questions pertaining to; *Training preparations, IE course relevance and Trainee preparedness, IE required support, Facilitating factors, Inhibiting factors as well as Trainee concerns.* These categories were further analyzed to arrive at minor themes and ultimately mega themes as presented in Table 1 below.

*Table 1:* Teacher preparation for IE and influential factors

QUESTIONS	CATEGORIES	SUB THEMES	MEGA THEMES
1 Necessary Educational preparation (training etc)	Training – Theory/ Course contents Practice	<input type="checkbox"/> Training needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Teacher preparation/Training requirements</li> <li>❖ Attitude</li> <li>❖ Resource (Physical and Human)</li> <li>❖ School/community collaboration</li> </ul>
	Research and observation in IE Needs training knowledge in sign language and braille		
	IE Experts/trainers	<input type="checkbox"/> Value of IE specialists/ Experts	
2. IE course relevance and teacher preparedness	Value of compulsory IE course	<input type="checkbox"/> IE course relevancy	
	Insufficient preparations --inadequate IE courses	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher preparation deficiency	
3. Support required for an inclusive classroom?	Specialized training in sign language/braille (FOE/NUS)	<input type="checkbox"/> Training preparations (Training institute factor)	
	IE expert trainer		
	Experienced practitioner	<input type="checkbox"/> Community/school collaboration	
	Collaboration-community/school		
Resources (Govt)	<input type="checkbox"/> Financial support (Govt)		
4. Facilitating/Inhibiting factors for IE success	Teacher knowledge / skills / experience in IE	<input type="checkbox"/> Training/teacher preparation	
	Attitude-parents/teachers, communities, schools, Classroom teacher personality / attitude- Innovative, caring, patient, loving	<input type="checkbox"/> Attitude (external/internal factor)	

	Classmate positive attitude		
	Good leadership and management skills-principal		
	Teacher lack of awareness in different types of disabilities		
	Personality/ attitude of the learner with special needs	<input type="checkbox"/> Personality - student with special needs	
	Teacher aide		
	Specialized resources e.g. braille, sign language, insufficient reading material	<input type="checkbox"/> Resource - human /physical resource	
	Teachers & parents collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/> School / community collaboration	
5. Teacher concerns	Teacher limited knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/> Teacher preparation (via training etc)	
	Poor school environment		
	Insufficient resources to support disabled students	<input type="checkbox"/> Learning environment	
	Time factor		
	Syllabus	<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom management (can also relate to teacher preparation)	
	Unfavorable attitude-students, teachers, parents, school, community	<input type="checkbox"/> Attitude	

## VII. EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION (TRAINING ETC)

The question which concerns with educational preparation was connected to the training institution and teacher preparedness for IE. Additionally it dealt with ways in which teachers preparation for IE classrooms could be improved. Analysis of this question came up with five

categories: *Training, Practice, Research and observation in IE, More resources, IE Experts/trainers*. These were re-categorized under two broad themes: *Teacher training needs and Value IE specialists/Experts* as will be presented below. These themes are presented below.

## VIII. TEACHER TRAINING NEEDS

Data indicated that the majority of participants have limited knowledge and skills in IE. Inherent in this view is the notion that teachers are not adequately prepared to work in an IE classroom. Participants indicated their need for more skills and knowledge to enable them to teach in an inclusive education setting as reflected in the following comments:

*Teachers preparation for an IE should be sufficient in terms of theories and philosophical beliefs in ways to better the teaching for students (P11)*

As alluded to earlier, the need for the institution to develop more courses to give teachers a better understanding of learners and their needs was a significant finding as it arose several times:

*The institution must have more courses that deal with handling students with disabilities (P90)*

One of the critical areas pertaining to teacher preparation relates to the importance of practicing learned ideas in the IE classroom. For example, more than fifty percent indicated their need for a more practical aspect of IE as this is where they put into practice the theories, ideas and concepts that they learn in IE. These participants commented:

*There needs to be a program where students go to the field for experience. The experience of being present in the IE environment is crucial (P.30)*

This notion of practicing IE ideas is well connected to the need to observe and undertake research within an inclusive classroom or within a special school setting as voiced by some participants:

*I need to go out and observe schools like Loto Taumafai, where students with disabilities are (P41)*

One other area in connection with teacher preparation that was highlighted in the findings relates to sufficient and special resources such as; braille and sign language as well as the need for

teachers to be knowledgeable in using these resources. The sign language materials and brailled machines are available at FOE however they are not utilized and practiced by teachers due to a lack of specialized or knowledgeable individuals who can effectively use these resources as indicated by this comment:

*There should be resources like braille to be used for the training. As well as sign language to improve, there should also be specialized teachers for this area (P22)*

### 8.1 Value of IE Specialist/Experts

The worth of being trained by specialized trainers with the expertise in specialized areas such as in the use of sign language and braille was a very significant findings as indicated by more than half of the population. At the moment the two inclusive education lecturers who hold some qualifications in inclusive education, have a good ground in theoretical and philosophical understanding of inclusive education, but lack the specialized skills such as the use of braille and sign language. These are the practical skills the participants seem to require in their IE trainings and preparations. Limited access to this support can be one great obstacle in preparing teachers for IE. The following comments seem to reflect this need:

*Teachers need to be trained by specialized individuals (with specialized skills) who are working with special needs (P81)*

## IX. IE COURSE RELEVANCE AND TEACHER PREPAREDNESS

The question which concerned with relevancy of the one IE course (HED 191 Introduction to IE) that is currently offered for all teachers in addition to teacher IE preparedness came up with the following categories: *Great value of Current IE course, Insufficient preparations, Need for more IE courses*. These categories were further reorganised under the two broad themes: *IE Course relevance and Teacher preparation deficiency* as will be presented below.

### 9.1 IE Course Relevance

With respect to relevance or not of the currently available IE course, more than half of the respondents indicated the relevance of the current IE course however, this one course would not adequately prepare them to teach in an IE classroom setting. They need more courses to be made available in IE as indicated by the following comments:

*... at the moment there is only one course that teaches us about inclusive education and I don't think this is enough to help me how to face challenges in IE (P.90)*

*I think HED191 is very relevant and crucial for teachers. I used not to value children with special needs. However, when I became involved in research and interview people with special needs, I came to learn to acknowledge the needs of people with special needs (P6)*

One of the practitioner who is already working in the field but is currently upgrading her qualification also commented on the relevance of the IE course for her work:

*HED 191 benefit me as a teacher. I had students with disability and I have no idea nor understanding on how to handle them, but HED 191 has given me huge knowledge ... and also being able to work together with parents helped a lot (P85).*

### 9.2 Teacher Preparation Deficiency

With respect to teacher preparedness to teach in an IE classroom, the majority indicated their lack of readiness to teach in an IE classroom. This deficiency seem to affect teachers' confidence to work in an IE setting as noted by these comments:

*No I do not have the skills to face students with disabilities so I don't think I can handle because I lack the skills (P37).*

As alluded to earlier, participants applauded the relevance of the one available IE course however it is not sufficient to inform their understanding about teaching children with special needs and to

address the challenges that may arise. This participant has this to say:

*... at the moment there is only one course that teaches about inclusive education and I think it is not enough to face challenges Because we only take and inclusive course in one semester within 3 years so I lack the experience and I need more time to spend on the course before working in the field (P90)*

## X. SUPPORT REQUIRED FOR INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

The question that dealt with the type of support required for IE came up with the following categories: *Specialized training in sign lang/braille, IE expert trainer, Experienced teachers, Collaboration- community / school, Funds for Resources (Govt)*. Further analysis of these categories generated three themes namely: *Training preparations, Community/school collaboration and Financial support (Govt)*. which are presented below.

### 10.1 Training Preparations

As had been highlighted in previous themes; the importance of training as it relates to teacher preparation has again emerged in connection to necessary support for IE. For example, the majority emphasized the importance of having specialized training in sign language and braille in preparation for a child who could only communicate using sign language or braille. The following comment reflects this need:

*I need to learn how to use sign language and be able to understand other special needs such as visual impaired and ways to support these students (aside from those with hearing problem) (P77)*

### 10.2 Community/School Collaboration

Additionally the support from the community was also evident. For example, several participants pointed to the vital support from parents via a community and school collaboration since parents have a better understanding of their own child as noted here:

*Parent support is crucial i.e. we teachers need to work collaboratively with parents so that we know the needs and wants of special needs students (P21)*

There were also participants who acknowledged the support of other individuals from special schools and IE contexts for shared knowledge and expertise. i.e., a close collaboration between the university and individuals who teach in special schools similarly individuals who work in special schools was considered essential based on this comment:

*It is great to have the support from other persons who work in special school so we will have an understanding of all types of disabilities and how to teach the blind and deaf students (P31)*

### 10.3 Financial support (Govt)

Although not many participants mentioned this aspect however it is worth noting for its impact on IE. It was suggested for the Ministry of Education Sports and Culture (MESC) to provide support via educational tools and facilities e.g., building ramps. We can very well relate to the importance of appropriate facilities for success of IE. We could use our own institution as an example of a non-inclusive environment. For example, although some ramps are put in place however lack of lifts and ramps for upstairs rooms can greatly inhibit mobility of a learner who is wheel chair bound.

## XI. FACILITATING AND INHIBITING FACTORS FOR IE SUCCESS

The two questions which asked participants regarding factors that could enhance and or debilitate IE were collapsed into one and the following categories emerged: *Teacher knowledge/skills, Teacher disposition, Positive attitude, Teacher aide, Specialized resources e.g. braille, sign language, Good leadership, Teachers & parents collaboration*. These categories were further analyzed and generated the following 5 themes: *Teacher Training preparation, Resource – human /physical, Attitude, Student personality*

*and School / Community collaboration*. Narrative based on these themes are presented below.

### 11.1 Teacher Training Preparation

Again as noted in other themes, the notion of training has also emerged as a top theme under this category. One of the outstanding factors that can either facilitate or inhibit IE concerns with the knowledge and skills to deal with children who have special needs. This knowledge and skill however comes from effective training which can then be transferred by teachers to the IE classroom. This participant commented on the importance of teacher knowledge in enhancing IE:

*Factors to facilitate IE practice in the classroom, are the skills that a teacher must have to juggle teaching special students and normal students in the same room. Normal students will obviously catch up faster than special needs student (P30).*

On the other hand, limited knowledge in IE can greatly affect one's understanding of IE. The majority of participants reported they have very limited teacher knowledge and skills in dealing with various needs of children which makes it very challenging for them:

*For me it is really hard for myself to teach these students as I don't know anything about sign language and ways to draw their attention (P2).*

### 11.2 Resource – Human /Physical Resource

Other factors that can affect IE, relates to human resource in this case teachers to support IE. For example, findings highlighted the importance of having teacher aides to support the child who may have a special need in the classroom as this will allow the classroom teacher access to other students:

*Inclusive education can be facilitated by having two teachers in the classroom, one to work with special needs and the other to work with non special needs children (P74)*

Additionally, the availability of specialized resources such as brailled machine and personnel

who can use sign language was also considered as an important consideration for IE.

*There should be resources like braille and sign language to be used for the training ...there should also be specialized teachers for this area (P22).*

### 11.3 Attitude

Attitude plays a major role for success or failure of IE i.e., positive attitude breeds success while a negative hints at failure. The participants alluded to the importance of having a positive attitude from classmates, the school community and parents as this facilitates IE:

*Students mingle around with students who have special needs, they should also encourage to treat these students as their own brother because some students look down on these students and make fun of students with disabilities in the classroom (P26)*

Negative attitude on the other hand can be an obstacle towards IE. For example, the participants indicated that negative behavior towards the child who may have a special needs can hinder IE practices.

*Children [with special needs] may go through bullying and discrimination in class and this can affect their desire to be in class (P40)*

Some participants indicated that the characteristics of the teacher can also be a facilitating or debilitating factor. For instance a teacher who is innovative, caring, patient and loving was deemed critical for IE success:

*The teacher should be compassionate, have love, patience and must have enough time to connect to the child with a special needs (P20)*

### 11.4 Student Personality

Child related factors were also highlighted to affect IE success for instance, some participants commented that the attitude of the child with special needs can be a facilitator or hindrance to IE.

*Some students with special needs require more time to learn and speak since they have low self esteem. Some of them do not seem to care whether they learn something or not and some get easily distracted (P4)*

### 11.5 School / Community Collaboration

Participants also stressed the importance of a collaborative relationship between the community and school for IE success. For example some parents can be utilized as a resource person to support the classroom teacher. The parent of the child who may have a special condition can be allowed into the classroom to offer the necessary support for the child while the teacher concentrates on other learners. This support can filter into the homes where parents can be encouraged to support their children in their home study.

*I think teachers should work together with parents...they can provide them with some basic skills and knowledge to support their children (P80)*

## XII. TEACHER CONCERNS AND CHALLENGES TEACHING IN AN INCLUSIVE CLASSROOM

The question which dealt with concerns and challenges that teachers may have with respect to teaching in an inclusive setting came up with these categories: *Teacher limited knowledge, Time factor impacting the syllabus, Unfavorable attitude, insufficient resources to support disabled students, poor learning environment.* These categories were further analyzed and generated 4 themes; *Teacher training preparation, Classroom management, Attitude and Learning environment* which are presented below.

### 12.1 Teacher Training Preparation

The category pertaining to teacher challenges and concerns regarding IE saw participants being very much perplexed by their limited knowledge in IE. This insufficient knowledge make them feel very vulnerable to practice within an IE environment. Again the concept of limited knowledge as a result

of inadequate training preparations has been viewed as a major concern in this section:

*One thing which really worries me as a future teacher is my limited knowledge of various disabilities and strategies to support them. e.g., visual impairment students need a braille machine but I don't have much experience in using such resources'.. (P21)*

### 12.2 Classroom Management

A number of participants were quite concern with time factor in relation to their daily work plan. For example, participants indicated that teachers may not have ample time to help other students if s/he would have to concentrate on children with special needs. Consequently this will affect syllabus coverage i.e., other aspect of the teacher's daily plan may not be effectively fulfilled if extra time is to be spent in supporting learners who may learn at a very slow pace:

*Some of the challenges that concerns me is time management while teaching. It is obvious that I must make sure the special student is on track and is able to understand at the same time not to neglect students who do not have special needs (P30)*

### 12.3 Attitude

One of the participants' concerns was associated to unreceptive attitude from students, teachers (school community) and parents towards the student with special needs. An example of a student unfavorable attitude is reflected by this comment:

*I believe the student with a disability may not understand of may not have the ability to learn because the student who are considered normal may disagree or discourage the student with disability (P5)*

Similarly the teacher's prejudiced attitude has been viewed as a concern as it can affect IE as reflected by this comment:

*Avoid giving all attention to the poor student with disability because it will make the others*

*feel jealous and think that I am bias. This may lead to other problems (P.49)*

### 12.4 Learning Environment

A further concern for IE in relation to IE practice was connected to limited resource and poor learning environment to support students with special needs within the classrooms. Physical resource has always been one of the common global issues concerning IE mainly in low socioeconomic contexts. The prevalent high teacher student ratio issue within the Samoan context can be challenging for IE. For example, how would a learner who is wheel chair bound maneuver his way around a room full of students? This will definitely defeat the purpose of IE as reflected by this comment:

*There should be enough teachers to teach in this area. The environment should be perfect example, school building resources to support children and of course cleanliness. If these areas are well prepared, the children will be successful in the future (P.6)*

This section has provided a presentation of findings based on categories and subthemes. The next section discusses the mega themes that emerged from subtheme themes: *Teacher Preparations and Training requirements, Human resource, Attitude, and School/Community collaboration.*

## XIII. DISCUSSION

This study was driven by the assumption that the training institution may not be adequately preparing teachers for an IE classroom given that only one course on IE is currently available to teachers within this study context. Teachers were examined concerning their views about their preparations in IE. After an in-depth analysis of data, four major themes emerged which forms the basis of the discussion. These include: *Teacher Preparations and Training requirements, Human resource, Attitude, and School/Community collaboration.*

The overall findings indicated that teachers have limited knowledge and skills to teach in an IE environment. This limited teacher knowledge and skills were attributed to the limited number of courses that are offered by the training institution. As alluded to earlier, there is only one IE course that is currently offered in IE which implies a lack of an available IE program. The lack of a program in IE can also imply that whatever knowledge or skills in IE that teachers may have had are unlikely to be practiced within a real IE classroom and may have further affected teachers' preparations for IE. According to the findings, the majority of participants indicated their desire to have an opportunity to observe and practise within an IE classroom. We argue that one of the major factors which seemed to have affected teacher IE preparation was the lack of opportunity provided for teachers to practise their learned ideas within an inclusive classroom setting. The current situation at FOE is that preservice teachers do not have the privilege to practise their learned ideas within an inclusive education classroom setting. The last time trained teachers practiced their teaching within a special or inclusive education context was more than a decade ago; a time when the diploma in special education was made available for preservice teachers who specialized for special education. When the program was dismantled in 2014, teachers lost the opportunity to carry out their practice within these settings. The discontinuation of teaching practice within the IE classrooms has greater implications for teacher preparations, and as the study shows, it implies an inadequacy on the part of FOE (NUS) in providing the teachers with the professional training they require. This we argue has further impaired teachers' preparation for an IE classroom- a view that is in line with the literature, (Forlin, Earle, Loreman, & Sharma, 2011) which emphasized the importance of teachers being effectively trained for this will effectively prepare them to efficiently practice within an IE setting.

Findings also indicated a great need for human resource or individuals with the expertise to train teachers especially in the more specialized areas like sign language and braille. In the current state

of affairs, there is no specialized trainer within the faculty of education who can effectively use sign language and braille. The lecturers who are currently involved in the teaching of IE, did not receive the requisite training in these very specialized areas thus would normally have difficulty sharing this vital knowledge with teachers. On some occasions and through special arrangements, some guest speakers (from outside the university) with the expertise in sign language or braille would be invited to share their knowledge with trainees through a lecture. Although these individuals are well applauded for sharing their expertise, however there is still a great need to have a full time lecturer onsite with such expertise to work together with teacher trainees within the training institution. One can argue and as confirmed by these findings, that this type of support is crucial for enhancement of educational preparation for teachers in IE. As indicated by Sutherland (2000) lack of expertise to address special needs of students can affect teachers' emotional state which in turn affect their practice. Hence the importance of recruiting experts to support teachers in their preparations cannot be over stated.

Findings also highlighted the notion of support as an important factor for success of IE. This support can be from various individuals such as the trainer with considerable expertise in IE. Similarly the support can come from the school environment in the likes of the teacher aides, experienced teachers and school principals. For example, the concept of using a teacher aide to support the classroom teacher within the classroom was highly recommended by participants in this study. One can very well relate to such sentiments given the challenges such as over crowded classrooms that seem to be the norm in most Samoan classrooms. The ratio of 40 or 50 students to one teacher simply defeats the purpose for inclusive education. Tufue-Dolgo, (2010) arguing from a similar position, argued that the manner in which inclusive education operates in Samoa seemed to have led to more exclusion for a number of students i.e., the idea of effectively including a student with a special need in a classroom with a high teacher student ration is very unrealistic. Therefore having an extra

teacher in this type of context would be the most sensible action to take. The idea of using teacher aides to support IE was initiated by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with one inclusive service provider which clearly indicates government support towards IE. The service provider provides teacher aides to support students with special needs within some regular classrooms. The support of parents of the child with special needs has also been seen as vital in the sense that they can be allowed in the classroom to support the child while the teacher focuses on other students.

Findings also stressed that attitude of teachers, classroom learners and the community can affect IE either in a positive or negative manner. The majority of teachers in this study are novice and they claimed having very limited knowledge of IE which seemed to have affected their sense of confidence in practicing IE. They claimed that having sufficient information will help them develop a better understanding of IE. This findings is consistent with years of research indicating that limited teacher preparation led to teachers feelings of trepidation to practice in an IE classroom (Chhabra, Srivastava, & Srivastava (2010). Success of IE can also be affected by attitude of classroom learners i.e. if children without special needs are not accepting of their peers with special needs then IE would suffer. The attitude of parents was also deemed important for IE success as several participants indicated that some parents have an adverse attitude towards including a child with a special needs together with their children in the same classroom. This type of attitude is not healthy for IE hence it is important to educate parents so they will develop a better understanding of IE; as education can effect change. In this light, some participants highlighted the idea of an effective school principal in influencing attitude which seems to suggest the principal as an ideal person to organize parents' and teachers' meetings to address the attitude issue.

As has been argued throughout the paper, the limited number of IE courses that are currently available for teachers may not be sufficient to prepare them for IE. The findings seemed to have

affirmed this assumption. We maintain that teachers are far from being prepared for an IE classroom hence we strongly suggest that the training institution (FOE) acknowledges the importance of developing an IE program so teachers are adequately prepared to teach in an IE classroom. The literature in relation to professional development of teachers (Avramidis, Bayliss, Burden, 2000 & Avramidis & Kalyva, 2007) stressed the value of developing relevant courses and seminars for it helps reduces teacher stress and any opposed attitude to IE.

#### XIV. CONCLUSION

Despite some progress made in IE since its inception in the Samoan context in the early twenty first century, a lot of challenges are still evident in several ways. One such problem lies in the preparation of teachers in IE as noted in the findings of the current study. Findings indicated that the training institution is not adequately preparing teachers for an IE classroom. This is clearly evident in the lack of an IE program that is made available for teachers. The one IE introductory course that is currently made accessible to teachers although seemingly relevant, however is far from adequate in meeting the teachers' needs. The majority of participants in the current study exhibited a great interest in IE unfortunately they claimed not having sufficient knowledge and skills to confidently practise in an IE classroom. It appears that this limited knowledge due to poor teacher preparation has affected teachers motivation and confidence to teach within IE environment. We can argue that this lack of knowledge could have also been exacerbated by the unavailability of a fulltime expert in sign language and braille to further support teachers in their preparation. Moreover is the issue of attitude which has been an ongoing obstacle for success of IE. We have reason to argue that perhaps issues noted above could have stemmed from an adverse attitude towards IE. For example, a lack of IE program could be attributed to an unfavorable attitude towards IE i.e., if policy makers and the training institution value IE, then this attitude would be reflected by the availability of an IE program for

teachers. It is highly likely that the same unfavorable attitude could have been instrumental in decisions to eliminate special education courses that were initially offered for teachers as mentioned at the outset. These issues suggest implications for the training institution and teacher preparation programs as will be noted in recommendations below.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Some recommendations are worth consideration which include the following:

- The training institution must acknowledge the importance of recruiting specialized persons to support IE otherwise it will be just theorization which is very unrealistic.
- It is crucial for the training institution to acknowledge the value of all education programs and give all equal consideration. IE has suffered many challenges due to individuals seemingly indifferent attitude towards IE.
- The majority of policy makers, IE stakeholders and teacher trainers do not seem to have an understanding of the IE concept hence is vital for these individuals to have a clear conception of IE.

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# About the Fractal Nature of Life and All Natural and Human Laws

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## ABSTRACT

The tree-like, fractal structure of universal (including legal, law-governed) laws, norms and rules has been explored and justified. The physical example for the fractal structure (spruce, pine, etc.) shows a experimental technique for measuring their basic physical parameters: mass, density, volume, and the side surface area. It is proposed that norms, laws and rules have to have the short, compressed, concise, simple, clear, and simple-to-follow in contents. This follows from the fractal theory of building the human society. And from the intelligent construction of the algorithm of human life and activity. Positive aspects of the Hadith presentation style were noted.

*Keywords:* fractals, human society, social, legal, legislative framework, optimal ways, develop ment, reasonable algorithm.

*Classification:* UDC Code: 340

*Language:* English



Great Britain  
Journals Press

LJP Copyright ID: 573350  
Print ISSN: 2515-5785  
Online ISSN: 2515-5792

London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 23 | Issue 14 | Compilation 1.0



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# About the Fractal Nature of Life and All Natural and Human Laws

О Фрактальной Природе Жизни, Всех Природных и Человеческих Законов

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## ABSTRACT

*The tree-like, fractal structure of universal (including legal, law-governed) laws, norms and rules has been explored and justified. The physical example for the fractal structure (spruce, pine, etc.) shows a experimental technique for measuring their basic physical parameters: mass, density, volume, and the side surface area. It is proposed that norms, laws and rules have to have the short, compressed, concise, simple, clear, and simple-to-follow in contents. This follows from the fractal theory of building the human society. And from the intelligent construction of the algorithm of human life and activity. Positive aspects of the Hadith presentation style were noted.*

**Keywords:** fractals, human society, social, legal, legislative framework, optimal ways, development, reasonable algorithm.

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## АННОТАЦИЯ

*Раскрыта и доказана древовидная, фрактальная структура общечеловеческих (в том числе и юридических, правовых) законов, норм и правил. На физическом примере для фрактальной структуры (ель, сосна и др.) показана экспериментальная методика для измерения их базовых физических параметров: масса, плотность, объем, площадь боковой поверхности. Доказано, что все нормы, законы и правила должны иметь краткую, сжатую,*

*лаконичную форму и простые, ясные, доходчивые содержания. В этом случае они будут соответствовать стремлениям, желаниям и ожиданиям большинства людей на планете. Это следует из фрактальной теории построения всего человеческого общества и ее законов. И из разумного построения алгоритма жизни и деятельности человека. Отмечены положительные моменты стиля изложения Хадисов.*

**Ключевые слова:** фракталы, человеческое общество, педагогика, социальная, юридическая, законодательная база, оптимальные пути, развития, разумный алгоритм.

## I. ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Фракталы широко применяются в точных и фундаментальных науках. Однако, недостаточно изучены роль и место фракталов в гуманитарных, педагогических, юридических, политических, экономических, социальных и общественных науках. В статье делается попытка для начала для теоретического исследования о роли и месте теории фракталов в указанных видах научных направлений. Приводятся примеры из событий, происходящих в настоящей общественной и социальной жизни Казахстана.

## II. ТЕОРЕТИЧЕСКОЕ ОПИСАНИЕ И РЕШЕНИЕ

Фракталы играют важную роль в описании многих естественных процессов [1-4].

На рисунке 1 показана древовидная структура. 1 – основной корневой ствол дерева, (2-7) – ветви, которые сами являются ветвящимися

структурами, 8-почва, земля, (9-12)-корни, которые сами также являются ветвящимися древовидными структурами.

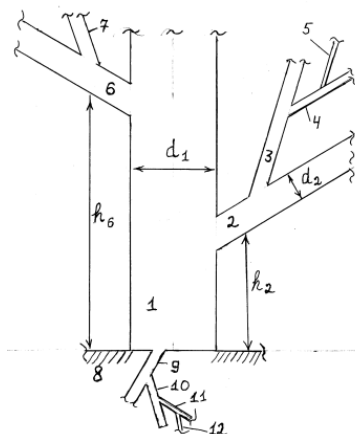


Рисунок 1: Древовидная, фрактальная структура

Древовидная структура иначе называется фрактальной структурой. То есть это самоподобные, разветвляющиеся структуры, которые могут делиться (размножаться) бесконечно много. Другими словами, это субстанция, которая в обычном понимании не имеет конечного, ограниченного значения площади и объема. Это динамичная система.

Представьте себе ель или сосну. Разумеется, что никто даже попытаться не будет точно определить общую площадь боковой поверхности сосны, так как столько много иголок на ней. В то же время мы не можем утверждать, что боковая поверхность данного дерева сосны  $F_1$  имеет значение бесконечности  $F_1 \ll \infty$ . Таким образом в данном случае мы приходим к новому понятию: ограниченность, конечность значения чего-либо при наличии визуальной, кажущейся, наблюдаемой его бесконечности. Это очевидно при попытке оценить  $F_1$  обычными классическими методами, как например интегрирование по кривой боковой поверхности некоторого тела. Значит тот факт что,  $F_1 = n_1$  имеет некоторое конечное ограниченное значение предопределен некоторым законом высшего разума, высшей программы, назовем это программой, задумкой божественным алгоритмом. Всякое дерево имеет ограниченное, конечное

значение своей массы  $m_1$ . Это очевидно. В то же время мы можем ввести в рассмотрение некоторое усредненное значение плотности данного дерева  $\rho_1$ .  $m_1$  и  $\rho_1$  - можно определить из эксперимента,  $m_1$  - определяется простым взвешиванием.

Для экспериментального определения  $\rho_1$  необходимо знать общий объем данного дерева  $V_0$ . Объем можно определить следующим способом. Большой резервуар заполняется водой. Измеряется уровень заполнения и определяется точный объем воды в этой емкости, обозначим его  $V_1$ . После чего погружаем в эту воду все дерево (ель или сосна) целиком, до полного ее погружения. В результате объем воды в емкости увеличится, уровень приподнимется. Добавляется объем вытесненной жидкости. Далее используем формулы из геометрии и вычисляем новый, измененный объем жидкости  $V_2$ . И тогда объем дерева будет равен  $V_0 = V_2 - V_1$ . После чего усредненная плотность легко определяется  $\rho_1 = \frac{m_1}{V_0}$ . Далее представим дерево некоторой фигурой, похожей на юлу или конус. После чего можно приблизительно определить площадь боковой поверхности  $F_1$ .

Принципиальная не возможность (неопределенность) для определения объема дерева, стала определенностью в данном примере. Также невозможно принципиально точно определить площадь боковой поверхности дерева. Касательно жизни людей, в пример можно привести родословную людей, которая напоминает древовидную структуру. Люди часто схематически изображают родословные в виде древовидной структуры, показанной на рисунке 1.

Теперь о всех законах, нормах и юридических правилах, которые сопровождают жизнь всякого человека от его рождения до самой его кончины. В настоящей статье мы доказываем, что все законы, правила и нормы – также имеют древовидную структуру, фрактальную природу. Ствол дерева 1 можно отождествить с конституцией страны. Также можно отождествить со священной книгой Кораном. От основного закона в различные стороны разветвляются, размножаются, распространяются различные другие законы, правила и нормы, которые детализируют, раскрывают, поясняют различные ситуации в жизни. Однако при этом, все светские ранее существовавшие законы имеют следующие недостатки. Речь идет о законах и юридических правилах во всех странах мира, а не только в Казахстане, где мы живем. Они далеки, местами противоречат абсолютно правильным, верным и вечным истинам, описанные в святой книге Ислама – Коран, или в своде правил (инструкций) по наилучшей практике, называемой Хадис. Например, в одном из Хадисов говорится: Не усложняйте ничего, упрощайте решение всякого вопроса везде, где это возможно и всегда. Все должно происходить во благо и на пользу человека [5-7].

Люди могут привести множество примеров, когда юридические и другие правила и нормы сильно забюрократизированы, страдают многословием, расплывчатостью определений, длинно текстовыми формулировками и тому подобными минусами. Такие неудобные правила, нормы и законы позволяют неопытным или коррумпированным

прокурорам и судьям на волокиту дело, решать вопрос не по справедливости и не в пользу незащищенного человека.

С другой стороны, все тексты Священного Корана и Хадисов написаны очень простым, ясным, понятным и легко запоминающимся текстом [5-7].

Поэтому мы полагаем, что в будущем времени все юридические, правовые и нормативные документы будут заново составлены и написаны в соответствии с положениями и идеями священного Корана и Хадисов отсюда следующих. Отмечаем, что многие положения в Коране, Библии в Торе совпадают. А такие тезисы из различных Хадисов, что человек – человеку друг, товарищ и брат имеются даже в правилах теории коммунизма. Поэтому, когда впредь мы пишем, ссылаясь на Коран и Хадисы – то это не означает, что мы удалились от международных правил и проблем. Как раз наоборот, все излагаемое нами носит интернациональный характер, имеет общечеловеческий смысл и гуманное направление.

Это необходимо сделать для того чтобы: 1 – идти по правильному и праведному пути, 2 – облегчить жизнь всех людей на земле, 3 – сделать их счастливыми и свободными.

Древовидная, фрактальная структура позволяет объяснить очень много закономерностей, происходящих в мире явлений, в том числе в обществе людей.

Рассмотрим один юридический аспект. В священных книгах (писаниях) все мысли, законы, предписания формулируются четко, очень малым количеством слов, ясно и понятно. Подробная расшифровка возможных деталей не производится. Почти во всех юридических законах в светском обществе стараются излишне детализировать, раскрывать и пояснять ситуацию. Таким образом, впадают в многословие и все равно не все остается понятным. Все неясные моменты позволяют нечестным судьям манипулировать ситуацией, поворачивать дело в ту или иную сторону. Не надобность излишней

детализации ситуации объясняется на основе фрактальной природы писанных людьми законов. Рассмотрим рисунок 1. Если сильно удлинять и наращивать ветки дерева 2-3-4-5-... то вскоре корневая ветка 2 – обломается, она не выдержит наращенную, нагроможденную, лишнюю структуру. Такие паттерны могут иметь место и в жизни людей. Допустим, некоторое человеческое общество дошло до такой степени детализации своих законов, что написали закон по которому любой человек должен ходить в магазин и купить себе булку хлеба. И вот будет примерно следующее. Человек имеет право сходить в ближайший магазин и купить там булку хлеба себе если: 1 – он имеет доказательства, что в кармане у него не менее 10 долларов. 2 - с того момента, когда он в последний раз кушал хлеб прошло не менее 8 часов. 3 – в магазине, после его покупки должно оставаться столько хлеба, что в радиусе 500 метров никто не останется голодным... И так далее и тому подобное. И таким образом можно написать столько много лишних, не полезных, абсурдных, нелепых законов и правил. Так, что при нарушении любого одного пункта этих законов, любого человека можно обвинить в нарушении правил и привлечь к ответственности.

По всей вероятности, примерно такое происходило и в нашей стране в недалекие времена в связи с вопросами проведения мирных демонстраций и шествий. На которые тогда был наложен нелепый запрет. Подумаешь, соберется группа абсолютно мирных людей (в основном это женщины), скажут в мегафон кое-что и разойдутся с миром. Зная при этом, что власти и не собираются что-либо выполнять из их требований и пожеланий. Так нет же, целые батальоны солдат и полиции хватили их бедных и увозили в закрытых машинах куда-то. словно какие-то иностранные полчища нападали на страну. Смешно даже бывало. Это из ушедшей в прошлое безвозвратной истории, сейчас конечно, все по другому, многое стало лучше сейчас.

Поэтому согласно теории фракталов, необходимо ограничиваться основными,

стволовыми законами и правилами. Это ствол 1 на рисунке 1. Они должны быть короткими и ясными, словно Хадисы.

Таковыми лаконичными, сжатыми, малословными (не болтливymi) были все юридические, этические и все другие нормы и законы нашего степного казахского права. Вносим предложение, использовать новый термин – степное право. Многими столетиями (а может быть и до тысячи лет длилось?) формировалось гуманное, справедливое, демократичное степное правосудие и степная казахская мораль и этика. Все спорные и не спорные вопросы решали открытые собрания и советы биев и старейшин. Это были гласные, демократичные и доступные для всех людей собрания и совещания. Где учитывалось мнение каждого человека или участника события. Все было справедливо. Естественно, что бумаг не писали. Поэтому все такие совещания были сжатыми, краткими и не многословными. Мысли выражались предельно точно и ясно. Имеет смысл в будущем изучать этот позитивный опыт и пропагандировать его для применения в новых условиях и при новом содержании для всего человечества.

Преобладающее большинство жителей РК против внедрения в страну 55 предприятий из КНР. Требуют остановить, запретить. При беседе они указывают много причин для их опасений. Говорят, что эти производства используют сильно химизированные, ультра интенсивные технологии. Которые потом приведут в полную негодность всю эко систему страны, биосферу и атмосферу. Однако вот следующее их опасение буквально удивило нас. То, что они говорили нам простыми своими словами мы изложим как резюме, сжато, обобщенно. Люди говорят, что казахский народ – сейчас само достаточное дерево, само достаточный фрактал. Который, хотя и делится, но все еще слабый и малочисленный. Начальное численное соотношение между ими и нами 150:1. В математике это называется начальным условием при решении задачи. Если на основной ствол насадить чужеродную ветку, из

другого более живучего и более мощного дерева, то эта насаженная ветка со временем высосет все соки из корня к себе. Со временем все родные ветки этого дерева вымрут, высохнут. Новая присаженная ветка разрастется и от этого дерева, от этого первоначального фрактала ничего не останется. Вот так просто и ясно изложил данный вопрос умный, хороший, благородный, доверчивый, простой и беззащитный наш народ. Так что наука всеильна и фрактальная теория объясняет очень многое. То есть наш народ боится диффузионного смешения, растворения и исчезновения в чужой большой среде.

Другой пример ненужной многословности и болтливости из нашей жизни. В 2003-2004 г. в университетах РК начали вводить и применять так называемые учебно-методические комплексы (УМК) и силлабусы (Slb) [8]. До этого существовали хорошие, очень короткие, не длинные учебные рабочие программы - УРП. Многие зарубежные Slb по форме и содержанию очень близки и похожи на наши прежние УРП, имеют объемы всего 4-5 страниц. Наши же Slb умудрились раздуть и увеличить до больших неразумных размеров. Есть много излишних пунктов, где необходимо: указать цели, указать задачи, указать пути достижения, указать пути реализации, указать предисторию, указать настоящее, указать будущее, что ожидается и так далее и тому подобные излишние моменты, в которых нет необходимости. В разных университетах бюрократы из главных, административных, чиновнических корпусов начали составлять какие-то таблицы для внутреннего оформления этих Slb и УМК. Этим таблиц много. И начали гонять и мучить бедных преподавателей тем, что какая-то ими надуманная таблица написана не так, как надо бы. Не потребность УМК следует из того простого и ясного факта, что в передовых и развитых странах мира действует принцип "открытой книги". Поясняем, что это такое. Через интернет люди получили доступ к различным электронным он-лайн библиотекам. Количество книг, методических

разработок, журналов в них исчисляется уже не тысячами, а миллионами единиц. При такой ситуации главным является то, чтобы студент, открыв ту или иную книгу, смог-бы правильно усвоить любой материал (при содействии и консультации преподавателя) и потом доказать факт его усвоения тем, что правильно решает ту или иную практическую задачу. Или же выполняет ее в объеме лабораторной работы. Вот и все. Путь изучения и освоения материала – короткий, ясный и эффективный. Поэтому не стоит даже доказывать, что УМК – это уже какой-то ужасный архаизм, глупость и нелепица. Сколько же времени в пустую затратили наши преподаватели на написание этих никому не нужных УМК? В течении этих 18 лет. Стоит задуматься над вопросом: может быть разработчики этих самых УМК – это враги народа и образования? Необходимо срочно отменить эти самые УМК. По некоторым сведениям МОН РК как-бы отменил эти УМК в 2021 году. Однако, в некоторых ВУЗах продолжают по инерции требовать письменные тексты лекции и семинаров. Зачем? Это пустая, не нужная работа. Силлабусы необходимо сделать очень простыми, короткими, в объеме не более 3-5 страниц и допускать определенную степень произвольности в форме и содержании на усмотрение самого преподавателя. О том, что ситуация с УМК является очень абсурдной, нелепой вы можете узнать более подробно из работы [8]. Там изложены интересные моменты.

Аналогичная ситуация с оформлением и сдачей отчетов по финансируемым научным темам в РК. Все отчеты требуют на трех языках: казахском, русском и английском языках. В этих отчетах очень много излишней текстовой, словесной информации. Придираются даже так: шрифт не того размера, должен быть обязательно Times new roman или же какой-то другой, назначенный по какому-то надуманному правилу. Далее скажут, что какая-то там таблица имеет отклонение на 2, 3, 5 мм. от кем-то принятого правила. Подобно этому придумают еще

другие нелепые правила для придирки. Если пожелают, то могут придаться и к толщине какой-то линии. Очень много всякой другой не нужной, не полезной информации требуют написать. Все это очень сильно тормозит работу творческого интеллектуального научного потенциала страны, мешает движению вперед. Желательно бы, чтобы принимали отчеты только на одном или на двух языках в максимуме: английском и (или) казахском. Надо ограничиваться основными показателями: а) опубликованная научная статья в авторитетном журнале; б) изготовленный новый прибор или оборудование; в) новая действующая компьютерная программа и тому подобные итоговые вещи и факты. Один приглашенный из-за рубежа ученый, в настоящее время работающий в Назарбаев университете, уже высказывал мнение, что из-за усиленного бумажно-бюрократического подхода он уже не желает больше участвовать в выполнении научных тем в Казахстане! Просим других преподавателей, исследователей и ученых РК принять участие в дальнейшем раскрытии и более подробного изложения поверхностно затронутых здесь вопросов.

Наступит время, когда юристы и все другие разработчики законов со всего мира будут разрабатывать, составлять и внедрять в жизнь совершенно новые, хорошие законы и правила, в соответствии с идеями и решениями указанными в этой научной статье.

Каждое дерево вырастает только до определенного фиксированного (позволенного) размера. Слишком велико разрастаться оно не может. Приток животворной энергии из его корней равен расходу энергии во всех стволах и ветках. Также все человеческие законы. Только те приживаются в обществе, которые идут на пользу и на благо всем людям одинаково.

Разветвленные информационные, телекоммуникационные, интернет и другие сети также имеют фрактальную структуру и фрактальное содержание.

В связи с бурным ростом размеров и масштабов применения IT технологий в жизни буквально всех людей на земле расширяется сфера влияния Больших данных, Big Data - BD [9-11]. Наступает время философского осмысления достигнутого уровня применения BD и ее влияния на жизнь людей. Это глубокая большая отдельная тема. Отметим, что при рассмотрении и изучении таких современных и актуальных тем будет очень плодотворным, если физики-теоретики, математики-кибернетики, IT-инженеры, философы, юристы, педагоги, экономисты и историки будут совместно работать в одной дружной команде.

Об указанных двух последних моментах мы расскажем в следующих наших публикациях.

Надеемся, что открытый нами новый закон – закон о фрактальной, древовидной структуре всех законов, правил и нормативов будет достойно оценена всеми юристами, правоведами, педагогами и философами со всего мира.

### III. ВЫВОДЫ

1. Раскрыта и доказана древовидная, фрактальная структура всех общечеловеческих (в том числе юридических, педагогических) законов, норм и правил.
2. На физическом примере для фрактальной структуры (ель, сосна и др.) показана методика для измерения их базовых физических параметров: масса, плотность, объем, площадь боковой поверхности.
3. Доказано, что все нормы, законы и правила должны иметь краткую, сжатую, лаконичную форму и простые, ясные, доходчивые содержания. В этом случае они будут соответствовать стремлениям, желаниям и ожиданиям большинства людей на планете. Это следует из фрактальной теории построения всего человеческого общества и ее законов. И из разумного построения алгоритма жизни и деятельности человека. Отмечены

положительные моменты стиля изложения Хадисов.

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### АННОТАЦИЯ

Жакатаев Т. А., Абдибекова Л. М, Женисхан Г., Болат А.

*О фрактальной природе жизни, всех природных и человеческих законов.* Раскрыта и доказана древовидная, фрактальная структура общечеловеческих (в том числе юридических, правовых, педагогических) законов, норм и правил. На физическом примере для фрактальной структуры (ель, сосна и др.) показана экспериментальная

методика для измерения их базовых физических параметров: масса, плотность, объем, площадь боковой поверхности. Доказано, что все нормы, законы и правила должны иметь краткую, сжатую, лаконичную форму и простые, ясные, доходчивые содержания. В этом случае они будут соответствовать стремлениям, желаниям и ожиданиям большинства людей на планете. Это следует из фрактальной теории построения всего человеческого общества и ее законов. И из разумного построения алгоритма жизни и деятельности человека. Отмечены положительные моменты стиля изложения Хадисов.

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# Education beyond a Human Capital Perspective

*Dr. Edgar Ivan Castro Zapata*

## ABSTRACT

According to the theory of human capital, one of the aspects that affects the growth of a country is the citizen's capacity to work. This essay seeks to demonstrate a criticism of this theory and highlight education in the development of the human being and society. Thus, through theoretical analysis, development is conceptualized from a holistic view and is related to topics of quality and equity. Finally, the importance of investment in education is sustained and it is concluded that an integral education is required to face the challenges of globalization.

*Keywords:* human capital; development; education; society.

*Classification:* DDC Code: 330

*Language:* English



Great Britain  
Journals Press

LJP Copyright ID: 573350  
Print ISSN: 2515-5785  
Online ISSN: 2515-5792

London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 23 | Issue 14 | Compilation 1.0



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# Education beyond a Human Capital Perspective

La Educación Más Allá de una Perspectiva de Capital Humano

Dr. Edgar Ivan Castro Zapata

## ABSTRACT

*According to the theory of human capital, one of the aspects that affects the growth of a country is the citizen's capacity to work. This essay seeks to demonstrate a criticism of this theory and highlight education in the development of the human being and society. Thus, through theoretical analysis, development is conceptualized from a holistic view and is related to topics of quality and equity. Finally, the importance of investment in education is sustained and it is concluded that an integral education is required to face the challenges of globalization.*

**Keywords:** human capital; development; education; society.

## RESUMEN

*Según la teoría del capital humano, uno de los aspectos que incide en el crecimiento de un país es la capacidad para el trabajo del ciudadano. El presente ensayo busca evidenciar una crítica a dicha teoría y resaltar la educación en el desarrollo del sujeto y la sociedad. Así, mediante el análisis teórico, se conceptualiza el desarrollo desde una visión integral y se relaciona con los tópicos de calidad y equidad. Finalmente, se sustenta la importancia de la inversión en educación y se concluye que se requiere de una educación integral para afrontar los retos de la globalización.*

**Palabras clave:** capital humano; desarrollo; educación; sociedad.

## I. INTRODUCCIÓN

Uno de los recursos más valiosos con los que cuenta la sociedad es su gente, las personas que en su día a día promueven, potencian y

condicionan el crecimiento social. Por tal motivo, se requiere que el Estado centre su mirada en el desarrollo del ciudadano y todo lo que ello condiciona, con el fin de potenciar los alcances que puede lograr mediante este proceso. Es así como surge la teoría del capital humano, la cual se enuncia como punto de partida epistemológico que justifica la importancia del ser humano y su formación al interior de la sociedad. Particularmente, esta teoría contempla el capital humano como el conjunto de actitudes, aptitudes y conocimientos desarrollados por el sujeto que pueden ser de utilidad para el trabajo, el sistema económico e incluso el país (Odriozola, 2008). En consecuencia, a la educación se le percibe como un medio para condicionar la mano de obra que dinamiza la sociedad en general y que promueve su progreso.

Según Mendoza y Mamani (2012), el sistema educativo es factor crucial para que un Estado logre progresar continuamente. En otras palabras, posee un efecto directo en el desarrollo social, el cual, más allá del crecimiento económico, se contempla como una realidad multidimensional que abarca aspectos políticos, culturales, sociales, éticos, religiosos, entre otros. Por tanto, al hablar de la formación del sujeto, se hace énfasis en procesos pedagógicos integrales que puedan generar beneficios tanto a nivel personal como social. Subsecuentemente, sobresalen, por un lado, el principio de calidad educativa, el cual es considerado como un entramado de aspectos que no solo considera resultados de aprendizaje, sino el proceso de educación en general. Y por el otro, el principio de equidad, que busca igualdad de oportunidades para todos y todas en pos de romper barreras económicas y sociales de discriminación y pobreza.

El presente artículo pretende desarrollar una reflexión en relación con la importancia de la

educación en el desarrollo de la sociedad, así como una descripción y crítica del concepto de teoría del capital humano. Para ello, se hace el estudio de diversas corrientes epistemológicas y fuentes bibliográficas, lo cual da como resultado la necesidad de reevaluar la sinonimia que se le ha dado a desarrollo y crecimiento económico, además de reconocer la importancia de una educación integral del sujeto. Paralelamente, se destacan la equidad y calidad educativa como aspectos importantes para la sociedad. Además, se justifica la inversión en educación como medio para fortalecer y obtener beneficios mediante el proceso de formación de los ciudadanos. Finalmente, como conclusión, se plantea la relevancia de un sistema educativo que trascienda el pensamiento economista de la formación y evalúe el rol de dicho tipo de educación en el proceso de globalización.

## II. NECESIDAD EDUCATIVA DE UNA VISIÓN INTEGRAL DEL PROCESO DE FORMACIÓN.

La sociedad como realidad cambiante, en la cual intervienen una gran variedad de elementos para promover su crecimiento y desarrollo, a lo largo de los años, ha sido fuente de interrogantes en el campo científico con el fin de alcanzar lo que se denomina desarrollo social. Es así como surge la teoría del Capital Humano. Según Briceño y Godoy (2012), en la época actual el ser humano y la formación de sus actitudes y aptitudes son unos de los insumos de mayor valor social. Razón por la cual se ha visto el fenómeno de que al interior de los distintos países y naciones este recurso se torne prioritario. Lo anterior, sustentado bajo la fundamentación epistemológica de la teoría del capital humano, en donde el ciudadano es considerado como materia prima de la producción, y a su vez, como eje integrador y constituyente de las distintas comunidades y sociedades. Ello debido a las repercusiones que este puede tener en el crecimiento económico.

En palabras tanto de Díaz (2009) como de Odriozola (2008), cuando se habla de capital humano, se hace referencia al conjunto de técnicas, facultades y destrezas que posee el sujeto para la realización del trabajo y que inciden en su

rendimiento y producción. Es decir que, gira en torno al conjunto de capacidades y virtudes necesarias para llevar a cabo una labor. Así, dicho concepto llama la atención de la sociedad y el mundo industrial debido a que impacta -de manera directa e indirecta- el desarrollo económico, pues, genera dinamismo en relación con la producción, la oferta y la demanda; además de influir directamente en el mercado laboral y dinamizar el sistema de ganancias económicas a nivel general.

Por consiguiente, el sujeto pasa a convertirse en eje central en temas relacionados con crecimiento, avance y progreso de la institución a la cual pertenece (López, et al., 2007). Esto, al considerar su peso en el avance económico. Entonces, si se traen a colación posturas teóricas como las de Weiss (1986) se puede sustentar la inversión en la mano de obra como un beneficio a futuro, ya que según la teoría del capital humano, a mayor capital humano, mayor fuerza de trabajo; y a su vez, mayor progreso económico, tanto para la sociedad como para la industria. Lo previamente mencionado deja en evidencia que este enfoque se centra en la productividad del ciudadano (Martínez y Amador, 2010). Por tanto, se concibe la persona únicamente como un instrumento o un medio para la labor y la producción.

Ahora bien, es posible mencionar que esta corriente de pensamiento da gran importancia a aquellos aspectos que influyen directa o indirectamente en la productividad del ser humano, entre los cuales se destaca la educación. Según Sánchez y Rodríguez (2011), esta es una herramienta fundamental para la formación de la mano de obra; es decir, es la que permite pulir habilidades para el trabajo. Por consiguiente, se sostiene la premisa de que entre más niveles educativos haya alcanzado la persona, mejores serán sus índices de rendimiento laboral (Mella, 2003). En conclusión, se infiere que la educación influye directamente en la formación del ser humano, entendiéndose esta formación, desde la teoría del capital humano, como el medio o la forma por la cual la sociedad prepara a sus ciudadanos para el campo laboral.

En consecuencia, el sistema educativo pasa a ser el dispositivo de acreditación y validación de la utilidad del ciudadano (Pantoja, 2010). Motivo por el cual, este se edifica como aspecto trascendental en la sociedad, en la medida que potencia el rendimiento del sujeto y por consiguiente, el desarrollo social desde la producción y crecimiento económico. De allí que, según Gómez y Zárate (2011), exista una estrecha relación entre la educación y la realidad de la economía. En otras palabras, se entiende que es labor de las escuelas, colegios, institutos y universidades, fomentar el conocimiento necesario en los ciudadanos para su desempeño laboral al interior de la sociedad; lo cual, acorde con el presupuesto teórico de Calvo (2003), dinamiza el mercado, aumenta la promesa y demanda de empleo y mejora e impulsa la circulación monetaria. En síntesis, implica ganancias tanto para las empresas como para la sociedad.

Es así como, a partir de lo mencionado por Odriozola (2008), se puede inferir que desde el pensamiento de la teoría del capital humano, la educación del ciudadano se ve conceptualizada bajo una mirada mercantilista. En otras palabras, se piensa bajo preceptos credencialistas que justifican el hecho de que la educación implica mejores posibilidades de trabajo y posición económica, pues su único fin es la formación de la mano de obra, por lo que todo conocimiento útil que puede desarrollar el ciudadano debe estar ligado directa o indirectamente a la mecánica del trabajo. Por tanto, se deja en evidencia que el sistema educativo no se ve permeado por una visión más amplia que permita la formación del ser.

En palabras de Gavilanez (2021), el ser humano es un entramado de elementos que trascienden la realidad económica. El sujeto es fruto del compendio de elementos biológicos, filosóficos, cognitivos, culturales, religiosos, entre otros; en los cuales el económico es solo uno más de ellos. Por lo cual, Sandoval et al. (2013), sostienen que existe un requerimiento de cambio en la perspectiva economista de la educación y sus objetivos de formación del campo laboral al interior de la sociedad. Se reconoce, entonces, la

necesidad de plantear un sistema educativo desde una mirada que trascienda la teoría del capital humano, de tal manera que, no solo vea a los ciudadanos como maquinas que hay que instruir, sino como seres humanos que pueden influir desde diversas realidades en su entorno.

Lo anterior se complementa al pensar que, según Pinto (2007) y Odriozola (2008), el desarrollo no solo se debe contemplar desde los bienes y servicios a los cuales se tiene acceso. Es decir, que es un concepto que va más allá de solo aspectos económicos, pues implica desenvolvimiento y crecimiento para el ser humano inmerso en un espacio interdisciplinario. De allí que autores como Martínez y Amador (2010) planteen que el concepto de desarrollo, hasta el momento basado en la teoría del capital humano, es un elemento multidimensional que integra diversos componentes del ser humano y su día a día. En otros términos, se deja en evidencia que se requiere de la formación de un ciudadano que no solo actúe bajo un modelo economista de trabajo, acción y consecución de aspectos materiales y le permita ser proceso en el que influyen conocimientos, saberes, valores, puntos de vista, información, derechos, deberes y demás aspectos que se contemplan en las diferentes dimensiones del ser, hacer y saber del sujeto.

Consecuentemente, desde la educación, se hace necesario reestructurar métodos y formas de enseñanza con la intención de garantizar una formación desde una visión integral del estudiante (Blanco, 2005; Grisales y Zuluaga, 2018; López y Zawady, 2021). Por tanto, su fin primordial consiste en brindar a la sociedad ciudadanos que posean las capacidades necesarias para que se puedan desempeñar activamente en los diversos campos en los que interactúan (Calvo, 2019). Lo cual traduciría en crecimiento integral para la sociedad en general (Briceño, 2011). En síntesis, se hace hincapié en un proceso educativo que influya en aspectos del sujeto como el ético, el político, el democrático, el religioso, el comunal, el epistemológico, el científico, entre otros; los cuales, a su vez, se verán reflejados en un desarrollo integral de la sociedad.

Por consiguiente, se puede reafirmar lo expuesto por Arias (2007) quien menciona que el sistema educativo es la puerta para el progreso cultural. Lo cual permite inferir que también influye en dimensiones relacionadas con lo cultural. Por tal motivo, Hernández (2012) estipula que la educación es el medio por el cual se da un acercamiento y fortalecimiento de la cosmovisión simbólica de lo que nos rodea. Entonces, se puede afirmar que el acto educativo permite fortalecer lo social, la convivencia, lo democrático, lo civil, lo moral y la forma en la cual se conceptualiza e interactúa con el entorno. De allí que se destaque el papel tan importante que posee al interior del Estado.

Es así como, se entiende por educación integral a la formación de entramados mentales, afectivos y sociales que permiten fomentar al máximo las particularidades del sujeto (Olín, 2018). Se llega a la afirmación de que el sistema educativo es el medio que permite mejorar las condiciones de subsistencia del sujeto y del Estado (Jiménez, 2011). En otras palabras, la educación es el medio por el cual la sociedad condiciona el desarrollo del ciudadano y a su vez promueve su propio desarrollo, ya que el desarrollo de un solo individuo, considerándose este como realidad compleja, cambiante y compuesta por distintas dimensiones en las cuales se debe influir, potencia a la vez el desarrollo de las personas a su alrededor, de la comunidad en la cual interactúa y la sociedad en la cual está inmerso.

Finalmente, de lo mencionado hasta el momento, se puede inferir que el rol de la educación radica en edificar la base de la sociedad (Castro et al. 2022). Y a su vez, ser elemento clave para generar cambio social (Pinto, 2007). Es decir, el sistema educativo se conceptualiza como herramienta significativa de cada país o sociedad, cuya utilidad radica en potenciar avances desde las diferentes esferas del conocimiento y acción que conforman la realidad circundante. Por tal motivo, se reconoce la trascendencia de generar políticas educativas óptimas para que se pueda impulsar al máximo este aspecto. En particular, al considerar que el sistema educativo se convierte en instrumento que permite hacer frente a las necesidades del contexto y la época (López y

Novoa, 2021). Calidad que le brinda mayor valor al reflexionar sobre los tiempos actuales, en los cuales cada día se pide en el ciudadano un conjunto de actitudes, aptitudes y competencias que le permitan su actuar, así como aprovechar los cambios que han traído los procesos de globalización.

### *1.1 La Educación Integral de Calidad y Equidad en la Globalización*

La globalización está reconocida como la apertura a la comunicación entre los Estados y comunidades, la cual rompe con fronteras y obstáculos de expresión (Giddens, 1999). En otras palabras, es el medio por el cual, la localidad es insertada y relacionada con la globalidad. Cada vez se torna en un reto para la sociedad debido a los desafíos que acarrea consigo. Según Benavides y Tovar (2017) una de las características más notables de este fenómeno es el cúmulo de conocimientos y datos a los cuales da acceso. Por su parte, Arias (2007) y Sánchez y Rodríguez (2011) plantean que la globalización incide en la apertura al mercado, las relaciones y acercamiento entre diversas localidades y el desarrollo y las repercusiones de las acciones que ahora no solo afectan de manera individual, sino, general. En resumen, ha marcado el devenir del mundo actual y ha generado nuevas formas de ver y actuar en el universo circundante, lo cual redefine distintos procesos al interior de la sociedad, entre ellos, la función de la educación en sí.

Tal como lo expresan tanto Acosta (2019) como Gamboa y Cruz (2021), el tema del mundo globalizado implica un conjunto de nuevos requerimientos en relación al sistema educativo, en pos de hacer frente a los retos que este plantea. En otras palabras, la globalización ha demarcado un nuevo papel para la educación, la cual ahora debe preparar a los distintos ciudadanos y sociedad en general para enfrentar los fenómenos que condiciona. Según Yugcha (2017), es función del sistema educativo brindar todos los saberes necesarios para que los distintos seres humanos sean capaces de actuar activa y responsablemente en el mundo globalizado. La formación del ciudadano requiere en la actualidad un giro en

torno a actitudes, aptitudes, valores, conocimientos y nuevos procesos de socialización.

Consecuentemente, sobresale la necesidad del diseño de políticas educativas que garanticen a los distintos ciudadanos la inmersión en la globalización y los temas que trae consigo, como lo son la apertura económica, la innovación tecnológica y científica y la comunicación masiva. Según Bonal (2009), dichas políticas han de girar en torno a la posibilidad de brindar la mejor educación posible a todos y todas. Por tanto, surge la palabra calidad educativa en la mayoría de las políticas educativas alrededor del mundo, al igual que en el discurso de equidad de muchos promotores de la educación. Específicamente, el tema de la calidad ha producido grandes controversias, pues según Boderó (2014) existe una alta polisemia con respecto al concepto. Es decir, no hay una realidad unívoca en relación con lo que es e implica un sistema educativo de calidad.

Por lo anterior, Orozco et al. (2009) reconocen que se requiere establecer un concepto universal con respecto a la calidad en el campo de la educación. Esto, al pensar que en muchas ocasiones solo es una palabra secundaria que no posee un significado adjunto que conlleve acciones claves para su consecución. No obstante, López y Zawady (2021) detallan que un factor decisivo en la mayoría de corrientes y acciones que apuntan al logro de la calidad educativa es la formación integral y contextualizada. En consecuencia, se podría mencionar que un sistema educativo que busque la consecución de dicha calidad es aquel que apunta al mejoramiento del estándar de vida del ciudadano y a una formación integral que gira en torno al manejo de las herramientas, conocimientos, habilidades y destrezas para ejecutar las acciones necesarias para actuar dinámicamente en el espacio.

Según Patiño (2018), un sistema educativo de calidad es el que garantiza todo lo necesario para que el alumno alcance un aprendizaje significativo. En otras palabras, es el que brinda todas aquellas herramientas necesarias tanto desde aspectos físicos, como desde aspectos

éticos, normativos, sociales, culturales, etc. Con el fin de que el estudiante interiorice el saber de la mejor manera posible. Por consiguiente, evidencia que una educación de calidad es aquella que potencia al máximo el desarrollo integral de los ciudadanos y por consiguiente, fomenta el avance social, y todos los beneficios que esto acarrea, siendo este el primer y mayor esfuerzo que ha de realizar una sociedad en relación con la educación.

Ahora bien, Blanco (2005) en un ejercicio de conceptualizar lo que significa un sistema educativo de calidad menciona que este posee relación con diversos elementos cruciales relacionados entre sí, de los cuales se destaca que este debe ser ecuánime. Del mismo modo, Rodríguez (2008) menciona que debe existir imparcialidad en la accesibilidad a este tipo de educación. Entonces, a partir de lo mencionado por los autores, se puede inferir que la calidad educativa está ligada estrechamente a la equidad educativa, el cual ha sido otro concepto que ha causado revuelo en el discurso educativo. En especial, al considerar que el trato igualitario promueve mayor discriminación e inequidad en las oportunidades (De la Cruz, 2017). Es decir que igualdad no es sinónimo de equidad ya que esta última implica justicia en el acceso, permanencia y consecución de los beneficios que otorga la educación.

Según López y Zawady (2021) se requiere que desde la educación se logre romper con brechas de desigualdad, discriminación, odio y limitaciones, con el objetivo de que todos y todas logren potenciar al máximo su formación. En relación con los autores, fomentar la equidad educativa en la actualidad es una estrategia y una meta que se posee para mejorar la realidad tanto educativa como cotidiana de los sujetos. Especialmente, cuando se reconoce la existencia de inequidades, segregación y exclusión que caracterizan el sistema educativo en general (Rodríguez, 2008). Por lo cual, la meta de la equidad educativa es poder asegurar un servicio integral de calidad educativa para todos y todas independientemente de la raza, cultura, género, religión, estrato social, o fisiología.

Por otra parte, Briceño (2011) aclara que al hablar de equidad educativa se hace hincapié en un proceso formativo que permite a todos y todas, el acceso al aprendizaje y lo relacionado con la garantía del desarrollo del saber. Es decir que una educación equitativa es aquella que brinda igualdad de condiciones y oportunidades a todos, independientemente de sus características; garantizando así una educación de calidad para sus miembros, tanto en zonas rurales y apartadas, como en zonas que gozan de beneficios económicos. Por lo anterior, se plantea la educación como el medio para romper con cadenas de pobreza y separación social, ya que permite incluir a aquellos que por diversas condiciones son excluidos o discriminados, arrebatándoles oportunidades.

En consecuencia, por un lado, se reafirma lo expuesto por Arias (2007) quien sustenta que la educación es un medio para el encuentro y la relación con las diferencias. Con lo que concuerda Plancarte (2017) al proponer que el sistema educativo debe dar respuesta a los requerimientos que plantean las características de sus estudiantes. Entonces, se puede mencionar que la educación es un puente de encuentro entre culturas y estratos sociales, el cual brinda igualdad de posibilidades a los ciudadanos, sin considerar quiénes son o de dónde vienen; siendo uno de los objetivos de las actuales reformas y políticas educativas. En particular, al conceptualizar la educación equitativa como un instrumento clave para desarrollar valores necesarios para la sana convivencia, al mismo tiempo, que un elemento clave para identificar la diferencia como una oportunidad de retroalimentación y aprendizaje.

Y por el otro, en armonía con Bonal (2009) y Pinto (2007), se reconoce que la educación permite eliminar ciclos reproductivos de desigualdad en la distribución de recursos y adquisición de los mismos por parte de los miembros de una comunidad. En otras palabras, el sistema educativo se torna como el medio por el cual se erradica la pobreza. Por tanto, se plantea la trascendencia de una educación equitativa para el desarrollo de la sociedad. A su vez, se destaca el papel determinante que tiene el diseño de

métodos y medios para la distribución e inversión en la educación. Ello con el fin de garantizar el derecho a una educación integral de calidad para todos de manera equitativa que beneficie a todos y por consiguiente a la sociedad.

## *1.2 La importancia de invertir en la educación integral*

Según Riomaña (2011) existe una tendencia a considerar el gasto público en el sistema educativo como uno de los mecanismos por los cuales se invierte en la mano de obra y dinamización del mercado. No obstante, a partir de lo mencionado hasta ahora, se reconoce que educar es buscar el fomento y potencialización del ser humano desde todas las dimensiones que lo conforman (Nova, 2015). Es decir, no solo gira en torno a los presupuestos de la teoría del capital humano y la formación para el trabajo. Se puede detallar que actualmente una de las estrategias más significativas para potenciar la educación integral al interior de las distintas sociedades es la inversión en la educación. Así, esta puede ser vista desde dos realidades. Desde un punto de vista, como gasto público, debido a los bienes y cantidad monetaria que se debe proveer para que la educación pueda considerarse de calidad y equitativa. Y por el otro, como una inversión, debido a los beneficios que puede traer para el desarrollo de una sociedad.

Por lo anterior, entidades internacionales como CEPAL y UNESCO (2004) hablan sobre la inversión pública en la educación y estipulan que existe la necesidad de ahondar en acciones que permitan invertir cada vez más en la educación y la consecución de recursos para ello. Es decir, se identifica el valor que tiene la educación para el desarrollo tanto individual como social, por lo cual se piensa que la inversión en la educación por parte de cada uno de los países genera efectos positivos. En especial, cuando se detallan los retos que demarca el mundo globalizado, tales como la apertura al mercado, en el cual, según Gómez y Zárate (2011) la educación cumple un rol protagónico debido a sus implicaciones en temas de crecimiento y avance económico. Algo que se puede sustentar bajo la visión de Pantoja (2010) y Riomaña (2011), quienes mediante sus estudios

permiten llegar a la conclusión de que la inversión en la educación desemboca en una tasa de retorno y utilidad; la cual, en la mayoría de los casos, favorece tanto al sujeto como al Estado.

Finalmente, se destaca la necesidad de políticas efectivas para la inversión del gasto público en la educación, en especial en Latinoamérica. Según Bezem et al. (2014), al año 2015 existía un porcentaje tentativo con respecto a la inversión en la educación propuesto por la UNESCO, el cual se encontraba aproximadamente en el 6% del PIB. No obstante, pese a que diversos países latinoamericanos han empezado un proceso progresivo en temas relacionados con la inversión en educación a partir del PIB, por lo general estos se encuentran por debajo de esta inversión en comparación con países ubicados en otros continentes, exceptuando algunos como Brasil, Chile, Portugal y Argentina (Gómez y Zarate, 2011; Toledo, 2014). Lo cual evidencia los distintos intentos en diversos países para alcanzar una educación con calidad y equidad para todos. Sin embargo, también resaltan la falta de mayores esfuerzos para subsanar este aspecto, en especial lo referente a la inversión en la educación y el gasto público destinado para ello.

### III. CONCLUSIONES

Existen diversos recursos que permiten potenciar la sociedad, además de promover su desarrollo, uno de ellos es el humano. Por tal motivo, se puede considerar a los ciudadanos como materia prima indispensable para cada país. De allí la necesidad de invertir tiempo y recursos para fomentar el desarrollo de cada persona, de tal manera que esto pueda beneficiar la sociedad en general. Particularmente, desde la teoría de capital humano, dicho desarrollo radica en la constitución de la mano de obra. Sin embargo, pensar la concepción de formación humana desde una educación instrumental en la cual se forman actitudes, aptitudes y destrezas para el trabajo de manera que favorezca únicamente el avance económico individual y social, se considera que no es pertinente para el contexto actual. Ello debido a que la globalización, el internet, los medios de comunicación masivos, entre otros, exigen una

formación integral del sujeto que abarque las distintas dimensiones del ser humano.

Consecuentemente, se plantea que el desarrollo se debe desprender de una concepción netamente relacionada con el crecimiento económico, para así entenderlo como proceso integral que abarca aspectos cívicos, sociales, políticos, económicos, éticos, religiosos, culturales, entre otros. Por tanto, se piensa la formación del sujeto como realidad compleja, lo que a su vez permite que el desarrollo que se logre en la sociedad no solo apunte a la consecución de bienes y servicios. Por consiguiente, se resalta que las características primordiales que debe tener la educación integral en el contexto actual son la calidad y la equidad. Esto con la intención de apuntar al mejor servicio educativo posible para todos y todas, lo cual requiere que los distintos países y naciones ahonden en procesos de financiamiento e inversión en la educación, lo que se reflejaría en el mejoramiento de la educación.

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# The Rise of Cyber-Activism and Digital Disobedience during the Arab Spring Uprisings

*Dr. Abdelhafid Tahboun*

## ABSTRACT

The fomented fulminations of social disarray, rebellious revolts and the outrageous outbursts of scandalously turbulent political turmoil inflamed during the dystopian plight of the Arab spring have been monumental milestones and remarkably watershed moments old-anchored in the Arab political history and its cultural memory. The tragic war casualties, catastrophic disasters, the horrendous butcheries of innocent civilians and collateral damage have been quintessential centerpieces of intense national and international media coverage alike. Hence, amid the chaotically sweeping whirlwind of such insurgent uprisings and insurrectional upheavals, the indispensably fundamental role of digital media, the practical serviceability of New Information Technologies (ICTs) and Cyber-Activism or digital disobedience become thought-provoking areas of extensive research theoretically reconfigured within the contextual contours of cyber-anthropology and digital sociology.

*Keywords:* youth media agency, cyber-activism, cyber-anthropology, digital communities, online identities, virtual political mobilization.

*Classification:* LCC Code: JQ1850.A91, HM851JQ1850.A91, HM851

*Language:* English



Great Britain  
Journals Press

LJP Copyright ID: 573350

Print ISSN: 2515-5785

Online ISSN: 2515-5792

London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 23 | Issue 14 | Compilation 1.0



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# The Rise of Cyber-Activism and Digital Disobedience during the Arab Spring Uprisings

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## ABSTRACT

*The fomented fulminations of social disarray, rebellious revolts and the outrageous outbursts of scandalously turbulent political turmoil inflamed during the dystopian plight of the Arab spring have been monumental milestones and remarkably watershed moments old-anchored in the Arab political history and its cultural memory. The tragic war casualties, catastrophic disasters, the horrendous butcheries of innocent civilians and collateral damage have been quintessential centerpieces of intense national and international media coverage alike. Hence, amid the chaotically sweeping whirlwind of such insurgent uprisings and insurrectional upheavals, the indispensably fundamental role of digital media, the practical serviceability of New Information Technologies (ICTs) and Cyber-Activism or digital disobedience become thought-provoking areas of extensive research theoretically reconfigured within the contextual contours of cyber-anthropology and digital sociology. Hence, the principal sine qua non of this research paper is to critically re-interrogate and re-investigate in depth the influential contributions of Cyber-activism and digital media of diverse electronic types in filming, recoding and documenting the cataclysmic calamities and the destructive apocalypse of the Arab spring. In so doing, it also aims to perspicuously cast the spotlight on the practical applicability, versatile multi-tasking and significant operations of multimedia platforms, online outlets and social networks in the democratization of the Arab autocratic regimes and their crucial roles in prompting regime transformation through re-appraising their importance in the liberalization of the Arab constitutions.*

*Keywords:* youth media agency, cyber-activism, cyber-anthropology, digital communities, online identities, virtual political mobilization.

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is complexly intertwined nexuses, symbiotic interplay and complementary interdependence between the Arab Spring's pro-democracy counter-protests and cyberactivism. The revolutionary uprisings and the insurgent counter-protests of the Arab Spring, whose volcanic eruptions and explosive blowup have engendered tumultuous disarray and fomented outrageous fulminations across the MENA Region, tightened the grip of mass mobilization and cemented the bonds of collective action and co-operative collaboration among the marginalized underdogs (Mourtada, 2012). Throughout this paper, I re-interrogate how the groundbreaking whirlwind of irrepressible political dissidence and iconoclastic insurrections fertilized the soil for democratic enfranchisement, engendered the rise of *cyber-activism*, facilitated the prevalence of virtually interactive online communities and augmented the ubiquity of digital identities that boomed the widespread of online-activism shifting it to real-life organized demonstrations (Howard, 2010).

The Arab insurgent youths and their effervescent enthusiasm as Netizens and influential Facebook vloggers, cyber-enthusiasts or opinion-leaders harnessed the practical serviceability of cyber-activism to instigate social overhaul, economic *perestroika*<sup>1</sup> and engendered political

<sup>1</sup> According to Merriam-Webster and Cambridge Dictionaries, the term Perestroika refers to the economic and governmental reform instituted by Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union during the mid-1980s. Ever since, Perestroika is deployed as a terminological neologism to refer to socio-economic overhaul, reformist refurbishment and constitutional reform in the field of political economy.

reforms through the subversive overthrow of autocratic regimes (Mourtada, 2012).

With the exponential upsurge and the cumulative growth of Facebook registrations and twitter penetrations, social movement amid the riotous proliferation of the Arab Spring have been staggeringly skyrocketed and reached their climacteric flashpoint by lifting the curtain on economic parsimony, governmental austerity and the flimsy fragility of their socio-economic infrastructure (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al.) Since accessibility of Media predetermines the control of political gatekeeping and the distribution of speech and voice articulation, Arab youth political dissidents disheveled the autocracy of the state and catapulted their smothered voices to the international community and externalized their dismal grievances by translating them into real-life protests (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al.). Hence, it is salient that the technological invention of the so-called cyber-activism has transgressively demolished the ivory-towered recluse, the dismissive marginalization, economic deprivation and the social withdrawal exerted by the armchair Arab intelligentsia and the supremely oligarchic dignitaries who monopolize constitutional ratifications and policymaking. By the same token, cyber-activism has been a groundbreaking breakthrough which swerved the pendulum of the public opinion and reawakened the sleepily dormant and frozenly paralytic spirit of the downtrodden underdogs by raising their political consciousness to divulge the tyrannical dictatorship, malevolent encroachments and the abusive misrule inflicted the Arab autocrats.

The practicable applicability of the media networks and their communicational functions have been expedient in prompting a transgressive trespass of the state enforced political surveillance and its media censorship. The public opinion which was once enchained captive by the enslaving bondage and the constrictive constraints of stifling suffocation is, now, freely unfastened loose and extricated to unleash its furious outrage (Mourtada, 2012).

Drawing on the theoretical inscriptions, epistemological prescriptions and the conceptual

precepts devised by the disciplinary sub-set of Cyber-Anthropology as a deconstructive framework, I shall re-explore in depth how cyber-activism fractured the handcuffing shackles of state-terrorism and went grassroot to exhume the silently asphyxiated political interests and expropriated human rights of the subaltern minorities living outside the power structures under the Arab despotic governments.

## II. THEORIZING CYBER-ANTHROPOLOGY AND DIGITAL ACTIVISM AS THEORETICAL PARADIGMS: RE-ASSESSING THE INFLUENTIAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF CYBER-ACTIVISM IN THE ARAB SPRING

Cyber-anthropology is a newly emerged disciplinary field of inquiry and an unprecedented scholarly realm which scrutinizes the virtual interactive communication, the formation of digital communities, online identities and the reciprocally transactional exchanges of internet-users in the cyberspace (Sivilisic, 2012). Cyber-anthropology as an epistemological doctrine and disciplinary endeavor re-interrogates the cyberculture of technosociality and artificial modes of digital communication systems and the formation of social network online communities that interact virtually. (Johana, 2011, p. 5).

Cyber-anthropology is a sub-set of science-art interface, techno-culture theory and digital sociology which is critically deployed to deconstruct the discursive artificiality involved in cyberspace, and how the exponential upsurge of electrical-mechanical communication systems, teleconferencing techniques and the rampant proliferation of computer-generated works have dominated the human social relations, molded their ideological proclivities and eventually refashioned their behavioral patterns. By the same token, the cumulative growth of ICTs (Information Communication Technologies), and how they influentially reshaped the worldviews of the youth culture and conjointly dovetailed it with the developmental viability of cyber-culture, videotaping photography and the explosive blowup of digital mania are also quintessential centerpieces recurrently unraveled by the

doctrinal epistemology of cyber-anthropology (Sivilisic, 2012).

While cyber-anthropology re-examines the digitally technologized youth culture, its customary traditions, modernly updated lifestyles and avant-garde thinking trajectories or groundbreaking illicit activities associated with cyber-criminology such as hacking, privacy disclosure, plagiarism or literary forgery, digital sociology focuses intensely on the type of online conversational exchanges, virtually circulated discourses, the dominantly overarching perceptions and the digital assumptions upheld by the audio-visual postmodern technologized culture (Sivilisic, 2012). Both, digital sociology and cyber-anthropology are practically applicable and efficiently workable once a comparative contradistinction and evaluative juxtapositions of how power dynamics in real-life social relations are correspondingly reflected, incarnated and computerized in the online digital cyberspace. (Sivilisic, 2012).

Extrapolating from Cyber-Anthropology as a preliminary groundwork and a theoretically foundational springboard, I shall argue that the multi-dimensional efficiency and the pluralistically multi-tasking versatility provided by cyber/Digital Activism have consolidated the grip of the politically conscious and mobilized Arab youths. In the same vein, I am also inclined to demonstrate how *'the right to the city'* (Lefebvre, 1968), which reiterates the re-appropriation and the invasive occupation of the urbanized central cityscape, is contextually re-configured in this current study as a metaphoric metonymy for proclaiming the right to the democratization of the virtual cyberspace and the de-politicization of digital media through the efficacious serviceability supplemented by cyber-activism.

In so doing, I shall revisit and re-conceptualize cyber-anthropology not as a disciplinary field of study but rather as a conceptual praxis, a theoretically analytical paradigm to re-explore how digital technology assisted the Arab insurrectional uprisings to formulate undetected online identities, construct surreptitious digital

communities and circulate seditiously anti-totalitarian pro-democracy protests, via multimedia platforms, that eventually culminated in the efflorescing springtime of constitutional reform, regime transformation, socio-economic overhaul and democratic transition in the Arab autocracies.

Based on the theoretical framework of Cyber-anthropology, the principal mainspring of this paper is to reaffirm how cyber-activism, a sub-set or a fraternal offshoot of cyber-anthropology, has empowered the insurgent upheavals of the Arab youth political dissidents and left-wing human rights activists to democratize the political spectrum in the Arab world and topple the theocratic orthodoxy and jurisdictional encroachments fiercely wielded by the despotic rulers and their old-entrenched regimes.

In a conference on Media and the Arab Spring hosted by the Communication Studies Master Program at AL-Akawayn University in Irfan, the scientific committee explicitly divulges the integral centrality of multimedia outlets in strengthening the Arab revolutionary revolts underscoring that *"In a region where traditional media have been under strict government control, the internet and social networks provide a space for youths to articulate their political views and organize their political actions"* (SHSS, 2014. p. 1). Hence, it is plainly salient that cyber-activism marks the interdisciplinary consilience, the symbiotic interplay and the intersectional convergence between digital technology and concretely in-person collective arousal or political mobilization amid the social disarray and the tempestuous turmoil prompted by the Arab spring. Besides, I shall succinctly reconfigure how digital activism aided the politically disenfranchised youths and the downtrodden peripheral underdogs to outvoice their hijacked political interests outside the multimedia modalities and normative mainstream discourse of the Arab governmental autocracies.

### III. REFLECTIONS ON YOUTH DIGITAL DISOBEDIENCE AND CYBER-ACTIVISM AMID THE ARAB SPRING UPRISINGS

The integral centrality of the multimedia corporations, newsmaking institutions and cyber-activism in the diffusive promulgation of pro-democracy protests and anti-totalitarian demonstrations as well as the deposition of the autocratic tyrants rejuvenated heedlessly under-researched political implications and resurfaced the synergistic interplay between real-life insurrections and digital riots during the Arab Spring (Mourtada, 2012). In the scholarly realm of social movements and political activism, media is construed as a liberating cyberspace, an instrumental locomotive or communicative mouthpiece that replaces representative spokespersons as it facilitates collective action, cements the bonds of mass mobilization, streamlines the process of social assembly and relocates the hijacked agency of the silenced peripheral subaltern to the central metropolis of political decision-making and social integration (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al.)

With the cumulative growth of digitalized technology and the ubiquitous popularity of multimedia corporations and other communicative outlets, social media networks have been the vehicular mediums whereby videotaped footages displaying homicidal criminalities of police brutalities, sadomasochistic violence, sexual molestation and physical assault were put in the limelight of the public's eye to unmask the callous cruelty of the Arab autocrats (Mourtada, 2012). Besides, Media is the oxygenating lifeblood of virtually 'cyber-activism' and pro-democracy counter-protests as it is an accessible gateway of self-representation, political criticism and unconstrained freedom of speech which broached the constrictive shackles of stifling censorship dismantled the enchaining strictures of regimental regulations and political surveillance. Thanks to multimedia outlets, newsmagazines and documentaries, Bouazizi's tragic demise and his dystopian plight have gone global as they prevalently occupied the institutional agendas of human rights organizations, inspired the strategic vision of diverse NGOs and triggered global

citizenship or universally altruistic solidarity as well as transnational realignments irrespective of the divisive disjunctures of cultural heterogeneity, racial disparities, ethnic differences and geographical remoteness. Through media circulations and its diffusive online transmissions, Bouazizi's suicidal tragedy went grassroots and stimulated a popular ubiquity which generated an ideological backlash deconstructing the ivory-tower paradigms of stifling censorship and repressive suffocation (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al)

Media is an incentivizing catalyst that fertilizes the soil for irrepressible social activism, the formation of social network cobwebs, the construction of virtually digital communities and collective action of mass mobilization (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al.) The peripheral subaltern protesting for democracy harnessed the practical serviceability of media to dishevel the autocracy of the state and catapult their smothered voices to the international community. As Wolfsfeld et al critically remarks "*When the level of anger and violence rises, all forms of media can serve as accelerators for increasing the speed and intensity of protests.*" (p.182).

The profitable serviceability and the diffusive transmissions of the aired newsreels and televised broadcasts have engendered an unprecedented turn in protest politics through making a transformational shift from real-life orchestrated demonstrations to virtually mediated cyber-activism. The latter is a practically workable mechanism whose rampant proliferation garnered the spotlight of the international media coverage, relocated the hijacked agency and the stifled voice of the displaced peripheries to the central metropolis and destabilized the technocratic suzerainty of the Arab policymakers by exerting lobbying pressure on the elitist stakeholders to democratize the political spectrum. Hence, media as a liberating cyberspace to outvoice the subdued aspirations of the twisted subaltern has subversively created a periphery-inclusive counter-narrative that disruptively demolished the state-sponsored rhetorical propaganda, frustrated its insidious disorientations, infiltrated its unscrupulous corruption and supplanted its monological dogmatism by calling into play

dialogical inter-discursivity as a democratic policy of state-citizen reciprocal negotiations to propound strategic visions of state-rebuilding avenues and constitutional remaking (Mourtada, 2012).

The de-politicization of media initiates the inaugural startup of the democratization of policymaking, the liberalization of constitutional ratification as well as the de-militarization of the state (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al). Metaphorically, Cyber-activism served as an agora-like terrain of political leadership negotiations, the reciprocal exchange of attitudes and the large-scale diffusion of conscious-raising anti-government campaigns that blow the whistle on heinous aspects of corruption, chronic unemployment, social injustice and economic impoverishment. Media is a democratizing mechanism of expository denunciation, castigating revilement and divulging disembowelment which blows the whistle on ferocious rapacity, greedy avidity and covetous avarice of the pot-bellied parliamentarians who ravish the innately inborn rights of the civil society and politicize public sectors by militarizing the country. It casted the spotlight on administrative corruption, chronic unemployment, aggressive pugnacity and belligerent political detention exerted by the state as it disclosed its dysfunctional deficiency, myopic shortsightedness, constitutional misconduct as well as ideological miscarriages (Mourtada, 2012).

Cyber-activism and virtually interactive transaction across social networks have consolidated the perceptive conceptuality of the rebellious youths and equipped them with a spacious arena to sharpen their innovative creativity, strengthen their sagacious perspicacity and deepen their political consciousness empowering their ideological stamina. Accordingly, Media platforms served as prophylactic immunity and oxygenating lifeblood that resurrect their deadened spirit from the underground dungeon of peripheral subalternity through foregrounding it to the frontispiece of socio-economic integration, political engagement and participatory involvement in the decision-making system and the democratic declaration of their destiny (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al).

A variegated array of zoom symposiums, virtual assemblies and online teleconferencing summits have been frequently held to reflect upon and bureaucratize protest politics propounding state-rebuilding avenues, alternative strategic visions of constitutional reform, socio-economic overhaul and regime transformation (Sivilisic, 2012). The seditious mobilization and the co-operative collaboration of collective rallies are orchestrated through interactive virtual communication and message-texting as well as teleconferencing digital techniques.

Media is the mechanical locomotive and the supportive linchpin which served as a pivotal pillar, if not empowering backbone of political protestations and instigated a shift from real-life demonstrations to cyber-activism (Mourtada, 2012). For instance, *Intifada* is an independently autonomous and anti-totalitarian Facebook page devised by the downtrodden underdogs and the marginalized peripheral subaltern living outside the power structures of the tyrannical regime to relocate their hijacked agency of political mobility and unconstrained social action to the central locus of decision-taking and policymaking. Intifada is a media platform originated as a defensive crackdown, a liberating cyberspace and a confrontational countermeasure to democratize the state and re-bureaucratize parliamentary elections of electoral presidency. Media, therefore, destabilized the tectonic plates of state-citizen asymmetrical power imbalances, architectural configuration of space occupation and disheveled the socially structured pyramidal hierarchies of class stratification and divisive disjunctures through counter-forcing the mainstream media.

At the individually micro-level, cyber-activism served as expressive mouthpiece that aided the disenfranchised subaltern living outside the power structures to externalize their despicable grievances, disclose their alarming discontent and unfold their disappointing letdown inflicted by the selfishly egocentric and tyrannical rulers. While the mainstream media and its repressive military apparatus exerted mouth-shutting policies of disproportionate violence, tragic casualties and focused on the separative dispersal of the orchestrated protests, the mass controlled

cyber-activism concentrated on tightening the grip of convergent unification, co-operative collaboration and mobilized collective action (Mourtada, 2012).

Evoking McLuhan's conceptual paradigm of the "*Medium is the message*", the Arab youth iconoclastic rebels have revolted through the cyberspace as a vehicular spacecraft and a liberating outlet that can relocate their agency and disruptively unsettle the constrictive strangle holds of online censorship and suffocating political surveillance enforced by the totalitarian Arab regimes (McLuhan, 1964; Johana, 2011, p. 5). Hence, the omnipresent ubiquity of the cyberspace has blurrily overstepped and transcended the boundaries surpassing the divisive disjunctures which used to distinctively demarcate the ordinarily conceivable real from the unfamiliarly artificial hyper-real. Accordingly, the real-life revolutionary mobilization and the fomented fulminations of appropriating the central urban spaces as riotously turbulent hotspots of social activism are supplanted by the contagiously transmissible outrage of cyber-activism and the thickly ascendant domination of the cyberspace as a '*third-space*' of power negotiation to outvoice the stifled subaltern minorities outside the preponderantly hegemonic jurisdictional autocracy of the Arab dictatorial governments. Therefore, the heretical defiance and the rebellious disobedience of the Arab youth cyberculture is unabashedly channeled and outlined outside the normative patriarchal infrastructure and the intransigently uncompromising belief systems inherently fossilized in the Islamocentric conservatism-oriented regimes.

The traumatizing case of Tunisia, whose riotous atrocities and police brutalities, account for the tragically suicidal self-immolation of Mohamed Bouazizi in the small-scaled town of Sidi Bouzid after he had been humiliated and stigmatized by a female police officer, had gone virtually viral pervading the cyberspace before they were translated into nationwide organized counter-protests. It is, therefore, remarkably insightful to note that "*through blogs and text messages that Tunisians experienced what the sociologist Doug*

*McAdam calls "cognitive liberation."* (Howard, 2010, p.2). Similarly, In Egypt for instance, the tragic casualties, political detentions, repressive imprisonment and the catastrophic collateral damage catalyzed the explosive outbreak of civil disobedience manifestly incarnated in the proliferation of cyberactivism as "*Wael Ghonim started the Facebook group "We are All Khaled Said" to keep alive the memory of the 28-year-old blogger, whom police had beaten to death on 6 June 2010 for exposing their corruption."* (Howard, 2010, p.2).

It is a markedly phenomenal veracity and an irrefragable assertion to reiterate that politics of intimidating terrorization and dismaying trepidations usually breed forms of confrontational media backlash and defensive pushback. As Foucault critically articulates in his voluminous treatise on the historical archeology of *sexuality* that "*where there is power, there is resistance*" (Foucault, 1984). In the same vein, while evoking Spivak's philosophical reflections on protest politics in the Arab world enunciated in her intriguing essay, *The Subaltern Speaks Through Dying* (2021), The notion of death becomes a provocatively stimulating impetus that animates the inextinguishable flames of both, social demonstrations and cyber-activism as complexly complementary avenues, if not strategic blueprints of political democratization. By the same token, as Daniel Gaxie pinpoints in his article, the *Rewards of Activism* (2017), that a political commitment to a deep-seated convictions and irreversibly unshakable political cause fuels the unstoppable willingness of self-sacrifice because the steadfast attachment to a politically committed belief is a satisfactory reward in itself.

Despite the virtually displayed videotaped footages, organized cyber-activism and the broadcasting of online newsreels and screen images, the Arab youths proved recklessly fearless, and that they developed an unconquerable immune indomitable intrepidity and ideological stamina that securely shields and safeguards them against politics of fear. Hence, bravely undeterred by the repressive state political apparatus inflicted by the police violent torture and dehumanizing felonies, the heroic

youths remained persistently resilient and tenaciously strenuous clinging to their imperishable cause of demanding democracy harnessing the power of multimedia corporations as practical mechanism. Once again, in Spivak's conceptual percepts, the Arab peripheral subaltern social and ethnic minorities rebelling against the heinous forms of social deprivation and presidential wrongdoings have been loudly overheard and outspoken through the monopolization of mass-controlled media and cyber-activism as enabling power structures (1988).

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In her critically electrifying and thought-provoking classical essay, *Can the Subaltern Speak* (1988), Gayatri Spivak has reflexively re-envisaged and revisited the state-citizen dialectical power relations and conflictual discordances or what social movement scholars designate as the cultural Incongruence hypothesis (Sakbani, 2015). The elected enunciating social actors and the representative political stakeholders as supremely hegemonic policymakers and governmental dignitaries overlook the periphery-inclusive policy of conversational dialogues, political engagement, and co-operative collaboration as the rudimental terrain of obtaining contractual consensus and procuring the general will subscribed by the uniformly collective conscious. They paradoxically take recourse in the employment of mouth-shutting avenues or truncheon-oriented approaches as repressive state-apparatuses to exert jurisdictional theocracy, despotic totalitarianism, marginalizing dismissal and coercive oppression (Spivak, 1988).

Whether consciously recognized or unconsciously undiscerned, the explosive blowup and the outrageous outbursts of the Arab youths political dissidents are dubbed as the prognosticative harbinger heralding the advent of an optimistic springtime of political consciousness and the temperamental penchant towards social democracy. The de-politicization of the news-making agencies and the democratization of media platforms disruptively unsettled the

top-bottom hierarchized monological flow of media transmissions and transformed them into a dialogically inter-discursive monopoly which adopts an inclusively centrifugal approach. The architectural configuration of discourse industrialization, consent-manufacturing and the panoptical surveillance of the technocratic Arab state are deposed and toppled by a heterotopical auto-ethnography which re-narrativizes the repressed history of the margins which was erstwhile thrust in the wasteland of amnesiac oblivion.

Media platforms strengthen the widespread promulgation of tweets, anti-totalitarian hashtags, videotaped footages of police brutalities and images of the severely injured peaceful protestors during their frictional encounter with the horrendous repression of the military apparatuses. Hence, it is plainly decipherable that the young *"The cyber-enthusiasts express optimism about the ability of the new media to empower people living in nondemocratic societies and to allow insurgents to adopt new strategies."* (Wolfsfeld, 2013 et al, p. 117).

In a synoptic brevity, it is, hereby, noteworthy to espouse the assertion that Cyber-activism instigated unprecedented transformational metamorphosis in the tectonic plates of citizen-state power structures prompting an upside-down reversal in the periphery-center hierarchized paradigm that supplanted the exclusively state-centered model of tyrannical dictatorship by a periphery-inclusive bottom-up reformist approach which is democratically centrifugal.

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# A Descriptive Study Recording and Analyzing the First Language (Arabic) Interference Impact on Arab Learners Who Study English as a Second Language (ESL) during Question Formation

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## ABSTRACT

In all hoopla, first language (FL) interference significantly plays an important role in second language acquisition. This current research explores the first language (Arabic) interference impact on Arab students studying English as a second language (ESL) during question structuring. Categories of produced error were noted and analyzed at different linguistic levels. A translation test includes ten interrogative sentences to be translated from Arabic into English is used to determine the learners' conducted errors during question formation. Also, a questionnaire consists of five questions was sent to Arab teachers who teach English as a second language to gain more insight. The study samples were randomly selected and were 12 teachers and 60 students who have been studying at a private college in the United Arab Emirates (Medical Lab, Business Management, and Academic writing skills Departments) (N=72, HES=60, LT=12). Results showed the deep and severe impact of Arabic as a first language on Arab learners during question formation English in all areas of grammar knowledge.

*Keywords:* first language. second language. impact. interference.

*Classification:* LCC Code: PE1068.A6, P118.2

*Language:* English



Great Britain  
Journals Press

LJP Copyright ID: 573350  
Print ISSN: 2515-5785  
Online ISSN: 2515-5792

London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 23 | Issue 14 | Compilation 1.0



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## I. INTRODUCTION

Scholars and researchers have considered first-language (FL) interference as significant and effective in second-language acquisition. First

language (FL) has been entitled: native language, mother tongue, and primary language (Sinha et al. 2009). Banerjee, Sinha, and Shastri (2009) report that children acquire their first language from the family and the surrounding community. Each native language has distinguished characteristics and structures that lead to the language being developed naturally. First-language native speakers are proficient in possessing language structure deep comprehension: connected cultural nuances, grammar, phonetics, morphology, pronunciation, phonology, syntax, and semantics.

Second language fluency and nativization are long-life learning journeys. A combination of aggregated elements helps learners in understanding the obstacles and solutions. New language acquisition becomes increasingly difficult as people age. Insufficient exposure to the target language has severe results, such as hindering excellence in a second language, slowing down academic progress, and limiting lexical and cultural knowledge. Furthermore, extrinsic and intrinsic motivations play prominent roles in target language acquisition.

The interference phenomenon is a normal language acquisition feature that can be addressed with exposure, practice, and knowledge of the precise distinctions between the two languages. Second language learners should be aware of potential hindrances and actively try to improve their native and target language proficiency.

Scholars have used a taxonomy of error analysis to record all the errors produced by Arab students who study English as ESL (James.1998). On the other hand, the taxonomy of inter-lingual errors

includes stylistic elements: phonological, flexo-semantic, grammatical, and morphological errors (Shehzadeh, Gheichi. 2011). Grammatical errors include possessive cases, concordance, irregular verbs, nouns, pronouns, reported speech, articles, word order, prepositions, and singular and plural.

Various contradictory studies have refuted how the first language interferes with the target language, thus causing acquisition difficulties. First-language interference is a phenomenon that makes it difficult for learners aspiring to master a second language. First-language interference is authentic and central to second-language acquisition (Ellis.1997).

The problem statement of this study is based on Arabic language interference which influences ESL Arab students' grammar knowledge during constructing questions in English. Collecting data will support the study topic with objectives and suggest appropriate recommendations (Christiansen & Chater, 2016, p.189).

The main research objective is to record and analyze the impact of Arabic language interference on ESL students during question formation. Both the translation test and questionnaire determine the committed errors and what are the factors that lead to these errors.

With the perspective of first-language interference and its impact on Arab students who study English as second language. Therefore, the current research questions are formed:

- Does Arabic language interference impact Arab students studying English as a second language during question formation?
- Does Arabic language interference impact ESL-Arab learners' grammatical knowledge?
- What are the standard errors among Arab students when they form questions in English?

## II. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Since the Plato era, researchers have considered conceptual analysis a significant custom and philosophical technique. The conceptual analysis

supports the theoretical foundation of literature thoughts, certain concepts analysis, definitions, meanings, and contexts (Henderson and Horgan.2011). Literature review proposes important theories, such as contrastive analysis (CA), error analysis, and language transfer, to record and analyze errors during construction questions. In this study, the conceptual analysis is based on recording and analyzing students' committed errors.

The age of the term second language acquisition (SLA) is still relatively young in comparison to language learning. The English language has dominated the world as a lingua franca in multilingual nations over the past decades and giving second-language learning tremendous popularity in recent years. There is an inevitable necessity and significance in mastering and learning skills and systems. Multilingual pupils who later studied English found it challenging and misleading (Wright, W. E. 2010).

Researchers around the world and specifically in the Arab Region, have titled second language learning or the target language or language 2. The target language mastering which is not the learner's first language (L1), or native tongue is known as second language acquisition (SLA). The study of a second language is concerned with non-native speakers (NNS). Linguists, researchers, psychologists, and educationalists pay second language great attention.

In the Arab Region and the world over the past few decades, English has been known as English as a Second Language (ESL), Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), Foreign Language (EFL), English as an Additional Language (EAL). Practically, the term ESL refers to the utilization of English as a target language. Collective titles describe the aspects of ESL that are taught.

During these decades, English has dominated the world as a lingua franca in multilingual countries. Multilanguage students who study English later find it difficult and misnomer (Wright, W. E. 2010). English language dominates all fields of life in the whole world today. There is an inevitable

necessity and significance to mastering and learning its skills and systems.

Second language learners face many difficulties in learning English, which differ in their sources and levels. The Arab students struggle with their English language skills and systems during all educational cycles and the difficulty level results from language structures and first-language interferences. Acquisition of a second language requires heroic effort in terms of the structure and basics of every learning faculty. Students should isolate their first language (FL) structures from the second language if they aspire to language fluency. Second language acquisition occurs when interactive meaning and natural communication are available in the second language, and learners are aware of the conveyed and understood messages (Steven Krashen, .1987).

The word “grammar” is derived from the Greek word *grammatikḗ téchnē*, which refers to the art of letters (Harper, Douglas. 2013). Grammar is defined by linguists and grammarians as a system constructed by constraints that margin how words, phrases, and sentences can be ordered together by speakers or writers. The term grammar can also be used to describe the study of a subject area that covers syntax, morphology, and phonology, as and the frequently added fields of phonetics, semantics, and pragmatics. Grammar is a cognitive information system that includes language production occurrences (O'Grady, William, Dobrovolsky, Michael, Katamba, and Francis, .1996). Grammar can point to linguistic conduct committed by a cohort of writers and speakers, which requires plenty of divergences (Holmes, Janet, .2001). Grammar refers to the spelling and punctuation conventions that are used in language writing.

Whether language mastering and learning grammar knowledge are implicit or explicit, it is important to attain acquisition (Ur, P, .2006). Grammar function is structuring correct and fluent language and plays a pioneering and effective role in the communication process through correctly structured words, phrases, and sentences. Communicative and interactive competence attaining requires professional

grammar knowledge and other skills (NCLRC, 2017; Zhang, 2009); (Gradman. 1973); (Richards et al.1973); (Oldin,1989); (Robert Lado,1975); (Chomsky,2010); (Jon Zamboni,2018); (Bowles & Stanseld, 2008) (NCLRC, 2017; Zhang, 2009).

Poor grammar reflects the inability to communicate effectively and actively and lose social positions. Incorrect grammar knowledge and use are the results of some personal contextual credibility and lack of proficiency. The term “control”, and proper grammar power are used in everyday life “Glarious errors in spellings and punctuation are judged before the content of the work” (Praise and Meenakshi, .2014).

### *2.1 Grammar Teaching Approaches*

The task-Based Language Teaching (TBLT) approach involves completing specific language activities. Tasks are integrated and grammar learning happens when students study grammar. Objectives are to achieve the task goal, integrate grammar rules, and develop learners’ capabilities to express meanings and communicate purely inside the classroom (Skehan, Peter, .2003). Practicing these tasks involves achieving language fluency, acquisition, production, and communicative competency.

The deductive approach is one of the most common teaching approaches that explicitly presenting grammatical rules for learners through various educational materials; PowerPoint slides, lectures, textbooks, explanations, and worksheet instructions. Later, learners use and apply through activities, drills, exercises, and activities. Concentration is on application and memorization; however, meaningful language use opportunities may be missed.

Inductive Approach or grammatical inference (de la Higuera, Colin, .2010). The approach inspires and emboldens learners’ ability to infer grammar rules in authentic and situational language examples. Students figure out the rules from language examples and analysis, supporting the students’ critical thinking capabilities, problem-solving principles, and grammar rules. The advantages of this approach are supporting

the problem-solving code, focus, and grammar rules broad insight.

The previous approaches and methods focused on teaching core grammar and grammatical competence (Bax, S. 2003). The communicative approach aims to use language for communication and emphasizes language adaptation in meaningful contexts (Savignon and Sandra. 1997). Engaging learners in authentic communicative activities, such as discussions, role-play, and information-gap tasks, where they apply grammar structures naturally while focusing on conveying meaning.

The origins of the grammar-Translation Method return to teaching both Latin and Greek. Learners study grammar rules for the sake of translating sentences from the second language into the first language and vice versa. Grammar is presented explicitly for students. Advanced learners, in some cases, are required to translate complete texts. Grammar-Translation Method focuses on exposing and immersing students in written literature texts translation and developing students' mentality and intellectuality. Zhou. G. and Niu, X. (2015) criticize this approach because of its shortcomings. Ineffective communicative skills and limited oral proficiency may inflict this approach.

The cognitive method of teaching grammar focuses on the mental procedures involved in language acquisition. The approach emphasises comprehending the underlying cognitive processes, including rule formulation, pattern recognition, and problem-solving. Exercises that encourage students' critical thinking and metacognitive knowledge of grammar are included in this method.

## *2.2 Contrastive Analysis Theory (Charles Fries, 1945)*

Before the Contrastive Analysis Theory which was founded by Charles Fries in 1945, there were many inspections about the role of the first language and its impact on second language acquisition by linguists such as Harold Palmer and Henry Sweet. The book "The Principles of Language" discussed that a few refugee

youngsters from Belgium moved to England and studied English as a target language as they lived in England (Palmer, .1921). Most of them did not have any impact on interference from their first language.

The previous notion was accepted by behaviorism scholars, such as Van Patten and Williams, who assimilated learning a language as any conducted behavior. Charles Fries developed the contrastive analysis (CA) theory in the 1940s. If we need to save language materials, similarities and differences between the native and target languages should be presented explicitly (Khansir and Tabande, .2014). The contrastive analysis theory has inspired debates in most foreign languages (Sridhar, .1975).

One of the biggest supporters and proponents of contrastive analysis was Roberto Lado. Lado discussed in his book "Linguistics Across Cultures, 1975" a plethora of languages contrastive analysis sounds systems, grammar, and vocabulary items. Lado's discussions covered the learners' differences comparisons, and anticipated difficulties inflicted on learners' first and second languages (Myles, .2010).

The key basis of the contrastive analysis theory is that interference from the learner's mother tongue causes errors in target language acquisition. Meaningfully, learning the second language (L2) will be easier for learners if there are more comparable structures to their first language. The learner will have hard time with target language acquisition if there are more diverges.

Criticism faced contrastive analysis because some errors were predictable (Gradman, .1973). Hamp (1968) suggests that the causes of errors are possible; however, there is no reality or possibility to predict all errors occurring and the causes of occurrences. Furthermore, James (1980) claims that language surface structures already exist in the two languages during similarity comparisons.

### *2.2.1 Errors Analysis Theory (S. Pit Corder,1960)*

The drawbacks inflicted by the contrastive analysis led Error Analysis Theory to be founded and shift from focusing on the native language's

impacts on second language acquisition to the occurred error analysis to support learners. Errors analysis means the study of second and foreign language learners' committed errors (Richards et al, .1973). Error analysis means observing, analyzing, and classifying the second language grammar rules, which are followed by learners-operated system revelation (Brown,. 1980).

#### 2.2.1.2 Omission

Learners leave out some linguistic features when he says: where do you live? rather Where do you live?

#### 2.2.2.3 Addition

Use words that are repeated without necessity. For example, How many siblings, brothers, and sisters do you have?

#### 2.2.2.4 Selection

Learners use poor grammar or morphemes, on saying: I eated my dinner rather I ate my dinner.

#### 2.2.2.5 Ordering

The learner disorders the correct words in a sentence, such as He last night played instead of, He played last night.

### 2.2.3.1 Sources of Errors

#### 2.2.3.1.1 Interlingual Error (Interference)

Interlingual errors are induced by first language transfer. Errors analysis consider the error indicators that the learner was internalizing and researching the new language structure.

#### 2.2.3.1.2 Intralingual Errors

Cook (2008) considers that the first language supports learners when the second language components are similar. The interlanguage error is reported as an impermanent grammar that second-language learners learn. The first language plays the most important role that deprives the second-language learners of understanding it. Second-language learners transfer their learning

system to an autonomous system outside the school borders.

#### 2.2.3.1.3 Overgeneralization

Ellis (1997) claims that learners overgeneralize because they perceive learning as simple. An example, such as the past tense form of "ed" can be used with irregular verbs like "eaten" instead of "ate."

### 2.3 Language Transfer Theory

Language transfer has many definitions, such as the similarities and differences that result in the influence between the first and second languages. Language transfer refers to the conducted error which occurs because the target improperly the previous language taught similarities and differences (Oldin,. 1989). Language transfer refers to "the use of the native language (or other languages) data on the acquisition of an L2 (or an additional language) (Gass, .1979). Gass limits the term "transfer" in this context to only positive transfers.

Language transfer occurs through language acquisition (Jarvis, Scott, 1966.2008). Learners intend to distribute and transfer their first language forms, meanings, and culture to the target language practically during their trials to produce this language and receptively when they attempt to comprehend the language used by the native speakers (Robert Lado, .1975). The main function of language transfer is to examine the rooted interference caused by the first language and highlight the impact of first language interference. The necessity of examining the cognitive mechanisms involved in target language acquisition is to clarify how the learner's current linguistic knowledge affects second language learning (Odlin, .1989).

#### 2.3.1 Positive Transfer

Ellis (2008) claims positive transfer happens when learners use their first language knowledge to learn second language-specific patterns. Learning process involves similarities between the two languages. Understanding the target language depends on knowledge of the first language, and

the learner will find it easy because of interrelated similarities. Positive transfer means using the structures of the first language automatically to produce a second language if these structures are similar and this results in correct utterance (Dulay, Burt, Krashen, .1982). Moreover, Ellis (2008) considered that the similarities between the two languages reduce the number of errors. The deception may inflict similarities to the “false cognate.”

### 2.3.2 Negative Transfer

Osgood (1949) defines negative transfer as “the effect of a specifiable interpolated activity upon the retention of previously learned activity.” This type of transfer is called interference or retroactive transfer. The function is to create errors and problems for learners of the second language. Differences between languages are strict and block learning process procedures. Confusion between Arabic and English is due to this transfer.

## 2.4 The Universal Grammar Theory (Chomsky, .2010)

Chomsky (2010) claims that the human brain includes innates of biological components of language capabilities. All humans have an innate linguistic competence, which facilitates and directs language acquisition and learning. All learners have a set of stabilized grammatical structures and systems languages convenient to all languages. Interference from the first language may cause deviations from the target language's question formation patterns.

### 2.4.1 The Innate Postulate Access

Chomsky (2010) considers that language learners have a path to global principles that direct language learning and acquisition. Engagement, exposure to the second language's grammatical structures and principles and explicit instructions can aid Arab learners who study English as a second language during question formation in English, such as the inversion of the subject and auxiliary verb in yes/no questions.

### 2.4.2 Parameter Settings

Languages have certain and various parameters which identify the grammar faculties in every language. Parameter settings need to be modified by Arab learners when learning English. They should know that the English question is structured from Wh-word, helping or auxiliary verb, subject or pronoun, verb, and complement of the sentence, in contrast, Arabic questions typically rely on particles or intonation. Arab learners should identify and be aware of the structural differences and similarities between Arabic and English languages. They can isolate and separate the grammatical structures of every language alone. The contrasts paid attention aid to settling and stabilizing the English question formation new pattern.

### 2.4.3 Transfer of Knowledge

There are huge similarities and differences exist between both Arabic and English. The Arab teachers who teach English as a second language can depend on students' background and knowledge of Arabic grammar when they teach English question formation.

### 2.4.4 Ample Input and Practice Support

Arab learners should be engaged, exposed, and involved in practice question formation sufficiently and satisfactorily, which enables them to master this part of the English grammar structure. Students can practise speaking and writing skills which include asking questions. English Teachers can support learners with worksheets, classroom life situations, and interactive activities which internalize the correct question formation.

### 2.4.5 Individualized instruction

Learners' levels are characterized by strengths and weaknesses. Chomsky's Theory claims that learners are born with an internal grammar system that helps in language acquisition. Tailoring and selecting proper instructions for every learner enables teachers to succeed in eliminating the common and specific constraints

and hardships involving question formation when learning English as a second language.

### 2.5 Related Studies

Naser A Alkhafeel and Alansary Elkhoully (2000) conducted a study investigating the impact of the Arabic language in teaching English as a foreign language (EFL). Research questions revolved around the most common issues with Arab learners as a direct teaching method and suggested solutions for Arabs who learn English. Results showed most Arab teachers used the Arabic language as a medium to teach students English because the students had difficulties in understanding. English teachers use their mother tongue in some faucets to lead their learners to understand some issues. There are some issues with English grammar because of the similarities between Arabic and English.

Sadoon Salih (2019) has a study, "The Influence of the First Language (Arabic) on Learning English as a Second Language", which explores the first language impact on English as a second language. Participants were 163 students from the Basic Education College. Researcher applied a translation test with 20 questions and included verbal sentences, nominal, adjective, passive, and verb to be. Results showed high errors in passive voice, in addition to verbs before the subject and verb to be.

Jean Pierre Ribeiro (2021) assumes the interference of Arabic prepositions in English and how they occur in the study "The Interference of Arabic Prepositions in Emirati English." 20 participants who completed public schools and universities were randomly selected to represent the control group. Researcher used gender and education level as variables. Participants were asked to translate 20 sentences from Arabic to English, fill in 30 gaps with prepositions, and apply musical intelligence. Findings showed that Emirates and Arab students had difficulties in using the correct prepositions.

Haytham Bakri (2023) reports and analyzes the definite and indefinite English articles as common errors committed by Arab students in "Definite and Indefinite Article Misuse Among Saudi

Students Learning English as a Second Language". Thirty Saudi ESL students were randomly selected to examine their knowledge of definite and indefinite articles in English. Students were supported with 28 simple Arabic sentences to be translated into English within 30 minutes. Errors included the misuse of the definite article "the" omission of the indefinite article "a," and the least omission of "an." The results showed that Arabic interference had a significant impact on English learners. Most errors occurred because of the native and interlingual language.

Muneera Muftah researched in 2023, "Error Analysis in Second Language Acquisition (SLA): Types and Frequencies of Grammatical Errors of Simple Present and Past Tense in the Elicited Written Production Task of Arab EFL Undergraduate Learners". The study objective is to detail the grammatical mistake types and frequency in the present tense, past tense, and agreement made by Arab EFL learners in their evoked writing production task (EWPT). Participants were 67 Arab EFL undergraduates who were selected randomly and divided into three skill categories. EWPT had 46 test items and two passages, which served as tools for gathering data. Results revealed two primary types of grammatical errors: errors of omission (EO) and malformation errors (EM and incorrect use of inflectional morphemes).

### III. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology section offers the study credibility and yields reliable scientific results. It provides a thorough plan that aids in keeping researchers on the course, facilitating a simple, efficient, and manageable approach. A reader can comprehend the strategy and procedures utilized to arrive at results by understanding the researcher's methodology. The methodology section supports the ideal research framework, test, ethics, difficulties encountered in the research and solutions, and how data are collected. Researcher boasts research findings from using comprehensive methods to achieve research objectives.

The researcher thoroughly uses a quantitative method to analyze and contest the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab students who study English as a second language (ESL). The quantitative approach improves the researcher's knowledge (Traci Williams, .2021). Selecting the quantitative approach because it aids in the analysis, exploration, and identification processes. Social scientists and communication researchers employ quantitative research to watch and observe how unique phenomena emerge since they are interested in researching people. Quantitative analysis leads to knowledge of a cohort of people, known as the sample population (Allen, .2017).

The study closely examined and focused on students' responses to the translation test and interview and the teachers' answers to the questionnaire questions. Every effort was done to keep the variables under control while gathering data. Responses were collected from the students' translation tests to understand the effect of first-language interference on second-language acquisition.

The current study included 78 participants (N=78: teachers =12, Higher Education Students=60). Higher education students attending XY private college and studying various majors, such as Business Management, Medical Lab, Multimedia, and Mass Communication. Prerequisites to join the college in the United Arab Emirates state that students must get an English language proficiency certificate before enrolling or registering. Students can join and study a few specific general courses before studying the core modules. University students must get a score of 5.5 in IELTS or 71 in TOEFL IBT, or 1250 in EMSAT. Participants are Arab learners who have studied English as a second language, and most of the courses were taught in English in the United Arab Emirates. English teachers are Arabs who teach English as an ESL in the United Arab Emirates Schools. Participants were from different countries: Yemen, Jordan, Morocco, Egypt, Syria, Palestine, Sudan, Iraq, and the UAE. Involving large sample size in the research enables the researcher to have more data, identify

average values, and avoid errors properly (Jon Zamboni,2018).

An experimental study was conducted by randomly selecting 60 Arab ESL students. A translation test that included ten interrogative Arabic sentences to be translated into English was given to students. The main function of a test is to identify the research hypotheses without utilizing language levels' huge differences (Cohen,. 2014).

Translation test and questionnaire responses were the main sources for data collection. The two sources added more insight and depth into the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab learners who study English as a second language during question formation.

A translation test was used as the main instrument to achieve the current research objectives. Ten interrogative sentences were translated from Arabic into English. The test lasted for 45 min and responses represent the main data of this study.

On the other hand, Julie Clements (2023) states that using questionnaires in research provides core, rare, basic, and direct data, reaching a huge number of participants under control, fast, and in-depth responses. Researcher conducted the questionnaire online with the ESL teachers and lecturers. What characterizes the questionnaire is the researcher can get linguistic production and content (Dörnyei, Z.,2003).

The researcher attempted to collect data quantitatively through translation tests and online questionnaires. A translation test consisting of ten interrogative sentences was delivered to participants to translate it into English. Translation test in research refers to the only difference between the test's translated target language and the source English translations; however, the test content or targeted constructions remain the same (Bowles & Stansfield, 2008).

The online questionnaire has five questions about the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab students who study English as a second language during question formation and their

grammar learning and knowledge. Questionnaire records teachers' analysis of the most common errors that result from Arabic language interference, factors that lead Arab students to commit errors in question formation in English, and finally, the teachers' recommendations.

The researcher exerted heroic efforts to lessen and eliminate the current study limitations by designing a translation test and sending the questionnaire to teachers and university lecturers. A lot of students are studying at this college, but the researcher only focused on Arab learners who study English as a second language. Students are not accustomed to this kind of task, so they bombarded the researcher with questions. Teachers and lecturers were very busy during the final academic year exams; however, the researcher communicated with them using WhatsApp.

Maxwell (1996) claims that researchers should consider the confidentiality of students and institutions. An email was sent to students and to the Heads of Departments in the college to obtain administrative approval for conducting the translation test and questionnaire. The researcher believed that all participants had a detailed understanding of their contributions.

Bann S, Davis IM, Moorthy K, et al. (2005) claim that adopting reliability in research supports the utilized assessment methods with the opportunity to evaluate and provide the researcher with more experience and consistency. Feasibility refers to study implementation and intervention, and researchers can conduct their experiments in identified authentic settings (Frey, B.2009). The researcher is teaching at the college, so he respects all parties: college administrations, parents, students, and colleagues and he will preserve the accreditation and accuracy of data.

At a non-specific college and school in the United Arab Emirates, Abu Dhabi, where the study was conducted, the researcher teaches ESL. As a result, it was simple and available to acquire access to students, ESL colleagues' contacts, and academic records. Fully utilized time and effort were saved possibly while conducting the study.

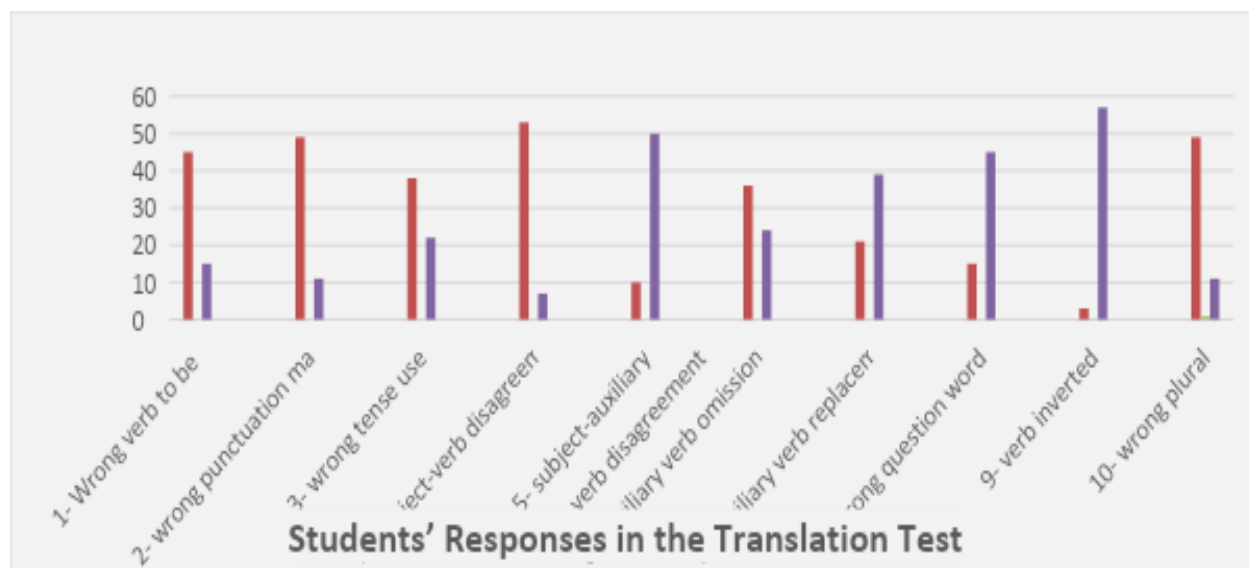
#### IV. FINDINGS AND DATA ANALYSIS

Quantitative methods were used for data collection and analysis. Findings were framed based on the main sources of information: translation tests and interviews. During the translation test responses investigation, the researcher focused only on the participants' complete answers. Students were asked to translate ten interrogative sentences from Arabic into English. Results reflected the impact of Arabic language interference on the English language during question formation. Specific grammatical aspects for which the impact was clear and this empowered the non-refuse of hypotheses.

The current research records and analyzes the committed errors that result from Arabic language interference with Arab learners studying English as a second language during question formation. Participants concentrated on committed grammatical errors. Errors categories were classified as follows: wrong verb to be, bad punctuation marks, bad tense use, subject-verb and subject-auxiliary verb disagreement, auxiliary verb omission and replacement, bad question word, verb inverted, and wrong plural. Data were collected and analyzed statistically to achieve the research objectives based on responses from the translation test and the questionnaire.

*Table 1:* Students' Responses in the Translation Test

Area	Sample	Recorded Errors		Correct Answers	
		Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
1- Wrong verb to be	60	45	75%	15	25%
2- Wrong punctuation marks	60	49	81.66%	11	18.33%
3- Wrong tense use	60	38	63.33%	22	36.66%
4- Subject-verb disagreement	60	53	88.33%	7	11.66%
5- Subject-auxiliary verb disagreement	60	10	16.6%	50	83.33%
6- Auxiliary verb omission	60	36	60%	24	40%
7- Auxiliary verb replacement	60	21	35%	39	65%
8- Wrong question word	60	15	25%	45	75%
9- Verb inverted	60	3	5%	57	95%
10- Wrong plural	60	49	81.66%	11	18.33%
Total		53.16		46.84	



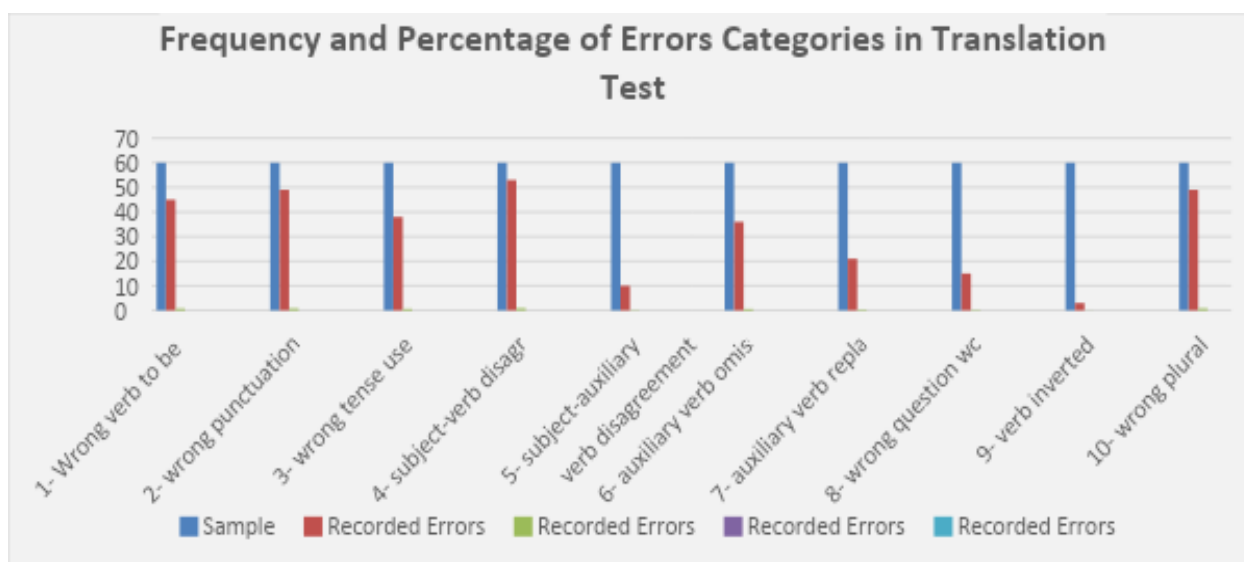
*Graph 1:* Recorded Responses from Participants in the translation test

Table 1 and Graph 1 illustrate that the total percentage of errors committed by the students surpasses that of correct answers in most areas. There were 53 recorded errors compared to 46.84 correct answers. Recorded errors exhibit a slightly higher percentage than the right answers.

Findings support the first hypothesis, suggesting that interference from the student's first language (Arabic) influences Arab students studying English as a second language when it comes to question formation.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage of Errors Categories in Translation Test

Number	Area type	Frequency	Percentage
1-	wrong verb to be	45	75%
2-	wrong punctuation marks	49	81.66%
3-	wrong tense use	38	63.33%
4-	subject-verb disagreement	53	88.33%
5-	subject-auxiliary verb disagreement	10	16.6%
6-	auxiliary verb omission	36	60%
7-	auxiliary verb replacement	21	35%
8-	wrong question word	15	25%
9	verb inverted	3	5%
10	wrong plural	49	81.66%
		3.19	88%



Graph 2: Errors Categories Percentage in Translation Test

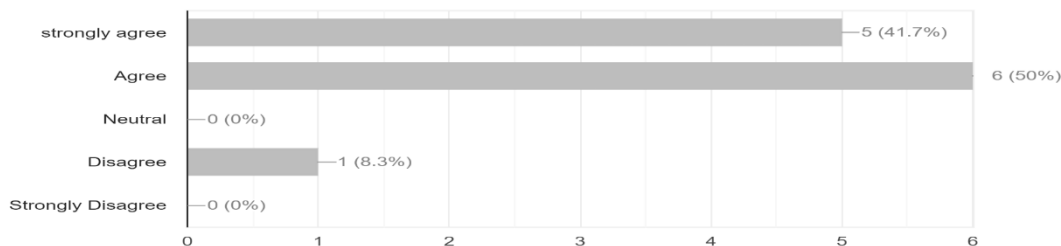
Table 2 and Graph 2 present the distribution of committed errors: subject-verb disagreement exhibited the highest percentage at 88.33%, in comparison, bad punctuation marks and wrong plural shared the same rate at 81.66%. The incorrect usage of the verb "to have" reached 75%, and improper tense use accounted for 63.33% of the errors. Auxiliary verb omission accounted for 60% of the mistakes. Remaining errors were below the 50% mark, with extra verb replacement at 35%, wrong question word at 25%, subject-auxiliary verb disagreement at 16.6%, and

the lowest percentage recorded at 5% for verb inversion.

The researcher tries to get more data from the English teachers and lecturers teaching English as a second language. Five questions formed the questionnaire.

1- Do you think that Arabic language interference has any impact on the Arab students who study English as a second language during question formation ?

0 / 12 correct responses

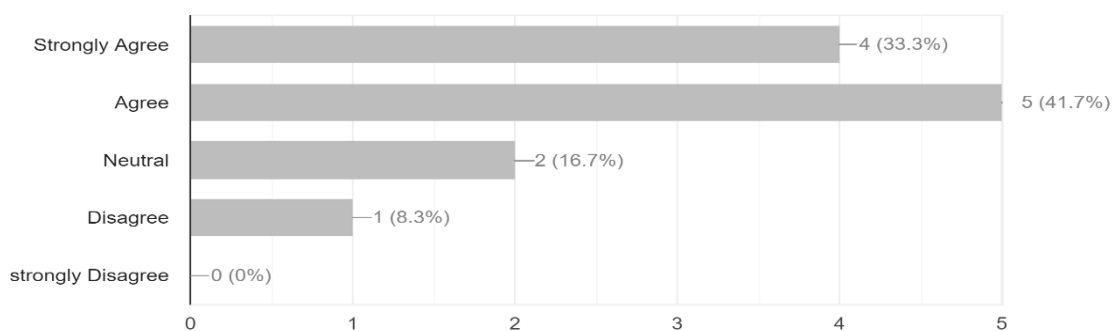


Graph 3: Arabic Language Interference Impact on Arab Students Who Study English as (ESL)

Graph 3 depicts the participants' responses regarding the impact of Arabic language interference on Arab students studying English as a second language during question formation. 50% of the participants agree, while 41.7% strongly agree with this notion. 8.3% of the participants disagree with the statement.

2- Do you think that Arabic language interference has an impact on the Arab learners who study English as a second language ESL students' grammar learning and knowledge?

0 / 12 correct responses

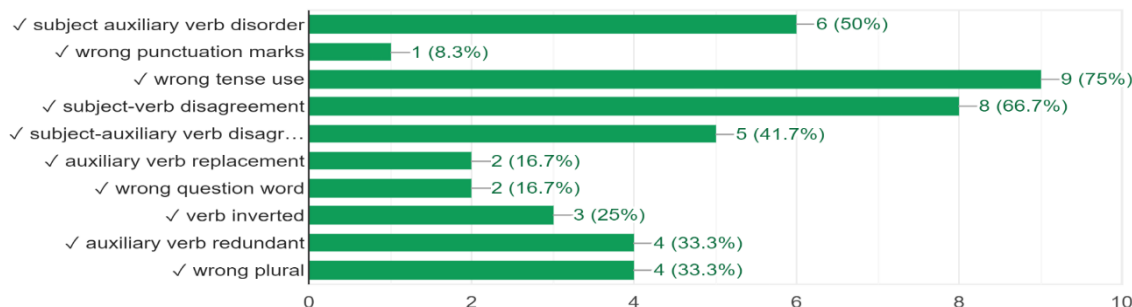


Graph 4: Arabic Language Interference Impact on Arab Students' Grammar Knowledge

Graph 4 illustrates the responses of the participants regarding the impact of Arabic language interference. 41.7% of the participants agree, while 33.3% strongly agree with the presence of such an impact. 8.3% of the participants disagreed, and 16.7% remained neutral.

3- What do you think are the most common errors that result from Arabic language interference with ESL ?

1 / 12 correct responses



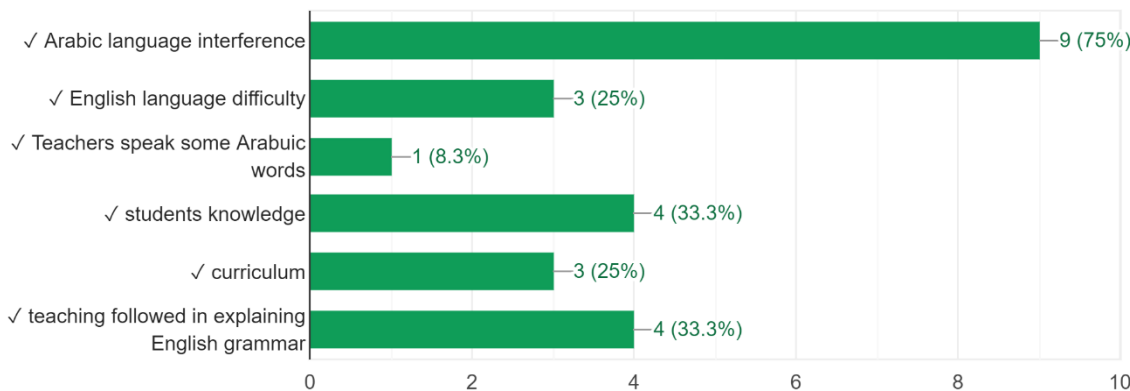
Graph 5: The Most Common Errors with the Arab Students

Graph 5 presents the distribution of errors, with wrong tense being the most prevalent at 75%. Subject-verb disagreement follows closely at 66.7%, while subject-auxiliary verb disorder

accounts for 50% of the errors. Subject-auxiliary verb disagreement is observed at 41.7%, and both auxiliary verb redundancy and wrong plural occur at a rate of 33.3%.

4- Which of these factors lead the Arab students to commit errors in question formation in English ?

1 / 12 correct responses



Graph 6: The Most Common Factors Responsible for the Arab Students' Errors

Graph 6 illustrates the main factors responsible for errors among ESL Arab learners. Results indicated that the Arabic language is the primary cause accounting for the highest error rate at 75%. Both students' knowledge and teaching grammar methods contribute equally, each representing 33.3% of the errors. The difficulty of the English language and curriculum caused 25% of the mistakes, while the use of Arabic words by Arab

teachers during English classes is reported at 8.3%.

## V. DISCUSSION

Arabic and English languages are different in origins and structures, so Arabic students struggle to structure the right questions in English. Arabic language has an agreement between the verb and

the subject gender and number. When the subject is singular and masculine, the verb will be in the singular particular male form. When the issue is singular, special must take a singular verb in English.

*Arabic:* The farmers works in the garden. الفلاحون يعملون في الحديقة

*English:* The farmers work in the garden.

Researchers consider punctuation as a language orthographic area. English language has many aspects of punctuation marks: commas, full stops, colons, semi-colons, question marks, exclamation marks, etc. Arabic language doesn't have capitalization which leads Arab learners to forget capitalization at the beginning of sentences and with the proper nouns. Sofer and Raimes (2002) declare that the Arabic language doesn't have an upper and lower case.

*Arabic:* where do you live? أين تعيش

*English:* Where do you live?

The vowel system in Arabic is different from English. English has five vowels: (a, e, i, o, u), and in specific cases, (h and y) are pronounced as vowels. Arabic language has three short vowels: (a, u, i), and three long vowels. Arab learners commit errors when they change from singular with y to plural nouns.

*Arabic:* Do you have any hobbes?

*English:* Do you have any hobbies?

The interference of the verb to be is misused in Arabic and English. Verb to be in Arabic means (كان- kāna) and is used to express different situations and contexts. In English, it is used in many situations and contexts and this results in errors with Arab students.

*Arabic:* I am having 25 years.

*English:* I am 25 years old.

Arabic and English have huge differences in tenses, which leads Arab learners to commit errors while studying English. Arabic language includes two tenses:

- The perfect tense, which refers to the past.
- The Imperfect tense includes future simple tense, present simple tense, and non-past tense. (Ali, 2007; Aoun, Benmamoun, and Chueiri, .2010). However, the English language has various types of tenses and this leads Arab students to commit errors when they form questions.

*Arabic:* Where are you coming from?

*English:* Where do you come from?

There is no auxiliary verb in Arabic, so Arabic learners commit errors when they form sentences in English. Arabic sentence depends on the context and verb conjugation to convey the message. Question formation requires an auxiliary verb after the Wh-Word to form the question. In English, the auxiliary verb "do" is imperative, crucial, and expresses the present simple. Omission of verb result in Arab learners committing errors when they form questions.

*Arabic:* what are you working: ماذا تعمل

*English:* What do you do?

## VI. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

Lecturers' and teachers' responses from the questionnaire suggest the current recommendations to eradicate Arabic language interference impact on Arab students who study English as a second language:

- Since Arab learners commit errors in every area of this study, teachers, education policymakers, and curriculum designers should support learners with sufficient knowledge and teaching methods that enable students to avoid error commitment.
- Teachers should support students with question words, explaining the different use of each Wh-Word, and urge students to practice forming questions.
- Teachers should teach students to use inversion: students can form questions by inverting the subject and auxiliary verbs. Instead of saying, "You are going," you ask "Are you going?".

- Teachers should empower students with tasks by searching for question formation exercises in various sources. Exercises often provide structured practice and gradually help them improve their skills.
- Learners should use question starters and start sentences with question words or auxiliary verbs to form questions more easily.
- Students should be engaged in conversation through practice speaking with native English speakers or language partners who can provide feedback on their question formation.
- Students should be immersed in regular conversations, which will help in becoming more comfortable and fluent in asking questions.
- Students should improve their language skills.
- Teachers should present question formation implicitly to learners to master it and teach the rule and give more examples and students' practice.
- Teachers can use learning by playing interactive games, watching videos, role-playing, and reordering the words to make questions using flash cards.
- Teachers should explain the tense and the sentence formation well before the question formation.

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## APPENDICES

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

1- ما اسمك؟

.....

2- ما هي وظيفتك؟

.....

3- أين تعيش؟

.....

4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟

.....

5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟

.....

6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟

.....

7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟

.....

8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟

.....

9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟

.....

10- متي تاتي الي  
المدرسة.....

.....

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

- 1- ما اسمك؟  
what your name? ..... *علي*
- 2- ما هي وظيفتك؟  
what your job? .....
- 3- أين تعيش؟  
where you live .....
- 4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟  
what you dad's job? .....
- 5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟  
How many siblings? .....
- 6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟  
what your hobby? .....
- 7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟  
what you hope to be in future? .....
- 8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟  
you love the Arabic language? .....
- 9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟  
you love the English .....
- 10- متى تاتي الي المدرسة؟  
at what time you go the school? .....

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

- 1- ما اسمك؟  
what is your name? .....
- 2- ما هي وظيفتك؟  
what is your job? .....
- 3- أين تعيش؟  
where are you living? .....
- 4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟  
what is your parents' job? .....
- 5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟  
how many sibling do you have? .....
- 6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟  
what is your favorite hobby? .....
- 7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟  
what do you wish to become in the future? .....
- 8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟  
do you love the Arabic language? .....
- 9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟  
why do learn English .....
- 10- متى تاتي الي المدرسة؟  
when you will come to the school? .....

Dear participant: The current questions require translation to the English language to analyze the interference and impact of the Arabic language as a first language on English second language learners. So, we are very appreciative of your participation. All information here will be secret.

Q1: Translate the current questions from Arabic to English:

- 1- ما اسمك؟  
What is your name.....
- 2- ما هي وظيفتك؟  
What is your job.....
- 3- أين تعيش؟  
Where do you live.....
- 4- ما هي وظيفة والدك؟  
What is your dad job.....
- 5- كم عدد اخوتك واخواتك؟  
How many brothers and sisters do you have.....
- 6- ما هي هواياتك المفضلة؟  
What is your favorite hobbies.....
- 7- ماذا تتمنى ان تكون في المستقبل؟  
What do you wish to be in the future.....
- 8- هل تحب اللغة العربية؟  
Do you love Arabic.....
- 9- لماذا تتعلم الانجليزية؟  
Why do you learn English.....
- 10- متي تاتي الي المدرسة.  
When do you come to school.....

1- Do you think that Arabic language interference has any impact on the Arab students who study English as a second language during question formation? \*

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

2- Do you think that Arabic language interference has an impact on the Arab learners who study English as a second language ESL students' grammar learning and knowledge? \*

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- strongly Disagree

3- What do you think are the most common errors that result from Arabic language interference with ESL ?

- subject auxiliary verb disorder
- wrong punctuation marks
- wrong tense use
- subject-verb disagreement
- subject-auxiliary verb disagreement
- auxiliary verb replacement
- wrong question word
- verb inverted
- auxiliary verb redundant
- wrong plural

4- Which of these factors lead the Arab students to commit errors in question formation in English ? \*

- Arabic language interference
- English language difficulty
- Teachers speak some Arabic words
- students knowledge
- curriculum
- teaching followed in explaining English grammar

5- How can we deal with question formation difficulty in English language? \*

Your answer

Submit

Clear form

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# The Western Nigeria Security Network and the Fight against Hostage-Taking and Kidnapping in the South-Western Region of Nigeria

AJIBOYE Babatope Matthew

Federal University Oye-Ekiti

## ABSTRACT

Hostage-taking and kidnapping have become aggressively rampant in Nigeria, particularly in the southwest, with a resultant inauguration of Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), codenamed 'Amotekun' in Southwest Nigeria. Despite the apparent success of WNSN in this region to stem these ills, it is regarded as a counter-culturist and 'next felony,' without considering how it has created and continues to offer another paradigm for citizens' protection in the face of numerous security challenges. Such prevalent perceptions are fraught with claims that WNSN is a product of unconstitutionality, and ethnic mingling. Therefore, this paper beams its searchlight on the WNSN operations in Southwest Nigeria, a region that has recently become a haven for kidnappers. It examines the evolution of the WNSN as a regional security scheme to combat rising insecurity and proposes an alternative initiative to address regional security concerns.

*Keywords:* WNSN, *amotekun*, regional security, southwest, nigeria.

*Classification:* DDC Code: 320

*Language:* English



Great Britain  
Journals Press

LJP Copyright ID: 573350  
Print ISSN: 2515-5785  
Online ISSN: 2515-5792

London Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Sciences

Volume 23 | Issue 14 | Compilation 1.0



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*Hostage-taking and kidnapping have become aggressively rampant in Nigeria, particularly in the southwest, with a resultant inauguration of Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), codenamed 'Amotekun' in Southwest Nigeria. Despite the apparent success of WNSN in this region to stem these ills, it is regarded as a counter-culturist and 'next felony,' without considering how it has created and continues to offer another paradigm for citizens' protection in the face of numerous security challenges. Such prevalent perceptions are fraught with claims that WNSN is a product of unconstitutionality, and ethnic mingling. Therefore, this paper beams its searchlight on the WNSN operations in Southwest Nigeria, a region that has recently become a haven for kidnappers. It examines the evolution of the WNSN as a regional security scheme to combat rising insecurity and proposes an alternative initiative to address regional security concerns. The survey evidenced that WNSN has played a key role in detecting kidnappers' hideouts, gathering intelligence, and constantly rescuing kidnapped victims from the whims and caprices of their tormentors. It has also continued to provide robust intelligence on kidnappers to security agencies such as the Nigerian Police Force (NPF), State Security Service (SSS), and Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), and other special forces. The paper concludes that WNSN is a positive and needful response to the long-running debate over community policing, functioning as an alternative approach to securing Nigeria against the numerous security challenges bedeviling the country.*

**Keywords:** WNSN, amotekun, regional security, southwest, nigeria.

**Author:** Department of Peace and Conflict Studies, Federal University Oye-Ekiti.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The collapse of state power, particularly in the realm of law enforcement and security, has been at the center of scholarly and ideological discussions concerning the future of Africa's politics and governance ever since the Cold War ended (Nolte, 2007). Certainly, the hand of time has long been speeded up in terms of various security concerns in Nigeria. Lately, insurgency, armed robbery, cattle rustling, herdsman-farmer clash, piracy, rape, human trafficking, domestic violence, and kidnapping are just a few of the issues facing governance. These issues have, understandably, threatened the country's corporate existence spanning over six decades; there has also been the general issue of the country failing to have the type of robust security framework/architecture required to boost the internal and national security. Intrinsically, as part of the contractual allegiance it owes her citizens, as exclusively outlined in Chapter 2, Section 14, (2a) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended, 'the fundamental aim of Federal and State governments will be the security and welfare of the people', and the government is seen rising to the challenge of adopting a series of tougher security measures and strategies to curtail security threats.

It is however apparent that these initiatives and strategies have consistently been thwarted by diverse security challenges embroiling the nation.

Consequently, it has sparked continued debates about the efficacy of the strategies adopted to combat security challenges headlong. However, formal state institutions are mostly debated when it comes to the provision of public goods, particularly security (Agbiboa, 2019). Among such queries was raised by Agwanwo (2014) concerning Nigeria is experiencing very serious security and crime issues, which appear to be dampening the institutional capacity of the criminal justice system, calling into question the role and ability of the police to protect citizens' lives and property. Congruently, the majority opined that the police alone can no longer exterminate the innumerable security threats directed at the nation.

Correspondingly, Ekiti state Governor, Dr. John Kayode Fayemi while featuring on the July edition of the monthly programme tagged 'Meet Your Governor' aired by all media outfits in the state, argues that the structural operation of the federal police is grossly inadequate to secure the entire nation (Independent Newspaper, 2019). Similarly, this view is affirmed by Badejo (2020) who states that "Nigeria is politically charged and lacks safety and security, which is an understatement. Terrorists are competing to see who can kill more people than the other. Many nationalities' drums of separation have recently become louder." Kidnapping, which was once limited to the Niger Delta, has now made travelling throughout the country extremely dangerous. However, in comparison to the rest of the country, the southwestern region had previously been relatively peaceful. Surprisingly, the region which was once known for its limpid ambience has recently witnessed weird and outlandish kidnapping operations.

Informed by the aforementioned issue, the six southwestern governors of Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo States converged in January 2020 to launch a regional security outfit, Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), in an effort to rid the southwestern region of all forms of criminality as well as provide a long-term alternative to the country's weak security architecture. Indeed, it is not arbitrary to argue that the fact that the southwestern region is home to millions of people, predominantly the Yoruba,

with shared ancestry, beliefs, values, and culture contributed to the initiative's speedy endorsement and establishment. The obvious affinities amongst these governors and the governed stimulated the timely and cooperative responses needed to obliterate the vehicles of insecurities in the region, in addition to the shared historical antecedents and geopolitical factors. Likewise, the integrative synergy of the region becomes apropos because of its obligatory stance to enhance economic growth and development; hence the necessity to adopt a well-articulated strategy that will enable the establishment of a solid socioeconomic foundation for the region and future generations (Nwoko & Osiki, 2016). Consequently, the major stakeholders in this region have joined forces to promote and ensure the security of investments and other economic activities, resulting in the WNSN initiative (Nwoko, 2021). Pertinently, the WNSN scheme is viewed as a response to recurring security challenges which not only tops the list but has become a recurrence episode in the region.

Basically, by virtue of the geographic area of southwest Nigeria, virtually all the communities have been compelled to comply with the demands of the marauding kidnapers, and consequently, the region has since become a haven for kidnapers. Subsequently, all manners of kidnapping operations have been successfully carried out. Previously, wealthy members of the society were the targets of kidnap gangs, but this has quickly evolved as everyone has become their target, not even the farmers working on their farmland, traditional rulers in their palaces, and petty traders in their shops are spared. Everyone has become easy targets for kidnapers in the region. As a matter of fact, the issue of kidnap has become a very worrisome occurrence, particularly because the region was once regarded as the most peaceful in the country as a whole, as it no longer enjoys the peace for which it was known. As a result, everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status, is now so fearful that they are unable to go about their normal lives for fear of becoming the next victim of this antisocial trend of 'kidnapping.'

Following this, it is not farfetched to suggest that the residents of these states who are subjected to incessant kidnap and hostage-taking are frequently terrified and frightened. As such, kidnapping is viewed as one way in which states and their residents are challenged. These challenges are evidential proof of loss of state authority, which eventually results in economic loss, human rights violations because the freedom and security of the citizens are not guaranteed, and instability, which frequently results in regional and national regrets. States confronted with ceaseless kidnap, which eventually eventuate in the breakdown of state power face enormous human security challenges that cannot be gainsaid. To this end, it behoves these states to obligatorily develop strategies to combat kidnapping in order to ensure protection. In contrast, Bamidele (2017:86) argues that ‘the irony of security sector governance and the fight against criminality in Nigeria is that non-state security groups, such as the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), also known as *Yan Gora*, are frequently overlooked.’

The Western Nigeria Security Network (WNSN), like the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), is a regional security outfit with divisions in all six states of the southwest region. WNSN or *Amotekun* is a group of young people who want to help the police and other security agencies combat kidnapping and other crimes in the region. However, as a mechanism for combating kidnapping syndicates in the region, the WNSN has elicited mixed feelings and reactions. Vast studies on non-state security organizations and informal security outfits have a tended to emphasize the detrimental effects, such as the commission of human rights crimes, and penchant for extra-judicial killings rather than the crucial roles these groups play in a community's safety and security (Ogbozor, 2016; Basiru & Osunkoya, 2019). Regardless of the castigations trailing the works of non-state security providers, it is evident such community-led groups, aid state security operations led by the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), State Security Service (SSS), Nigeria Security and Civil Defence Corps (NSCDC), and other special forces in the region. The WNSN

security outfit acts as a lower-level interface between state security agencies and neighbourhoods or hinterlands.

In accordance with the aforementioned, this paper contends that the emergence of WNSN as part of the mechanisms for fighting kidnapping, hostage-taking and other security threats represents a veritable example of a regional response to security challenges, as well as an indication of how kidnapping can be dealt with through regional efforts and knowledge. It also demonstrates or attests to the reality that offering security has never been a state monopoly, but rather a hyphenated field of delivery (Hills, 2009). Correspondingly, the WNSN has been effective in frustrating the activities of kidnappers by laying a marker and dislodging their hideouts in the forests, as well as rescuing a number of victims in their dens, due to its deep knowledge of the local environment and its involvement in the socio-cultural life of the locality. Since the kidnapping in 2006, information about regional security in the southwest has been scarce. In many cases, the government also restricts information about WNSN activities in the region. Even though collecting data on WNSN activities has been difficult due to security concerns, this paper still bases its conclusions on field research supplemented with open-source materials, media reports, official reports, and scholarly works. From April 11 to 29, 2022, research interviews were conducted with the Chairman of the Council of *Amotekun* Commanders in the Southwest region in Akure, Ondo and Ekiti States *Amotekun* Corps (ESAC), including the Commander in Ado-Ekiti, and Oyo State *Amotekun* Corps Commander in Ibadan, as well as the Ogun State police spokesman in Abeokuta.

## II. REGIONAL SECURITY: A CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

The dialogue on regional security initiative is rooted in the heart of Regional Security Complex Theory (RSCT) initiated by Barry Buzan and afterward, advanced by Ole Waever. The duo's idea has since been regarded as part of the Copenhagen School's collective theoretical approach to security. Regional security conceives

securitisation as a more effective countermeasure against terrorism and less difficult to achieve, as well as indirectly implying a broad-spectrum security. Its emergence, centered on numerous security threats and how to counter them, indisputably gave birth to the concept of regional security as a paradigm shift to address challenges confronting every society, particularly at the basic level. In essence, the goal is to develop functional security architecture at the regional level in order to achieve seamless and effective security across the various strata of society. Given their proximity, states have perceived their immediate neighbours as potential sources of threat or protection. Buzan & Waever (2003:229) contend that the relational nature of security makes it impossible to understand the national security patterns of a state without a compact understanding of the pattern of regional security interdependence in which they exist.

Regional security initiatives proponents believe that there should be a focus on the shared pattern of security concerns and interconnection that binds the states together, for it is the primary security concerns that knit them together so closely that their national security cannot pragmatically be considered apart from one another (Buzan, 1991:190). Likewise, Hettne (2000) argues for the importance of dealing with the region's social structures because it is crucially germane for a region to have its own identity, however nascent, as an interdependent state that is distinct and promotes security within a national construct.

Intrinsically, regional security mode or security management effectively makes it possible to get things done regionally because it is a viable channel. Since it involves states within geographical proximity of one another, and as a holistic unit, the security management enables the states to collectively solve their shared security challenges through long-term, resilient, and sustainable solutions. As such, rather than at the national level, the region effectuated an all-round success in achieving security arrangements during the post-second World War for instance. The aptness of these security perceptions is underscored by the growing realization that no

government or authority has the resources to adequately solve all public challenges/problems, and in the case of security, regional people, as stakeholders in their regions, not only understand their neighbourhoods better, but also share the common goal of promoting and protecting them. The understanding at the outset of the fight against kidnapping, and hostage-taking is that, while kidnapping and its variants are the work of marginal syndicates, these people are nonetheless integrated within the region and are not, on the whole, interlopers working alone. As a result, regional security forces, if involved in the fight against kidnapping, could be well-built to serve as an early warning mechanism/system for police and intelligence agencies if they come across information or have concerns about specific individuals or groups (Birt, 2009).

Regional security, inconsequential of the headlines and how it is emphasised, exemplifies a people-centered approach. Irrefutably, security is both desirable and necessary for everyone's survival. This is also true for community security, which represents the collective desire for safety and protection. Per se, regional security can be viewed as a tool for states to protect themselves collectively against a variety of security threats, including kidnapping. However, despite the fact that the WNSN has been heavily promoted as a tenable means for achieving safety against kidnapping in the southwest region, it appears that it has been grossly underutilized to achieve the desired results of fighting headlong and possibly nipping off kidnapping in the region.

Consequently, the meteoric rise in kidnapping cases in the southwest region has left regular Nigerian state security apparatuses overwhelmed and unable to protect the citizenry from the incessant threats posed to the region by the perpetrators of the gruesome cruelty, making it critical to investigate alternative and complementary approaches to enhancing security. Therefore, this paper examines the WNSN in order to contribute to the dialogue on a regional security approach to fight against kidnapping in Nigeria. In particular, this work intends to understand the resort to self-help by the states in the region, as exemplified by WNSN. In the

furtherance of these intentions, this research aims to advance the significant reasons state security agencies should partner with WNSN in their efforts to curtail kidnapping. Regional security or regional security partnerships/cooperative security systems at the regional level extend beyond international politics and into the security sphere. The practice of security cooperation has increased the importance of regional composite security frameworks in combating rising contemporary security challenges. It is assumed that security practices evolve. Proportionately, new security measures are invented, built upon, and gradually added to existing structures to make them more resilient to evolving threats.

To clarify the meaning of region amid so many debates, Agboola (2004) defines region as a flexible concept referring to a continuous and localized area intermediate between national and urban levels. In a not-too-dissimilar assertion, Saferworld (2014: 5) defines security partnership as:

A people-centered approach to addressing insecurity that integrates human security, development, and state-building paradigms, it works by bringing together a diverse range of state and civil society actors from both the demand and supply sides of security to collectively identify root causes of insecurity and develop coordinated responses to them. The approach is based on communities', local governments', and security providers' ability and willingness to address their sources of insecurity. It fosters a favourable environment for broader reforms and more people-centered policies at the sub-national and national levels.

However, swift significance and a major bottom line for regional security have been given appendage due to the incessant occurrence of crimes that have incapacitated both military and paramilitary agencies against their backs. Odewale & Lamidi (2020: 104) succinctly underscore the regional security partnership imperativeness by spotting the fact that:

The recurring decimal of social crimes, such as banditry and kidnapping, among other violent acts, has necessitated the reinvigoration of informal approaches to the security of lives and properties in recent times. Initially, group formations were visible as an unofficial response to criminal threats such as burglary, pot theft, and home-breaking cases. The severity of these crimes also influenced the concept of street policing, which has received little discussion but is evidence-based. Furthermore, its recurrence in various dimensions and forms sparked the current debate on community policing across Nigerian states, with some rapid formation, such as *Hisbah* police among joint task forces in the country. The police-community relations committee, in particular, is a permanent unit for interactions and operations involving communal security issues.

Pertinently, regional security partnerships distinguish between the system-level interaction of national powers, whose capabilities allow them to transcend distance, and the subsystem-level interaction of lesser powers, whose primary security environment is in their local region. The fact that most threats travel more easily over short distances than over long distances, security interdependence is typically patterned into regionally based clusters. As a result, regional security is an obvious matrix of a realistic and useful initiative for enhancing strong regional security, which, of course, speaks volumes and has implications for achieving national security. To accomplish this, regional security requires not only cooperation but also commitment in terms of pooling resources among states within the said constituent to sustain and keep the outfit afloat. More often than not, it also necessitates collaboration with traditional state security agencies, most importantly to achieve a holistic securitization based on long-term partnership and collaboration.

In contrast, the inclusion of the WNSN as a regional security network in Nigeria's southwest has yet to fully embody the type that properly demonstrates bringing on board all of the local community needed to make it an all-inclusive

initiative. Although it is widely acknowledged that regional security is primarily driven by state cooperation, the local people who inhabit its heart have more important roles to play in ensuring its success. Refusal to enlighten them of their expected responsibilities could be detrimental because it has been documented that locals in some communities have conspired with syndicates to kidnap members of their communities rather than work with the WNSN. For instance, Ekiti State Governor Dr. Kayode Fayemi revealed, while hosting members of the Ekiti State Council of Elders in his office on September 7, 2022, that it had been ascertained that local citizens were working with foreign elements to commit the heinous crime of kidnapping in the state, as evidenced by the number of arrests that included some of our own local citizens (Nigerian Tribune, 2022).

Given this, it becomes germanely apropos that local people must be sensitized against collaborating with criminal elements undertaking kidnapping in their vicinity and as well made them aware of the importance of regional security networks in ensuring local people's safety in their various communities. By doing so, they recognize that the benefit far outweighs the shortcoming in such an initiative, and in return, the outfit receives not only the nod but also robust cooperation in making their task of preventing kidnapping an easy one. It is thus conceived that, in order for the regional security network's efforts to stamp out kidnapping in southwest Nigeria, people in the various hinterlands must be given good education and convincing reasons to embrace the initiative as belonging to them, as opposed to the usual mindset they have long nursed against conventional security agencies, summed up in 'cat and dog' coexistence.

Regional security networks in southwest Nigeria are widely misunderstood as having nothing to do with the hinterland communities and instead with the urban cities that serve as state capitals. However, on closer inspection, kidnapping, and hostage-taking are no longer confined to cities; rather, they have spread to the region's hinterlands and forested communities. As a result, residents must be made aware that a

security network has been established to protect them from kidnapers and hostage-takers in such communities. Another bottleneck in the regional security network is citizens' failure and reluctance to provide vital information required to respond aggressively to criminals in their community. This has been found to significantly impede the WNSN's efforts to rid the region of kidnapers. Although some of these bottlenecks may be attributed to a lack of an effective communication strategy and initiative on the part of the Corps and members of the public in the fight against the known and common community nuisance, 'kidnapping.'

While it is critical for the WNSN to reach out to the people for information and appropriate intelligence about their surroundings, the government must equally be ready to provide the outfit with the necessary arms and operational tools to work with, as fighting kidnapers necessitates being overly well equipped and battle-ready (armed to the teeth). By doing so, security can best be promoted and maintained if local people have greater access to the intelligence-gathering process. Collaborations and partnerships with state security agencies can ensure the active participation of the local people in regional security. A strategic partnership between WNSN and state security agencies, in particular, will help people feel more connected to the anti-kidnapping effort. Broadly speaking, community security has embraced the value of partnerships and collaborative policy development and programme delivery, recognizing that the causes of domestic insurgency are diverse and complex, linked to a variety of social and economic conditions beyond the control of security agencies and frequently necessitating a coordinated response (Stabilisation Unit, 2014).

However, noticeably in the Southwest, the fight against kidnapping strategy typically requires NPF, SSS, NSCDC, and other special forces to seek the support of WNSN in gathering intelligence and identifying kidnapers. While WNSN is an important component of community security in practice, its collaboration with state-led security agencies has received far less

attention than other aspects such as community engagement and local problem-solving.

### III. THE EVOLUTION, COMPOSITION AND ADMINISTRATION OF WESTERN NIGERIA SECURITY NETWORK

The call for the establishment of the WNSN was first mentioned at the regional security summit held in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria in June 2019 and attended by all six state governors, dubbed the Development Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN). As a result, the security outfit, also known as *Amotekun*, which means leopard in Yoruba, is an operational nomenclature for the WNSN. The leopard represents strength, perseverance, ambition, independence, toughness, patience, wisdom, and fearlessness. The *Amotekun* is also known for its distinct hunting behavior and well-camouflaged appearance, which enable it to defend its territories from intruders. In either case, the animal exudes confidence, strength, and the ability to chase and catch up with prey at lightning speed (Oladele & Adeniran, 2020; Adetunmbi & Adedigba, 2021; Nwoko, 2021).

On January 9, 2020, all the six south-west governors of Ekiti, Ondo, Oyo, Ogun, Osun, and Lagos States unilaterally agreed to the formation of the corps as the first regional security outfit initiated by the South-West geopolitical zone in Nigeria. On the other hand, everyone's mind wanders with the question, why is WNSN in the southwest region? What could have prompted the agitation and subsequent establishment of WNSN? Could it have been precipitated by the shenanigans of the region's gladiators? Without reducing the three questions to probabilities or conjectures, it should be stated that the idea of forming a regional security outfit was motivated by the prevalent pervasive issues and a number of insecurity problems such as herder-farmer clashes, banditry, cultism, armed robbery, kidnapping, and hostage-taking that plagued the region on a regular basis, giving the region the appearance of a battlefield.

In attestation of the bleak security situation that pervades the southwest region and, by extension, Nigeria as a whole, the concept of WNSN regional

security outfit arose as a result of the central government's failure to protect its citizens, and because the region has lost faith in the country's security agencies. Subsequently, they no longer feel secure, necessitating the need for them to seek an alternative. For instance, Nwoko (2021:1) observes that the *Amotekun* initiative arose as a result of the region and the country's deteriorating security situation, which the Nigerian government has demonstrated a lack of capacity to address. In a similar vein, Iwuamadi et al. (2021) argues that the increase in violence in the country has left the centrally-controlled Nigerian state security apparatuses clearly overwhelmed and unable to protect the citizenry from the country's diverse threats. This has increased the desire for polity restructuring and decentralization of the nation's security apparatuses. Following the failure of the central government to meet those desires, the governments of the six states that comprise the country's South West zone established a regional security network, the WNSN, codenamed Operation *Amotekun*.

The WNSN security outfit was designed to accommodate both state and non-state actors, including local hunters, the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Agbekoya, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), vigilante groups, security experts, and other Yoruba socio-cultural groups involved in local security. Not only that, but the group was supposed to work under the supervision of the Nigerian Police Force. According to the country's Inspector General of Police, Mohammed Adamu, the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) will be involved in the recruitment, training, and deployment of personnel assigned to *Amotekun* operations (Izuora, 2020). The plan was to create a framework that would provide the logistics and support needed for effective community policing in the southwest region.

Thus, the WNSN was formed to supplement the activities of traditional policing organizations such as the NPF, NSCDC, SSS and other state security institutions (Olawale, 2020). WNSN security outfit has units in each of the six states of the region. The activities within its jurisdiction

will be coordinated by the local government organ. Each local government will have a relationship with the state command. The six-state commands will report to the regional command and operate from the control center in Ibadan, Oyo State and work closely with the Developmental Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission, which oversees the initiative administratively. The WNSN setup appears to stoutly rely on Dane guns for its weapons and ammunition, which are similar to those used by hunters when hunting animals in the forest.

For coordinated operations and administrative robustness, the security outfit has its regional headquarters located in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. However, in each of the six states' capitals, a correspondent office is located and coordinated by the commandant, with its activities regulated by the commissioner of Police in each of the states. To cater for the financial commitment of the outfit, a security trust fund was established to foot the bill. Each state is also obliged to recruit the number of personnel they are capable of maintaining. The initiative not only serves as an intelligent arm for conventional security; it also assists security forces in conducting more intensive and extensive routine patrols throughout the region. As a result, they serve as CCTV in most rural areas, gathering information about crimes and suspicious activities for interpretation and appropriate action.

Furthermore, security has featured prominently in today's framework, with continents, sub continents, regions, states, and local communities all competing intrinsically and extrinsically to improve their immediate domestic security posture. Stability is inevitably a major policy challenge for policymakers as well as communities and groups all over the world. This is because the framework remains a complex phenomenon that, without a doubt, necessitates not only defense initiative but also concrete precautionary and resilient decisions to be managed in order to avoid the loss of lives and property. As a result, security demands not only physical protection from existing harm, but also the development of resilient socio-political and economic structures

to deal with its complexities. Accordingly, as a necessary consequence, the WNSN was established in Nigeria's southwest region.

#### IV. REGIONAL SECURITY: WNSN AND ANTI-KIDNAPPING IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIA

Thus far, the fight against kidnapping led by the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) and other allied forces in Nigeria's southwest region has been ultra-conservative and has failed to meet the expectation of curbing the growing threat of kidnapping in the region. This is evident by the security agencies' almost non-existent dislodgement of kidnapers and rescue operations of victims, which are, of course, nowhere near or comparable to the torrent of daily successful kidnapping operations carried out by mafias and criminal gangs in the region. In fact, hardly a day passes without hearing or reading unbelievable news or events such as kidnapping, hostage-taking, and abduction of citizens riveting the southwest region. In a survey conducted in 2013 by the CLEEN Foundation in collaboration with the United States-based Macarthur Foundation to ascertain the region with the highest number of kidnappings in the country, the southwest region has the highest number of kidnappings, with 5% of respondents from the region who participated in the survey alleging they have either been kidnapped or attempts have been made to kidnap them (Premium Times, 2013).

In the past, the apparent lack of regional security in the fight against kidnapping in the region grew the success rate of kidnapping. It significantly increased the region's high number of cornucopia kidnapping occurrences, more than twice as many as what obtains in other regions that make up the country. In reaction to this common knowledge, the Nigerian Police Force's operations demonstrated a lack of involvement of a regional security in the fight against kidnapping in the region. For instance, during a visit to Ondo State Governor Rotimi Akeredolu in Akure, the erstwhile Deputy Inspector General of Police in Charge of Operations, Abdulmajid Ali, briefed him that:

Plan was in full swing, with squad members currently undergoing training in Abuja before being dispatched to Ondo State and other southwest states to combat kidnapping. The Inspector General of Police has dispatched me not only to Ondo State, but also to other southwest states, to inspect the security architecture on the ground and to advise on how to redesign the security apparatus. I decided to start with Ondo before moving on to Ekiti and Osun because, with Ondo being one of the focal points of recent events, I believe we need to sit down with my officers here and discuss how we can work together in the future. I want you to know that the Inspector General of Police is conscious of what has been going on, particularly along the road, how some of these miscreants are disturbing the peace (Vanguard Newspaper, 2019).

Nonetheless, kidnappings are on the rise in the region, necessitating the pursuit of alternative approaches, including regional security policies. Local hunters, the Oodua People's Congress (OPC), Agbekoya, the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), vigilante groups, security experts, and other Yoruba socio-cultural groups involved in local security comprise the WNSN in the Southwest region (Vanguard Newspaper, 2019). The WNSN security outfit has a correspondence office in each of the six southwestern states: Ekiti, Lagos, Ogun, Ondo, Osun, and Oyo, each with its own commander in charge of members in the hinterlands, towns, and villages under his command. According to Adetunmbi & Adedigba (2021):

*Amotekun* security outfit is a local affair. Squads of Operation *Amotekun* are stationed at 52 backstops spread across the south-west geopolitical region. Each state has its own unit of measurement. The activities within its jurisdiction will be coordinated by the local government organ. Each local government will interact with the state command. The six-state commands will report to the regional command and operate from the control center in Ibadan, Oyo State, and the operational base in Gbongan, Osun State. They will also

collaborate closely with the Developmental Agenda for Western Nigeria (DAWN) Commission, which will provide administrative oversight for the initiative.

The *Amotekun* security unit resembles the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) in the Northeast counter-insurgency campaign. The southwest *Amotekun* is to effectively collaborate with all countermeasure's mercenaries in the region, assisting the NPF and other forces in curbing kidnapping in the region. Professor Banji Akintoye, for instance, gave insight into the type of partnership and collaboration that would exist between *Amotekun* personnel and conventional police, noting that they would be specifically trained on the standard operating procedure. According to him, some people are wondering how the police will interact with *Amotekun*; his response was: 'Don't forget that we are being led by highly educated people who will properly shape their relationship so that *Amotekun* and the Police can work together without conflict. There will be no disagreements' (Yahaya & Bello, 2020:166). However, it is clear from Akintoye's submission that collaboration between state and non-state actors is required to combat kidnapping in the region. Ondo State Governor Rotimi Akeredolu, a Senior Advocate of Nigeria (SAN), backed this up, saying, we cannot predict the exactitude where this unfortunate disturbance will take place, and thus we felt that a combined effort of all of us would be very necessary (Ayoola, 2019).

It is apparent from the foregoing that foiling kidnapping syndicates and their heinous operations in the region requires the cooperation and partnership of multiple security agencies. Most importantly, it is clear that the WNSN understands the region's terrain better than any other security agency in the region. Moreover, it is common knowledge that no external forces can successfully penetrate a neighborhood to rid it of kidnappers unless the residents of that neighborhood actively support or collaborate, which, of course, is where the WNSN support role comes in. However, since early 2020, when the WNSN regional security outfit was endorsed by the six southwestern governors, it has been supplying not only intelligence to the police but

also leading the fight against kidnapping in the region.

WNSN, for example, has been proactive in assisting police and other state security forces, which has helped to reduce the occurrence of kidnapping and hostage-taking activities in the southwest region. Recently, men from Ekiti State's *Amotekun* Corps apprehended Abdurahman Ibrahim, a 30-year-old kidnapper who specializes in abducting residents of Ijesa Isu in the state's Ikole Local Government Area. We discovered local protective charms against gunshots on him. He pretended to be a cattle tender looking for the person who had given him the cattle. The suspect was however handed over to police for a full investigation and possible prosecution (Brig. Gen. Joe Komolafe (rtd), personal interview).<sup>1</sup>

Bearing in mind that WNSN, with a subsidiary *Amotekun* Corps, in each of the six states of Nigeria's southwest, is of course, a continuation of the ongoing debate on community security. It has also demonstrated the problematic backdrop against which regional security emerges. According to Nwoko (2021:1), 'the *Amotekun* initiative arose from the fallout of the region' and the country's worsening security situation, which the Nigerian government has demonstrated a lack of capacity to address.' The coordinated efforts of the region's major stakeholders (the governors of the six states) to promote and ensure the security of citizens' lives and property, on the other hand, are regarded as a success in the fight against kidnapping and hostage-taking, which previously dominated the region.

Despite the importance of regional security and WNSN, which has made significant strides in the fight against kidnapping in the region, it has received a backlash from some quarters, with some declaring its establishment to be illegal because it is not backed by any known law in the land, and as a result, they have remained coy on such an approach to tame kidnapping and other security threats in the region. In a statement made

<sup>1</sup>Interview with the Ekiti State *Amotekun* Corps (ESAC) Commandant, Brig. Gen. Joe Komolafe (rtd), in Ado-Ekiti, April 11, 2022, 11am-1pm

available to Vanguard on January 9, 2020, Special Assistant on Media and Public Relations to the Attorney General of the Federation and Minister of Justice, Dr. Umar Gwandu, criticized the establishment of the outfit. The bulletin reads:

The formation of the security organization known as *Amotekun* is illegal and violates Nigerian law. The Federal Republic of Nigeria Constitution of 1999 (as amended) established the Army, Navy, and Air Force, as well as the Police and numerous paramilitary organizations, for the purpose of Nigeria's defence (Vanguard Newspaper, 2020).

The Minister's statement appeared to be a reiteration of Okodolor's (2019) earlier position that no State government, whether singly or in a group, has the legal right and competence to establish any form of organization or agency for the defense of Nigeria or any of its constituent parts.

Regardless of the criticism leveled at the WNSN security outfit, the organization's activities are solely focused on combating kidnapping and other security challenges in the region. According to Adetumbi & Adedigba (2021:28), the aim of establishing the *Amotekun* security outfit is to ensure an end to insecurity in the southwestern region of Nigeria. The WNSN team has received widespread acclaim for its serious and competent approach to addressing kidnapping in the southwest. Visibly, the success of the NPF, NSCDC, and DSS in the fight against kidnapping in the region is based on a shared understanding, effective partnership, and collaboration with the WNSN. A huge part of the success has been made possible because of the better understanding of the environment by identifying the major forests that serve as hideouts for kidnapping syndicates and gangs and an upward supply of intelligence for NPF, NSCDC and SSS for seamless bursting of operation of kidnap members. For the purpose of enlightening the general public most especially on vague issues bordering on how *Amotekun* security team has been partnering other security agencies in the fight against kidnapping in the region, more often than not, *Amotekun* outfit works closely with the DSS, and when it wants to carry out any

operation, most times it engages men of the SSS, NSCDC, NPF and all other forces (Chief Adetunji Adeleye, personal interview).<sup>2</sup>

The activities of kidnapers in the region have been significantly disrupted as a result of the WNSN's active participation in intelligence gathering, merged with the combined efforts of the NPF, DSS, NSCDC, and inter - and intra Special Forces. This growing cooperation between the WNSN and security agencies has aided the forces in their efforts to rid the region of kidnapers and reclaim the ungoverned spaces (forests) from the kidnapping gangs. As more space is taken away, kidnapers are forced to flee the region for neighbouring states that do not share such cooperation, such as the southwest region, where their activities have met with stiff resistance. Despite this, in less than three years since its inception; the WNSN has made significant progress in combating kidnapping and other criminalities in the region. It can however be strengthened further to become a dependable conglomerate on which other state security agencies can rely for firepower and intelligence.

It is patent that the WNSN intelligence-gathering and regional anti-kidnapping initiatives have resulted in some successes. Not that alone, the initiative seemed to be the missing link in the anti-kidnapping campaign other security agencies in the region have long desired, with the string of support and onslaught culminating in victories coming their way in the quest to rid the region of kidnapers and hostage takers. For instance, between January and December 2021, the outfit captured 18 suspected criminals in possession of dangerous weapons such as over 500 daggers, knives, and guns concealed in sacks loaded with tiger nuts in Ondo State as part of its efforts to combat kidnapers and criminals in the region (Nigerian Tribune, 2021). Correspondingly, on Saturday, December 25, 2021, the WNSN's Joint Patrol team rescued 11 people who were being held captive by their abductors along the Ipetumodu-Ilesha expressway in Osun State. On Christmas Eve, the victims were said to be

<sup>2</sup>Interview with the Chairman of the Council of *Amotekun* Commanders in the Southwest region, Chief Adetunji Adeleye, in Akure Ondo State, April 14, 2022, 12 – 2pm

traveling from Lagos to Ado-Ekiti. Chief Adetunji Adeleye, Chairman of the Council of *Amotekun* Commanders in the Southwest region, confirms that the rescue operation was carried out by a joint team of *Amotekun* from Ondo and Osun States involved in the inter-border patrol in the southwest. According to him:

We received a distress call around 1 a.m. from one of the families of the kidnapped victims, asking for ransom. As a result, we took action. We were successful in locating the kidnapers. The victims were rescued, and some of their belongings were recovered, but the kidnapers fled. It was along the Ipetumodu axis in Osun State, and when we arrived at a village about 10 kilometers from the road, we discovered that the den is a regular dump area for kidnapers because we discovered so many items indicating that it is a permanent place where they keep kidnapped victims. Adetunji reaffirms that it is to reassure the people of Ondo and Osun States that *Amotekun* will stop at nothing to join forces with other security agencies to ensure that criminals are driven away from the states (Nigerian Tribune 2021).

On July 30, 2021, the men of the Oyo State *Amotekun* team, worked closely with local vigilantes and hunters, and won another battle when they killed two kidnapers during an unsuccessful kidnapping attempt by the kidnapers who stormed Iwere-Ile town in Oyo State, Nigeria. Weapons were recovered from the kidnapers and turned over to the police, despite the fact that three other kidnap syndicate members managed to flee after being shot (Daily Post, 2021). Equally, the WNSN team in Oyo State successfully dealt a major blow to kidnapers who were operating in the state's forests near Ibarapa and Oke-Ogun areas. As stated by Retd Col. Olayinka Olayanju in an interview: 'We had begun clearing out the dense forests surrounding the four councils that had recently been the target of kidnapping and rape. At Aiyede, when our personnel entered the forest, they were ambushed; this sparked a gunfight in which three of the assailants perished. In the process, one of our men sustained little injury; on the whole, we

are happy that he is recuperating fast from the hurt' (Retd Col. Olayinka Olayanju, personal interview).<sup>3</sup>

However, on April 24, 2022, the *Amotekun*, in collaboration with the police and vigilantes, were strategic in a raid on a kidnapper's hideout in Ogun State, when the joint security forces stormed Abule Oba, off Ayetoro Road in Abeokuta North Local Government Area, the kidnap syndicates were captured. While responding, the state's police spokesman affirms that:

The police had received a tip that two commercial motorcyclists running errands for the kidnapping syndicate, Hammed Taiwo and Kehinde Jimoh had been seen in the Rounder neighborhood of Abeokuta. During questioning, they admitted to being a part of the syndicate but claimed that their primary responsibility was to run errands and keep an eye on their surroundings to avoid being discovered by law enforcement. Their confession aided authorities to find their hiding place, where they regularly gathered after demanding ransom from their victims. Nine members of the syndicate were detained during the operation (Abimbola Oyeyemi, personal interview).<sup>4</sup>

In general, it appears that district partnerships and collaboration between the WNSN Corps and state security agencies will continue to receive the full support of the southwest states. On the whole, the fight against kidnapping and hostage-taking remains the responsibility of the Nigerian government, which will require regional and community support to succeed. Though the region has faced opposition in the form of constitutionality and legality from various quarters, most notably the Attorney General and Minister of Justice, since the establishment of the security outfit, the obvious truth is that the region's outfit is making tremendous efforts in

combating kidnapping. The structure for collaboration and integration into the current anti-kidnapping strategic approach, on the other hand, does not appear to be a primary focus for the central government. Certainly, the government can provide better security by focusing more on the positive contributions of the WNSN in protecting their communities, since no state can subdue kidnapping exclusively through state-sponsored security agency operations. As a result, it is pivotal that the government, in partnership with WNSN, engages in the region to better understand kidnapper hideouts and operating modes in the region.

## V. CONCLUSION

The relevance of WNSN Corps as a key player in the regional effort to counter kidnapping in southwest Nigeria has been articulated in this article. Given their sheer numbers, ingenuity, vitality, and local knowledge of the region, which have fueled and added significant boost to locating kidnappers' hideouts, gathering intelligence, and constantly rescuing and liberating kidnapped victims from the whims and caprices of their tormentors, WNSN, as an institution in southwest Nigeria, without a doubt deserves to be seen as a key player in the ongoing fight to thwart kidnapping, hostage-taking in the region.

Going by the current level of cooperation between WNSN, NPF, SSS, NSCDC, and other special forces in the fight against kidnapping, which has recently made the region inhabitable for kidnap mafias, it is evident that a more robust and long-lasting regional security option is required to defeat kidnapping in the southwest. It must be emphasized that effective communication among the various *Amotekun* units, commanders, state governors, NPF, SSS, NSCDC, and Special Forces in the area has also greatly aided the region's efforts to combat kidnapping. This is especially true of the joint/combined border patrol among states against kidnappers in the region, which is a significant advancement in the fight against kidnapping in the region. In this regard, it is crucial to reconsider the common perception of WNSN in southwest Nigeria, and by extension,

<sup>3</sup>Interview with the Oyo State Commander of Operation *Amotekun*, Retd Col. Olayinka Olayanju, (ret'd), in Ibadan, April 20, 2022, 2 – 3:30 pm

<sup>4</sup>Interview with the Ogun State police spokesman, Abimbola Oyeyemi, in Abeokuta, April 29, 2022, 12:45 – 2pm

Nigeria, and to see it more as a constant source of creativity, ingenuity, possibility, and serious obstacles for kidnapping operations in the region as opposed to symbol of separation, misconception as ethnic supporting armed group, and as equipped tool in the hands of the region's shenanigans.

Apart from the foregoing, it is pivotal to strengthen intelligence sharing among security agencies in the region and its neighbours in order to tackle kidnapping. Moreover, regional and national forces must be vigilant in foiling coordinated kidnapping assaults before they are carried out. To improve its effectiveness and offer a better security chain, the WNSN Corps could also be structured a little more in a chain of command structures: community, local government, state, and regional levels. Not just that; the emphasis must also be on giving the group access to resources, training, and retraining, as well as some sort of legal backing. Most importantly, personnel can be improved in the area of training and retraining in a periodic manner to keep the men of the outfit with a modern method of securitization without resulting in human rights violations and security breaches. In this regard, the WNSN Corps in the southwest would be a bulwark handy not only in the region's fight against kidnapping but also in enhancing the national security architecture.

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