

**INVESTIGATION INTO THE INFLUENCE OF CULTISM ON THE
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF HISTORY STUDENTS: A CASE
STUDY OF SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN OREDO LOCAL
GOVERNMENT AREA OF EDO STATE**

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BENIN CITY**

NOVEMBER, 2023

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS, FACULTY OF EDUCATION,
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT
OF THE REQUIRMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF
BACHELOR OF ARTS (EDUCATION) IN HISTORY EDUCATION**

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CERTIFICATION

We, the undersigned, certify that this study was carried out by **Emmanuel OSILAMA** with Matriculation Number **EDU1803580** in the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God for divine help and assistance throughout my programme at the University of Benin, Benin City.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History students: A case study of secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

The method used in the collection of data was a structured close-ended questionnaire. A questionnaire schedule was constructed and distributed to two hundred (200) respondents in some secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The data collected were analyzed and the results were displayed on tables. Findings from the study revealed that broken homes can lead to cultism. It was also revealed in the study that harsh economic situation in the country can encourage cultism in tertiary institutions. Also, it was found that cultism can result in the destruction of lives and properties of students in their multitude if not controlled. Furthermore, findings from the study revealed that the effect of cultism could result to arrest, detention and imprisonment of those involved in it.

Based on these findings, recommendations were made on the following area: parents should monitor their children both in and outside the school and counsel them regularly. Also, it was recommended that students should be properly guided by counsellors in the schools' guidance and counselling center. It is believed that if these are followed, it will go a long way to assist students and promote their learning.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The word cultism refers to a popular way of life, an attitude, or a concept, as well as a small group of individuals that practice extreme religion of some sort. It is part of the crime being committed in the society which go a long way to affect their life negatively. The origins of covert cult activity in Nigerian Higher Education Institutions seem to be diabolical. When cultism was first established in the early 1980s, it was for the purpose of intellectual responsibility. These groups were initially innocuous and had excellent intentions at several colleges. It has lately evolved into a terrible force that threatens to rip our campus apart. In recent years, campus has morphed into a type of slaughterhouse, with gun-toting hoodlums, generally teenagers, beset by identity crises (Laolu, 2002).

Wole Soyinka, Tunji, Tobi, Ralph opera, Aigmokluide, and Olamuyiwa established and headed the first Nigerian cult organization. They created the “National Association of Sea Dogs” (NAS), which was subsequently changed to Pirate Confraternity, when they were students at the leading

institution (University of Ibadan) (PC) The admission to the Pirate Confraternity was limited to individuals who are serious about their academic goals and are willing to protect their honor and reputation on campus (Laolu, 2002). One of the group's goals is to fight colonialism, ensure human dignity, and rid Nigerian society of elitism and tribalism. The pirate confraternity began as an anti-colonial pressure group among the early youths. Their regalia was red, and their symbol was a skull with two crossed bones with blood dropping.

When Wole Soyinka and the founding fathers graduated, the pirate confraternity was still in operation, and during the process of selecting new leaders in the pirate leadership, "BolagiCaew" aka Rica Richard and some twenty wives formed another group called "the buccaneers confraternity" in the same university, college, as a result of ethical bias in the leadership (University of Ibadan).

The pace at which cultism is spreading in schools today which is disturbing. It is so sad to say that in secondary schools, it is rapidly becoming breeding grounds for cultism and terrorism. This is nothing more

than a denial of the basic reason for the establishment of the institutions (Peter, 2002). The problem has become an eyesore that must be addressed as soon as possible, since the future of our wonderful houses and country is in the hands of our kids, who are swimming in the clutches of the devil, man's arch-enemy. According to Laolu (2002), the issue of cultism has evolved into a serious political danger that must be addressed in order for a crime-free society to emerge. The multi-faceted actions made by school officials and the Government to address this malignant issue have continuously been tainted by it. Instead, has been growing in strength on a regular basis. In order to abolish cultism from our schools, we must recognize that certain stones that have not been totally turned over will need to be actively cared to. Also, want our youths to see the much-desired peace and intellectual advancement both on and off campus (Peter, 2002).

Cultism's core issue is the insecure, dangerous, and emotional strain it causes across society, especially educational institutions, resulting in poor learning and plummeting academic success standards. Emotion and learning are inextricably linked. Learning is a process that leads to the production of new behaviors, while emotion is a result of behavior. Despite the fact that

emotion is a result of behavior, it nonetheless impacts and directs learning and academic performances. A central theme of Skinner's psychology is that all creatures are impacted to a large degree by the consequences of their own actions (Isangedighi in Asagwara, 1994). Isangedighi went on to say that each action is always followed by an experience that is a result of the action. Emotion is triggered by events in the environment. For example, if a student hears a gunshot near his or her lecture hall, such an interaction, if not handled properly, might cause emotional tension or terror, which can interfere with studying. Cultist activities have been publicized in both the electronic and print media in most sections of the nation, which may have had an impact on the learners' learning effectiveness (Peter, 2002).

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Statement of the Problem

There is no gainsaying on the good number of schools of learning today that has evolved into the abode of cultists. Some students now parade

themselves as member of one confraternity or the other, threatening the peace of the school community. The involvement of students in cult groups has caused many issues in the teaching and learning process which seemed to have affected their academic performance. Some time ago in April, 2023, Daily Trust Newspapers reported the killing of a final year student in the University of Benin, though such incident was reported at the higher institution level, what then would be the case of cultism at the secondary school level. As a result of this and other cult-related news headlines of the past, the researcher seeks to investigate the rise of cultism in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised to guide this study.

1. What are the causes of Cultism among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?
2. What are the influences of cultism on the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

3. What ways can Cultism be tackled in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Purpose of the Study

The main objective of this study is to investigate the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The specific objective of the study is as follows;

- (i) To investigate the causes of Cultism among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.
- (ii) To find out the influence of cultism on the academic performance of secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.
- (iii) To find out ways by which Cultism can be tackled in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Significance of the Study

It is hoped that, the findings of this study will be of great importance to educators and students in general. The study will be of benefit to the

Educational Administrators, policy maker and students in particular to identify the causes and effect, of cult activities on Educational Standard of Primary Schools, Secondary Schools and Higher Institutions in the Country.

The study can also lead to other researchable variables with a view to find better solution to Cultism, Primary, Secondary and Higher Institutions. If the findings and recommendations are utilized as supposed, it will create much awareness among the Parents, Educators and the Government functionaries to ameliorate problems of Cultism, not only in Higher Institutions, but the Country at large.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The study will investigate the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The study will also examine the causes as well as the influence of cultism on secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Lastly, the study will proffer solution as to how cultism can be eradicated in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Hence the study will be delimited to some senior secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Operational Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined operationally as used in the study;

Cultism: It is a ritual practice by a group of people whose membership, initiation, policies, and activities are done secretly.

Investigation: a searching inquiry for ascertaining facts; detailed or careful examination.

Trends: a general direction into which something is changing, developing, or veering toward.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with the review of relevant and related literature on this study. It shall be discussed under the following sub-headings.

- (i) Concept of Cultism
- (ii) Concept of Academic Performance
- (iii) Historical Background of Cultism
- (iv) Causes of Cultism in Secondary Schools
- (v) Cultism in Secondary Schools: The Psychological and Religious Impacts
- (vi) Strategies to Managing Cultism in Secondary Schools in Nigeria
- (vii) Summary of Reviewed Literature

Concept of Cultism

Cultism is undeniably one of the social vices setting the hand of the developmental clock of Nigeria backwards. The unabated atrocities of secret cults in the Nigerian educational institutions and even in the wider Nigerian society continue to take tolls on the lives of young and old Nigerians. Many

young people, politicians, academics and industrialists have been hacked down in their prime by the cultists. It could be in the execution of a contract to assassinate and waste the life of their mentor's real or imagined often political enemy. Acting as hirelings, the cultists get their target in his residence or office or track him down on the way. In most cases, the murderers 'escape,' not tracked down because they are serving the powers that be. They do not face the wrath of the law because the event is linked to a Political godfather, a Sacred cow.

The dismayed Enugu State Development Association (ESDA) feared in 2005 that the failure of the Government Security Apparatus to arrest and prosecute any suspects in the numerous incidences of political murder in Enugu State showed that the government had a hand in the crimes and made speaking out very risky. More often than not, however, it is in a clash between two cult groups, the one trying to demonstrate its stronger powers over the other. The cultists strike in one Nigerian Educational Institution today and a reprisal occurs the next day in another institution, claiming lives in both cases. Sometimes, a chain of reactions is sparked off in many other institutions of higher learning. This depicts their synergy and network of

existence and activities in a country already ravaged by underdevelopment, poverty and misery (Onoh, 2006).

The term “cult” is capable of various interpretations depending on the person defining it. The word cult is derived from Latin word cultus, which means both cultivation and worship. The Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2000) defined “cult” as the group of people believing in a particular system of religious worship with the special customs and ceremonies, worship of or loyalty to a person, principle or idea. Ogunbameru (1997) defined a secret cult as an organization whose activities are kept away from the knowledge of others. These activities are essentially covert, disguised and are usually carried out behind closed doors (Aguda 1997).

The word cultism may be referred to as the formation of a group of initiates or adherent round the figure of a god, a saint or even a living being. It may involve the practice of a particular doctrine within the body of religious belief (Pemedede and Viavonu, 2010). Ogunbameru and Daodu (2003) defined Secret Cult to be any form of organization whose activities are not only exclusively kept away from the knowledge of others but such

activities are carried out at odd hours of the day and they often clash with accepted norms and values of everyday life. From the above different definitions, cultism can be seen as a group or association in the schools whose membership, admission policy and initiation formalities as well as its mode of operation are done in secret and kept secret. This does not mean that every group in our schools whose business is conducted in at most secrecy is campus cult.

School cults are usually nocturnal in their operations. Members are under spell and bound never to reveal the indents or business of the group and carry out any duty that might be assigned to them by the group. Above all, school cult otherwise, called secret cult. Is a secret society is an illegal and illegitimate association.

Concept of Academic Performance

There is little research available on the relationship between cultism and academic performance of secondary school students. A majority of the research in this area has been conducted solely with students of higher institutions (Baily, Silvern, Brabham, & Ross, 2004; Marjoribanks, 2005). This study may provide an in-depth look at one aspect of parental

involvement, involvement in academic activities of their children, and academic achievement of senior secondary school students. Students' Academic performance remains central focus of an educational system.

There is no generally acceptable definition of students' academic performance but some scholars have been able to give some clues on what the term academic performance implies. Students' academic performance refers to what the students have learnt or acquired and is usually measured through assessments and portfolio assessment (Santrock, 2006). Academic performance which is measured by examination results is one of the major goals of a school.

Basically, academic performance can be referred to as the achievement or accomplishment of a student in his/her academic pursuit over a period of time and resources used. Clearly put, academic performance can be referred to as the achievement or accomplishment of a student in his/her academic pursuit over a period of time in terms of positive or negative value and resources or instructional aids applied in his/her academic career. Therefore,

academic performance can be divided into two groups: academic pass and academic failure.

According to Aderledge (1987) academic failure is the performance that falls below a specific standard 10 as a pass mark while a performance that is above the pass mark is regarded as a pass or success. Hence, in the case of Junior Secondary School Certificate Examination (JSCE) the pass mark is fixed for 40%. Therefore, the performance of a student who scored below in a subject in his/her JSCE results is regarded to have failed the examination leading to academic failure while a student who scored above the pass mark has passed the examination. Same applies for the senior secondary certificate examination (SSCE) as shown by the West Africa Examination Council (WAEC) bodies. However poor academic performance has been differentiated from academic failure. Poor academic performance is that general or overall performance that falls below a desired standard. The desired standard could be based on factors such as difficulty of the test, ability of the students, strictness of marking, etc. The overall performance of a student could be regarded as poor if he or she has distinction in some subjects but fails his core subjects. Hence, the concept of poor performance

is much more subjective and all-inclusive rather than the concept of academic failure. Therefore, if one considers students who could be said to have poor academic performance to those who actually failed, then the magnitude of Nigeria problems in this regard is great (Aderalegde, 1987).

Individual differences in academic performance have been linked to difference in intelligence and personality. Students with high mental ability as demonstrated by IQ tests and those who are higher in consciousness (linked to effort and achievement motivation) tend to achieve highly in academic settings. Early academic achievement enhances later academic achievement. Hoyle, (2000) argued that schools are established with the objective of imparting knowledge and skills to those who go through them and behind all these is the idea of enhancing good academic performance.

Historical Background of Cultism

Cultism is not a new phenomenon in schools (secondary schools alike) but the way it is being practised today is new. The relationship between a violent philosophies and modern technology has helped in the creation of the current crises of cultism in Nigerian schools. Nigerian schools are now

becoming battle fields and terrorist training ground with captain and all manner of cult violence.

The origin of the secret cults in the Nigerian educational institutions, specially universities can be traced back to the Pyrates Confraternity, also known as National Association of Sea Dogs, that was founded at the University College, Ibadan (now called the University of Ibadan), in 1953 when the institution was still a satellite campus of the University of London. It has the skull and crossbones as its logo. The Seadog Confraternity was similar to the numerous fraternities and sororities, which are so ubiquitous in many American universities and colleges both in membership requirements and activities. In the United States, the fraternities and sororities are sometimes called Greek Clubs because of their Greek names and symbols. These Greek clubs promote, among other things, moral uprightness, patriotism, community service and high academic and intellectual standards.

The Pyrates Confraternity at the University College, Ibadan, was formed by the first African Nobel Laureate, Professor Wole Soyinka and a few others popularly known as G7. The original aims of the association were very lofty and noble. They aimed at producing future Nigerian leaders who would be

very proud of their African heritage. (Thomas 2002). It also wanted to revive the age of chivalry. As Thomas further asserts, the Confraternity boasted of the cleanest, the brightest and the most politically conscious among the students.

The main objectives of the seadogs have been summarized by Orintusin (1990). They are as follows;

- (i) to fight non-violently but intellectually and effectively, against the imposition of foreign conventions,
- (ii) to find a lasting solution to the problems of tribalism and elitism.

Professor Wole Soyinka was the first democratically elected “captain” of the society with the name, Captain blood (Orintusin 1990). Professor Muiyiwa Awe was Long John Silver. Many prominent Nigerians who were founding fathers of the Confraternity include Pius Oleghe, Ralph Opara Aig I’Moukhuede and others. The outfit of the seadogs resembled those of the pyrates of the old. Everything done was healthy, fun and harmless (Orintusin 1990). Soyinka (2002) comments that the pyrates wanted to be different from the “stodgy establishment and its pretentious products in a new

educational institution different from a culture of hypocritical and affluent middleclass, different from alienated colonial aristocrats”.

Professor Soyinka also explained that confraternities are not cults (Dixon, 1994). According to him, Confraternity was part of the social life of the university, which existed then, and as Adebayo (2001) has pointed out some evil minds have twisted the original aims of this noble tradition that was simply one of campus life. Confraternity did not swear any oath of secrecy, no binding of blood and the identities of members were known to both students and staff (Adiamoh, 2003). Long after the founding fathers had left the University of Ibadan, the Confraternity (seadogs) continued to thrive. Unfortunately towards the end of the 1960's, the social, political and educational changes which were occurring in Nigeria began to affect the operations of the Confraternities. According to Adelola (1997), the first notable departure came in 1968 with the formation of the Eiye Confraternity at the University of Ibadan. According to Owoeje (1997) the Eiye Confraternity had sprung from the “Bucaneers” which also had sprung up from the sea dogs. The major force that led to the formation of new splinter groups from the sea dogs was basically doctrinal (Thomas 2002). For

example, members of the new groups were not able to meet the high academic standard originally set by the sea dogs Confraternity.

The new groups which were formed from the sea dogs regarded the pyrates as rather elitist whose campaigns had outlived their usefulness (Owoeye 1997). The protestant groups which sprang up from the Pyrates Confraternity included Black eye, Vikings, Bucaneers, Mafia, dragons, Black Beret and others.

Causes of Cultism in Secondary Schools

The causes of cultism in Nigerian, schools, according to Aroyehun (2000), are not only sociological and psychological in nature but are also rooted in the socio - economic problems being faced in the society. Aroyehun's findings shows that students join secret cults due to the following reasons:

- (i) Family influence: Exposure of students to secret cults from home; lack of proper upbringing, separation of parents; lack of commitments on the part of parents, hence the replacement of parental authority and love with that of charismatic cult leaders, overpamperedness i.e. lack of proper discipline; spiritual foundation of children not properly laid.

- (ii) For recognition: i.e. ego boosting.
- (iii) For protection: To protect themselves from unnecessary harassment from other students and lecturers-many lack the security from home as parents run after butter and bread all over the place so their children make up for it in the cults.
- (iv) To be feared and respected.
- (v) Influences and persuasion of notable members of the society who serve as patrons and advisers to the group.
- (vi) Nothing bad is seen in it since their lecturers are members of the group.
- (vii) Influence of Home Video and television programmes in which many want to model their lives after what they watch on the screen of the Television. Many of the videotapes portray cultists as heroes rather than people to be shunned.
- (viii) Economically, Nigeria is very rich in human and mineral resources, yet masses especially the youths suffer economic and social deprivations. Out of poverty, many find it difficult to pay fees; buy handout/textbooks etc. they see cults as a way out. They are easily lured

through the buoyant financial assistance given to them by cult members and god-fathers.

- (ix) Government's failure to meet the needs and aspirations of students and school authorities. There is the problem of inadequate hostel accommodation, inadequate funding, exorbitant school fees, and incessant close down of schools as a result of not meeting the demands of teachers (not minding the fact that idle hands are devil's workshop). Students are not sure of good jobs after completion of their academic programmes.
- (x) Professor Ayo Banjo Vice Chancellor (VC) of University of Ibadan the Punch of Tuesday, February, 19th February, 2002 recognized faulty admission policy as one of the causes of cultism in our schools. To him, our school systems have failed to produce people with high moral standard necessary to make the society free of social ills;
- (xi) Zainab Olokodare the Students' Union Vice President of the Lagos State University in the Punch of Friday February S ; 2000 saw poor security network which makes it easy for students to have access to

the campus through many routes as a major cause of cultism in some Universities especially their own University.

(xii) Fear of death on the part of University Security Officers contributes to the increase in the wave of cultism in our ivory towers.

Cultism in Secondary Schools: The Psychological and Religious Impacts

The psychological impact of cultism is enormous. Cultism had made parents lose some of their dearly beloved children when they struggled to get to institutions of higher learning, upon when they have put hope for their tomorrow. Some students have been killed, some maimed and disfigured. Others were brutalized, some had to abandon their studies in order to have respite from their predators, while many students live in fear and perpetually in nightmare conditions because of cult activities of co-students in institutions of higher learning. As a result of cult-related violence, many lecturers and students now live in fear and have emotional problems, which prevent them from serious academics exercises. Religion has played tremendous impact on cultism in Nigerian schools. Religion dictates to its followers basic values intended to guide people towards living an ideal life-

style and has been a good weapon to fight cultism if its values are appropriately applied (Adeniyi, 2001).

In Nigeria, there are two dominant religions: Islam and Christianity. To these writers' minds, the two religions do not condone cultism. Christian ethical values are dictated in the New Testament. This compels Christians to do, perform act, in accordance with the dictates of scripture and in conformity with societal values. For example, the Bible dictates to Christians to be holy (Lev. 11:45), to be just, to be loving, to be truthful etc. They are drawn from the Ten Commandments in the Old Testament, the ethical teachings of Jesus Christ and those of early disciples. The Bible advises all Christians to be of exemplary character on earth and serve as models in all societies or communities, they are expected to be of good conduct and endeavour to be honest (Mtt. 5:13-16). Like in Christianity, Islam is built on ethical values, which guide or direct Muslims in their behaviours towards their fellow human-beings and the societies in general.

According to Abe (1993), Islam is a practical religion whose tenets are based on the provisions of the Qur'an. Qur'an is therefore the fundamental source of Islamic values and guidance. It also derives some basic principles

or standards of ethics from Hadith. Qur'an and hadith serve as the prime source of Islamic faith and practice. Qur'an seriously warns the people against all sort of greed, especially the greed of wealth and property (Abe, 1993). It is clear from the above, that Christianity and Islam bequeath principles or standards to their adherents on good behaviour, especially as it relates to discipline, love and quality of moderation. The inculcation of these values by Christians and Muslims can therefore serve as springboards to achieving correct behaviour in the Nigerian schools. As a matter of fact, the effective application of all these values in the lives of Nigerian students will go a long way in eliminating cultism.

As a corollary of the above, the religious leaders and their followers must be proactive in preaching and campaigning against cultism in Nigeria since the two dominant religions are against this social vice. At another level, religious followers in Nigeria must continue to teach and preach against greed so as to eradicate all menace of violence in Nigerian schools. Besides, religious leaders and their followers must not relent in their efforts in preaching and inculcating the fear of God in the minds of Nigerian students.

In using religion to combat cultism in Nigerian schools, Johnson-Bashua (2006) noted that the religious organizations in the country have the responsibility to reawake the moral consciousness of students on cultism. By so doing, the menace can be eliminated from the schools. The role religious bodies in the establishment of private schools, especially universities have been acknowledged as an effort to reduce or eliminate cultism in Nigerian schools. Christian and Muslim missionaries, such as Redeemed Church of God, Catholic Church, Winners' Church, Islamic Movement for Africa (IMA) etc have established universities for moral and intellectual development of Nigerian students. According to Simpson (2006), the steady influx of religious universities into the realm of educational system in Nigeria is widely linked to a response to the disappointments of people in the secular universities in the country. Such disappointments, according to him, find relevance in Weeks's (1980) emphasis on the interrelatedness between education, morality and religion as well as intellectual development. Apart from establishing schools, religious bodies have established organizations that campaign against cultism in the society. All these steps by

religious institutions have positively impacted on reduction of cultism in the society.

Strategies to Managing Cultism in Secondary Schools in Nigeria

Efforts already being made are to be intensified. These efforts include the followings:

- (a) Expelling of identified cult members. Recently, Kwara State Polytechnic expelled 33 students who failed to appear for interrogation on cult activities. Some of the students are on their HND programmes, 5 who were found to have links with cultism are to renounce their membership publicly and in writing, to be endorsed by their parents /guardians. 41 students (21 of them were on the HND programs) were also expelled from the polytechnic for their involvement in cultism. Secondary schools can also take a cue from this. Any student found to be a cult member should be expelled immediately and handed over to the police.
- (b) Death penalty should be added to Decree 4 of 1987 which was promulgated by Babangida administration against cultism. Long

imprisonment that it carries has not really solved the problem. Those who killed should be killed and it should not be seen as draconian in nature.

- (c) Danger of cultism should continue to be made through the mass media.
- (d) Philosophers of old recognized that the soul must be one of the major focus of our education in order to have society sanitized. Thus, teachers are expected to cooperate with God in their relationship with learners. They are not perpetrating cultism at all, but to be God's right-hand men in shaping the future of the society.
- (e) Parents, especially women with their feminine touch, have much to do in solving this problem, parents have to:
 - (i) Monitor what the children watch on the television and what they read from obnoxious books.
 - (ii) Take heavy disciplinary measures against children when they misbehave regardless of the age of the child.
 - (iii) Bring up children by nurturing them in conformity with the norm and values of our society.

- (iv) Amicably address factors leading to broken (home/relationship which leads many children to wrong hands.
- (iv) Drum the evils of cultism into the ears of their children.
- (v) Make efforts to spend quality time with their children so as to understand them and give them the necessary security
- (vi) Endeavour to meet the needs of their children and wards in order to prevent them from lured to cultism through financial assistance.
- (vii) Religious Association (Church Mosques) should condemn cultism.
- (viii) The police force should equally perform their duties as expect i.e. without or favour.
- (ix) Government should increase the funding of all the institutions, bunds for curbing cultism should be given to all tertiary institutions.
- (x) There in need for effective security network in our institutions. There is need to employ adequately trained and well -equipped officers to curb the activities of cultists on campus.
- (xi) There should be serious screening of students for admission to Nigerian institutions specially the higher institutions. Each tertiary institution should be granted greater autonomy to conduct entrance

examination and screen their candidates before they offered admission. Through this, those with shady characters could be screened and denied admission.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

The study investigated the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History Students in some selected secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. It discussed the concept of cultism, the concept of academic performance, the causes of cultism among students in secondary schools, the historical background of cult groups, the effect of cultism, as well as the strategies to solving cultism in secondary schools.

It was discovered from the study that cultism among secondary school students is real and urgent solution is needed to be taken by the government and institution at large to curb it. Also, to put a lasting end to cultism, parents need to work closely with the institutions authority to arrive at a lasting solution. More importantly, counseling services in secondary schools should be up and doing, and functional, in helping to implement

programmes for the reduction of the incidence of cultism in schools. Some major causes of cultism was highlighted in the study which are corruption in the society, broken homes, inborn trait of being sadist, not persecuting those who are caught in cultist activities and influence from parents who belong to secret cults.

From this chapter as well, the following were highlighted as the effects of cultism on the students at large. They include increase in crimes like armed robbery and prostitution etc, spread of diseases, decline in academic performance of cultist, increase in examination malpractice, destruction of lives and properties, drug abuse, arrest, detention and imprisonment.

This chapter also suggested some strategies to reducing cultism in secondary schools such as organizing workshops, orientation of new students to enlighten them on the dangers of cultism, as well as every school having a functional guidance and counseling center in order to guide and counsel the students. Also necessary support and encouragement should be provided to this department in terms of finance and material needs for students in want.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the methods and procedures used in carrying out this study. It was discussed under the following headings;

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Technique

- Research Instrument
- Validity of the Instrument
- Reliability of the Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The research design used for this study was the descriptive survey design which was used to obtain opinions from samples in the area of study.

Population of the Study

The population for this study constituted the total number of all secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used for selecting respondents for this study was the simple random sampling technique. It was considered suitable for

this research since each member of the population under this study had equal chances of selection to participate in the study.

The sample size for this study was two hundred (200) students selected from five (5) public secondary schools within Oredo municipality.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used as the research instrument for this study and was tagged, “Respondents’ Questionnaire on the Influence of Cultism on the Academic Performance of History Students”. It was divided into two sections; Section A and Section B.

Section A was designed to elicit demographic information from respondents, while Section B was designed to elicit responses from respondents on the items extracted from the research questions.

Validity of the Instrument

The instrument was subjected to face validity by the researchers’ supervisor and two other experts in Measurement and Evaluation department, from the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. They made necessary

suggestions and corrections on the instrument before it was administered to respondents.

Reliability of the Instrument

The reliability of the instrument was carried out using the test retest reliability method. After the reliability test, a reliability co-efficient of 0.68 was derived to ascertain the reliability of the instrument.

Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered to students sampled for the study in their respective schools. After it has been filled, it was retrieved from them immediately and collated.

Method of Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using simple percentages and frequency tables.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents results and discussed the findings on the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History students in some selected secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The sample size used for this study is a total number of two hundred (200) students who answered the research questions as presented in the questionnaire. The data presented below is a tabular presentation of results gotten from the questionnaire after analysis.

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Sex

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	120	60%
Female	80	40%
Total	200	100%

From table 1, it can be seen that 60% of the respondents who are 120 in number are male students, while 40% of the respondents are female students 80 in number.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
12 – 14 years	60	30%
15 – 17 years	75	37.5%
18 years & above	65	32.5%
Total	200	100%

Table 2 shows the distribution of respondents by their various age groups. From the table, it shows that 60 respondents representing 30% of the total sample population are between 12 – 14 years of age. Also, the table reveals that 75 respondents representing 37.5% of the sample population are

between 15 – 17 years of age. Lastly, 65 respondents representing 32.5% of the sampled group are 18 years of age and above.

Table 3: Distribution of Respondents by Class

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
SS 1	51	25.5%
SS 2	65	32.5%
SS 3	84	42%
Total	200	100%

Table 3 revealed the class distribution of students in secondary schools, who were sampled in the study. From the table, it is revealed that 51 respondents bearing 25.5% of the sample size are SS 1 students, 65 respondents representing 32.5% of the sampled population are SS 2 Students, while 84 respondents representing 42% of the population are SS 3 students.

SECTION B: RESPONSE TO THE RESEARCH ITEMS

Research Question One: What are the causes of Cultism among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 4: Items on causes of cultism among students

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Broken homes can lead students to cultism.	72	56	32	40

2.	Inadequate funding of the schools to acceptably take care of students' welfare encourage cultism.	28	60	56	56
3.	Students with inborn traits of cultist become cultists.	12	28	96	68
4.	Harsh economic situation in the country encourage cultism.	76	68	20	36
5.	Students indulge in cultism because those caught in cult activities are not prosecuted.	64	40	24	72

Note: From Left to Right: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree), Source: Field Work (2023)

The data on table 4 reveals the causes of cultism among students. From the responses gathered, 72 respondents strongly agreed, with 56 respondents agreeing that broken homes can lead students to cultism. Also, 76 respondents strongly agreed with 68 respondents agreeing that harsh economic condition of the country encourage cultism. Inadequate funding of the schools to cater for students does not directly lead student to cultism. This is so because the total number of respondents that disagreed and strongly disagreed with the statement far surpasses those that agreed and strongly agreed. In the same vein, no student is born with the traits of a cultist or to become cultists.

Research Question Two: What are the influences of cultism on the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 5: Items on effects of cultism on students

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
6.	Destruction of lives and property of students and the schools' properties.	88	64	38	10
7.	There is decline in academic performances of cultists.	100	71	12	17
8.	Cultism could result to arrest, detention and imprisonment of those involved in it.	189	11	-	-
9.	Cultist engage in nefarious activities like armed robbery, prostitution, etc. to meet up with their extravagant lifestyle.	79	88	21	12
10.	Disease like AIDS could spread among cultists to others during initiation by sucking blood during oath taking by cultist.	66	75	35	24

Note: From Left to Right: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree), Source: Field Work (2023)

Table 5 shows the effect of cultism on students. It should be noted that students filling this instruments may not be cultists. But due to the happenings around school environment as a result of cult activities, their responses are tailored in this direction. From the responses gathered from the field, a good number of respondents agreed and strongly agreed that cultism could lead to destruction of lives and property of students and the school property, also it leads to decline in academic performances of cultists.

Cultism could also result to arrest, detention and imprisonment of those involved in it. From the responses gathered, they also agreed and strongly agreed that cultists engage in nefarious activities like armed robbery, prostitution, among others, in order to meet up with their extravagant lifestyle. Another negative effect of cultism is that it could lead to spread of diseases like AIDS as result of their initiation ceremony through blood sucking.

Research Question Three: What ways can Cultism be tackled in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

Table 6: Items on ways cultism can be eliminated among students

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
11.	Regular check on possession of arms by the	116	80	0	4

students should be carried out in schools by the schools' security department.				
12. Students should be properly guided through guidance and counseling which would entail the activeness and alertness of the school counsellors.	92	108	0	0
13. High cost of education in Nigeria should be reduced.	100	96	0	4
14. Parents should monitor their children both in and outside the school and counsel them regularly.	132	64	4	0
15. Churches should have youth department that would give the youths the forum to vent their issues.	128	72	0	0

Note: From Left to Right: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree), Source: Field Work (2023)

Table 6 answered research question 6 on ways cultism can be eliminated among students. From the responses gathered, a good number of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that regular check on possession of arms by the students should be carried out in schools by the schools' security department. It was also agreed and strongly agreed that students should be properly guided through guidance and counselling, and as well parents monitoring their children both in and outside the school and counsel them regularly. Also, a good number of respondents agreed and strongly agreed on ways to eliminate cultism in schools that churches should have an active youth

department which would give youths the forum to vent their issues, among others.

Discussion of Findings

This study focused on investigating the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. The following are therefore the discussion of the findings from the field;

The findings of research question one revealed the causes of cultism among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Some of the causes of cultism as itemized above are broken homes, peer pressure, the quest for power and popularity, economic and financial benefits, the need to seek protection within and outside school, among others. Also, the fear of the unknown which comes in form of intimidation amongst others; can possibly lead to cultism in higher institutions. This finding is in line with the study of various authors who carried similar studies on cultism such as; Paulley (2014) Fageyinbo (2004), Wokacha and Okujugu (1999), Nnajieta and Ahamefula (2015) amongst others. They listed the causes of

cultism, some of which were formulated as research questions for this study as well as the items designed in the questionnaire. All these problems identified needs to be addressed.

Also, research question two findings indicated the influence of cultism on students' academic performance; which are as follows; decline in academic excellence, fear and loss of peace, untimely death, inability to complete education, constantly living a life of fear, etc. These, from the points itemized are effects of cultism affecting students directly. The other point raised on forceful closure of tertiary institutions due to violent activities of cult members, as an effect of cultism happens when cultism is at the highest degree. This would not only affect the cultists themselves, it would affect every other students within the school environment. On the effects of cultism as found under this research question, Eitek (1990) remarks that the menace of secret cult in schools is tantamount to returning man to the state of nature where life is nasty, brutal and short. Also, the finding on the effects of cultism corroborates with that of Itedjere (2006) when he said that academic institutions in Nigeria have been brought under siege and virtually turned upside down by the heart throbbing activities of

student's secret cults. This has even caused forceful closure of most tertiary institutions due to the violent activities perpetuated by cult members. This is a major issue that still calls for attention and intervention.

The data output of research question three proposed strategies eliminating cultism in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. Amongst the points raised, it was suggested that one of the ways by which cultism can be controlled or avoided completed in secondary schools is the timely intervention by the government at all levels. One of the ways by which government can intervene according to Kalu (1995) is in the championing of educational programmes which is engendered at enhancing the lives of learners in educational institutions. In short, majority of the responsibility in curbing cultism in schools as itemized in research question three is laid to rest on the shoulders of the leadership of every nationality, especially in Nigeria as well as the governing council of the tertiary institutions concerned.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was carried out to investigate the influence of cultism on the academic performance of History students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State. In order for the purpose of this study to be achieved, three (3) research questions were raised;

1. What are the causes of Cultism among secondary school students in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?
2. What are the influences of cultism on the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?
3. What ways can Cultism be tackled in secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State?

The sample size for the study was a total number of two hundred (200) students, carefully drawn from five (5) secondary schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State, using the simple random sampling technique.

Conclusion

Based on the findings in this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Threats as a result of cult activities is still heard within some schools (names withheld) in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State.
2. Schools within the area does not give student pep-talks and orientate them on cultism.
3. The Government is not really showing any major concern on the palpable increase of cultism in secondary schools in Edo State because they do not show interest
4. Cult members still go on harassing students and bullying them in secondary schools.

Recommendations

From the findings of this study, the researcher recommends the following;

1. The school security patrol team should be active 24/7 in order to put cult activities to a check.
2. The school should organize periodic orientation and sensitization programmes on cultism and ways to keep safe from the danger of cult activities.

3. The government should show more concern and readiness to intervene in secondary schools, in a bid to combat cultism and bring peace to the school community.

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APPENDIX
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

**RESPONDENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE INFLEUNCE OF
CULTISM ON THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Dear respondent,

The researcher is a student of the above-named Department, Faculty and University. The questionnaire is designed to investigate **“Respondents’ Questionnaire on the Influence of Cultism on the Academic Performance of History Students in Secondary Schools in Oredo Local Government Area of Edo State”**. You are requested to kindly complete the questionnaire as sincerely and objectively as possible. Your response will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Emmanuel OSILAMA

Student Researcher

SECTION A: PERSONAL DATA

INSTRUCTION: Please tick (\checkmark) the answer that best describes your response.

1. **Gender:** Male () Female ()
2. **Age:** 12 – 14 years () 15 – 17 years () 18 years & above ()
3. **Level:** SS 1 () SS 2 () SS 3 ()

SECTION B

INSTRUCTION: *Please kindly tick (\checkmark) the answer that best describes your response*

Key: SA= Strongly Agree, A= Agree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree

S/N	ITEMS	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Broken homes can lead students to cultism.				
2.	Inadequate funding of the university to acceptably take care of students' welfare encourage cultism.				
3.	Students with inborn traits of cultist become cultists.				
4.	Harsh economic situation in the country encourage cultism				
5.	Students indulge in cultism because those caught in cult activities are not prosecuted.				
6.	Destruction of lives and property of students and the university				
7.	There is decline in academic performances of cultists.				
8.	Cultism could result to arrest, detention, and imprisonment of those involved in it.				
9.	Cultist engage in nefarious activities like armed robbery, prostitution etc. to meet up with their extravagant lifestyle				

10.	Diseases like Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome could spread among cultists to others during initiation by sucking blood during oath taking by cultist.				
11.	Regular check on possession of arms by the students should be carried out on campuses by the schools' security department.				
12.	Students should be properly guided through guidance and counseling which would entail the activeness and alertness of the school counsellors.				
13.	High cost of education in Nigeria should be reduced				
14.	Parents should monitor their children both in and outside the school and counsel them regularly.				
15.	Churches should have youth department that would give the youths the forum to vent their issues.				