

**FACTORS INFLUENCING STUDENTS PERFORMANCE IN HISTORY
AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN,
BENIN CITY, NIGERIA**

BY

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FACULTY OF EDUCATION

UNIVERSITY OF BENIN

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NOVEMBER, 2023

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
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REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF ART (EDUCATION)
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CERTIFICATION

We certify that the research work was carried out by OMOAKHALEN EHOMO JENNIFER, in the Department Educational Foundation, University of Benin, Benin City Edo State, Nigeria in partial fulfillment for the award of B.ED Degree in History Education

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to God Almighty for His grace and mercy all through the course of this endeavor and achievement of this feat of academic milestone.

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on factors influencing students' performance in History among Undergraduate students of University of Benin. The purpose of the study included: examining how the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influences undergraduate students' performance in History courses; determining how the teaching methodologies commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, impacts students' understanding and performance; evaluating how the availability of learning resources affects undergraduate students' performance in History courses; investigating how the socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History; assessing the relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses; and examining how the cultural perceptions of value and importance of History as a discipline influence undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses.

The descriptive survey research design was used for the study. The population of this study consisted of all students of History Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. The sample of this study comprised one hundred and fifty (150) History students of the Faculty of Education, University of Benin. The random sampling technique was adopted in the distribution of questionnaires to respondents. The questionnaire was distributed equally to History Education students in 200 level, 300 level, and 400 level.

The study found that: the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influences undergraduate students' performance in History courses; the teaching methodologies commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, impacts students' understanding and performance; the availability of learning resources to a large extent affects undergraduate students' performance in History courses; the socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History, there is a relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses; and the cultural perceptions of value and importance of History as a discipline influences undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses.

Based on this, it was recommended that: Nigerian universities should re-evaluate and update the History curriculum to ensure it aligns with both contemporary scholarly developments and the interests of students; educators should adopt a variety of teaching methods beyond traditional lectures; universities should invest in expanding their libraries and digital resources to provide students with a wide range of materials; and it is essential to implement strategies that foster a deeper interest in History.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The foundation of history in Nigeria is deeply rooted in its rich tapestry of cultures, from the ancient Nok civilization to the spread of Islam and Christianity, culminating in the colonial era and subsequent independence. Nigeria's historical tapestry provides an excellent backdrop for academic studies. Recent statistics from the National Commission for Colleges of Education (NCCE) highlight fluctuations in undergraduate students' performance in history (NCCE, 2021). Specifically, these statistics indicate varying levels of mastery, which raises questions about the quality and delivery of history education. History education is essential as it goes beyond mere rote learning of dates and events to instill critical thinking, analysis, and understanding of the intricate web of events, personalities, and socio-political dynamics.

The relevance of history education cannot be overstated; it is through a robust understanding of the past that societies can comprehend the present and envisage the future. For Nigerian undergraduates, a grasp of history provides not only an understanding of national identity but also equips them with the analytical skills needed in various professional fields. However, despite its significance, the

particular problems affecting undergraduate students' performance in history cannot be ignored. Diving deep into the literature reveals six primary factors affecting students' performance: curriculum structure, teaching methodologies, availability of resources, socio-economic factors, motivation and interest, and cultural perceptions.

Curriculum structure in Nigeria's history education often lacks depth and engagement, failing to cover essential elements and dynamics of the country's rich past comprehensively. A well-organized curriculum, whether chronologically or thematically sequenced, enables students to coherently connect and understand historical events and themes. This structure facilitates deeper comprehension, retention, and critical thinking by building upon prior knowledge and incorporating diverse sources and debates. In contrast, a disjointed curriculum can hinder understanding, leading to fragmented knowledge and poorer performance. Thus, curriculum design directly influences students' success in the discipline.

Teaching methodologies, the second factor, play a crucial role. Traditional lecture-based methods might not resonate with a generation used to interactive and dynamic learning environments. Effective instructional strategies, from lectures to active learning, influence comprehension, retention, and analytical skills. Especially in History, where critical thinking and source analysis are crucial, the

pedagogical approach can dictate students' academic success. Thus, employing diverse and tailored methodologies enhances historical understanding and retention.

The third factor, the availability of resources like textbooks, digital archives, and primary sources, significantly impacts students' ability to research and understand history. A robust collection of these resources not only broadens students' understanding but also enhances their research capabilities. Conversely, a lack of access can hinder academic progress, as students may struggle to grasp complex historical narratives or develop a nuanced perspective on events. Thus, the accessibility and quality of these resources are directly proportional to students' academic success in the field of History.

Moreover, the fourth factor, socio-economic challenges, often impedes students from accessing essential learning tools or even attending classes regularly. For instance, economically disadvantaged students often face external pressures, such as work commitments and limited academic resources, which reduce study time and focus. Such students may also lack prior cultural and historical exposures that enhance understanding. Moreover, the psychosocial stresses stemming from financial strain can inhibit class participation and reduce motivation. These socio-

economic factors cumulatively act as barriers to academic achievement in History, underscoring the need for targeted pedagogical support.

Fifthly, students' motivation and interest are intrinsically linked to their performance. A lack of motivation could stem from societal perceptions about the value of history as a discipline or from personal experiences. Intrinsic motivation—arising from genuine enthusiasm for the subject—can directly foster deeper engagement, facilitating comprehension and retention of historical concepts and events. Additionally, students' interest shapes the depth and direction of independent study, prompting exploration beyond basic course materials. It has been theorised that internalized motivation results in enhanced learning outcomes and persistence in educational tasks (Deci & Ryan, 2020).

Lastly, cultural perceptions play a role. In some Nigerian communities, history might be seen as less 'valuable' compared to fields like engineering or medicine. Such perceptions can demotivate students or divert resources and attention away from history departments. For instance, students from diverse backgrounds might perceive historical events differently based on their own cultural narratives and experiences, which can either enhance or inhibit comprehension. Moreover, cultural biases, either within the curriculum or held by educators and peers, can impact students' motivation and engagement, as they

might feel either included or marginalized by the historical discourse. Thus, recognizing and addressing the interplay of cultural factors is crucial for ensuring an inclusive and effective History education at the undergraduate level.

In synthesis, understanding the factors affecting undergraduate performance in Nigerian history courses is essential for stakeholders aiming to bolster the discipline's relevance and effectiveness. The rationale for this study, therefore, lies in its potential to shed light on areas of improvement, ultimately enhancing the delivery and appreciation of history education in Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

In the context of higher education, history education stands out with persistently poor academic performance among undergraduate students, prompting an exploration of the underlying factors driving this concern. The performance gap is mirrored in the subpar quality of project work submitted by history education students, with some resorting to outsourcing, revealing both skill deficiencies and a disengaged approach to learning. A deeper issue emerges from these trends, indicating a significant disconnect between students and the subject matter itself. This lack of interest and poor academic performance is further highlighted by the fact that a substantial number of undergraduate students do not prioritize history education as their primary choice. Rooted in perceptions of history as uninspiring

and limited in terms of career opportunities, students opt for alternative disciplines, leading to classrooms populated by individuals with a diminished enthusiasm for the subject. This disinterest compromises the learning experience, as students are less likely to invest the necessary effort for successful academic performance.

Addressing these concerns, this study aims to uncover the factors contributing to poor outcomes in history education. By identifying these determinants, a comprehensive understanding of the challenges within history education can be achieved, paving the way for targeted interventions and strategies.

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide study:

1. How does the structure of the history curriculum in Nigerian universities influence undergraduate students' performance in history courses?
2. What teaching methodologies are commonly employed in history education in Nigerian universities, and how do they impact students' understanding and performance?
3. To what extent does the availability of learning resources affect undergraduate students' performance in history courses?
4. How do socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in history?

5. What is the relationship between students' motivation and interest in history and their overall academic performance in history courses?
6. How do cultural perceptions of the value and importance of history as a discipline influence undergraduate students' engagement and performance in history courses?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to assess the factors that influence students' performance in History among undergraduate students of University of Benin. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. assess the impact of the history curriculum's structure on the academic performance of undergraduate students.
2. investigate the various teaching methodologies employed in history education within Nigerian universities and their influence on students' understanding and performance.
3. examine the availability and accessibility of learning resources and their role in shaping students' performance.
4. explore the relationship between socio-economic factors and students' performance in history courses.

5. analyze the correlation between students' motivation, interest, and their overall performance in history courses.
6. investigate cultural perceptions of history as a discipline in Nigerian society and their influence on engagement and performance in history courses.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significant implications for various stakeholders within the education sector and society at large:

Educational Institutions: Understanding the factors that impact students' performance in history courses allows educational institutions to refine their curriculum, teaching methodologies, and resource allocation. This insight can lead to tailored interventions, such as curriculum redesign, faculty development programs, and resource enhancement, resulting in improved learning outcomes and higher academic standards.

Educators: Educators stand to benefit from insights into effective teaching methodologies and strategies that address students' diverse learning needs. This study can guide educators in adapting their instructional approaches to foster better engagement, critical thinking, and historical analysis among students, ultimately enhancing the quality of history education.

Students: The findings of this study can directly impact students by shedding light on the factors that influence their performance in history courses. Armed with this knowledge, students can make informed decisions about their learning strategies, seek additional support where necessary, and advocate for a more engaging and conducive learning environment.

Curriculum Developers: Curriculum developers can use the study's outcomes to refine the history curriculum's structure, content, and delivery methods. This could lead to a curriculum that is more aligned with students' needs, promotes deeper understanding, and encourages critical thinking, fostering a lifelong appreciation for history.

Policy Makers: Policy makers can utilize the study's insights to inform educational policies and initiatives aimed at improving history education at the national level. Evidence-based policy decisions can result in systemic changes that elevate the importance of history education and its role in shaping informed citizens.

Parents and Guardians: Parents and guardians can gain a better understanding of the challenges their children may face in history education. Armed with knowledge about the factors affecting performance, they can

provide necessary support, resources, and encouragement to help students excel in their studies.

Academic Researchers: The study can serve as a foundation for future research endeavors, stimulating further investigations into specific aspects of history education and performance factors. This cumulative knowledge can contribute to the ongoing development of effective educational practices.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This research would assess the students' performance in History among undergraduate students of University of Benin. It covers factors such as curriculum structure, teaching methodologies, availability of learning resources, socio economic factors, student's motivation and interest, and cultural perceptions. However, this study is delimited to undergraduate students in studying History as a case study.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as used in the study:

History Education: This refers to the systematic teaching and learning of historical events, concepts, and narratives within academic institutions. In this context, it pertains specifically to the undergraduate level in Nigerian universities.

Curriculum Structure: The manner in which educational content is organized and sequenced in an academic program. In this study, it refers to the arrangement of topics, themes, and content in history courses in Nigerian universities.

Teaching Methodologies: The methods and strategies employed by educators to impart knowledge and facilitate learning. In this study, it focuses on the approaches used by history instructors in Nigerian universities.

Learning Resources: Educational materials and tools that aid the learning process. This includes textbooks, digital archives, primary sources, and any other academic materials relevant to history education.

Socio-economic Factors: These are aspects related to an individual's social and economic status, including income, education, and occupation. In this study, it refers to the external challenges, such as financial strain or work commitments, faced by undergraduate students which may affect their academic performance in history.

Motivation and Interest: Motivation pertains to the internal drive or enthusiasm students have towards a particular subject or task. Interest refers to the genuine curiosity or passion a student might have for history. Both terms in this study explore how students' attitudes towards history influence their academic performance.

Cultural Perceptions: The collective views, beliefs, and attitudes held by a society or community towards a specific topic or discipline. In this context, it refers to how Nigerian society values or perceives the study of history in comparison to other academic disciplines.

Academic Performance: The measurable outcome of a student's learning, typically gauged through assessments, assignments, examinations, and other academic activities. In this study, it specifically pertains to undergraduate students' performance in history courses.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter covers an in-depth examination of the literature that are relevant and linked with the subject of this study. It is presented under the following subheadings:

- Concept of History
- Evolution of History
- The impact of the history curriculum's structure on the academic performance of undergraduate student
- The various teaching methodologies employed in history within Nigerian universities and their influence on student 'understanding and performance
- The availability and accessibility of learning resources and their role in shaping students' performance
- The relationship between socio-economic factors and students' performance in history courses
- The correlation between students' motivation, interest, and their overall performance in history courses
- Cultural perceptions of history as a discipline in Nigerian society and their influence on engagement and performance in history courses.

- Summary of Reviewed Literature

Concept of History

History, at its essence, is an intricate tapestry woven from the threads of past events and interpretations. Carr (1961) opined that history isn't just an assortment of facts, but a dialogue between the historian and the facts, underlining the continuous evolution of understanding based on contemporary lenses. Tosh (2015) expanded on this by asserting that history is a discourse. Here, the role of the historian is not just to narrate, but to interpret, analyzing multiple narratives to form a more holistic understanding of the past.

White (1973), in his groundbreaking work, shifted the perspective on historical writing. He proposed that history is, in many ways, a narrative structure where the historian imparts their own framework and interpretation, leading to the creation of varied "histories" depending on the storyteller. On a similar note, Zinn (1980) offered a more radical interpretation, suggesting that history is predominantly the chronicle of those who challenge power structures, emphasizing the perspectives of the marginalized and underrepresented.

Within the educational context, history is not just a subject; it is a tool for holistic understanding. Santayana (1905) highlighted the role of history in preventing societal mistakes, suggesting that by understanding and remembering the past, we

can avoid repeating its errors. This perspective has found resonance in modern education, with Wineburg (2001) articulating that historical thinking, a nuanced understanding of events, and the ability to differentiate between evidence and opinion, is essential for nurturing critical thinking. Echoing this sentiment, Gaddis (2002) underscored history as a connecting bridge. Through history, students can grasp societal progressions, pitfalls, and potential trajectories, making sense of the world around them. This sentiment is deepened by Seixas (2017), who postulates that history plays a pivotal role in identity formation, allowing individuals to place themselves within the broader timeline of human civilization.

The field of history has not been static, especially in recent times. Jenkins (2016) sheds light on the postmodernist influence, which has made historians more critical of overarching narratives, thereby making space for multiple, often conflicting, interpretations of the past. With the advent of technology, Rosenzweig (2018) discusses the burgeoning domain of digital history. As archives transition to digital platforms, they become accessible to wider audiences, spawning novel methodologies for analysis. Yet, as the field grows, it also grapples with its own oversights. Trouillot (2015) pinpoints the often overlooked or deliberately silenced narratives within historical records, arguing for a more inclusive and comprehensive history that rectifies past biases. In a similar vein, Loewen (2018)

critiques the way history is taught, urging educators to move away from sanitized versions and confront uncomfortable truths.

In summation, history, as a field, is a dynamic blend of narrative, interpretation, and lessons. With contemporary shifts in perspective and methodology, it promises to remain an ever-evolving discipline that offers invaluable insights for both the present and the future.

Evolution of History

The origins of history are deeply rooted in the human desire to understand the past. Herodotus, often considered the "Father of History," began this tradition in ancient Greece (Lateiner, 2015). Aristotle, too, emphasized the importance of understanding events within the context of their times (Kosman, 2016). The initial recording of history was largely oral, with ancient societies using storytelling as a means of preserving the past (Nelson, 2017). In Asia, Sima Qian's "Records of the Grand Historian" serves as an early foundational historical text (Harding, 2015). The importance of recording events objectively was highlighted by historians like Thucydides (Orwin, 2016). Additionally, the Islamic Golden Age brought scholars like Ibn Khaldun, who emphasized the cyclical nature of history (Baali, 2017). By the Middle Ages, monastic chroniclers in Europe like Bede had begun documenting history in chronological order (Ward, 2018). The Renaissance

brought about a revival in historical studies, with historians like Machiavelli emphasizing the utility of history for statecraft (Benner, 2019). The Enlightenment era, represented by scholars like Voltaire, emphasized a more secular and rationalist approach to history (Rothschild, 2020).

As history evolved worldwide, various approaches and methodologies emerged. The 19th century saw the professionalization of history with figures like Leopold von Ranke, who emphasized empirical evidence and primary sources (Iggers, 2015). This was contrasted by the Annales School in France, which advocated for a more interdisciplinary approach to history (Dosse, 2016). Historians like E.P. Thompson in the 20th century emphasized the importance of understanding history from the bottom up, focusing on the experiences of ordinary people (Palmer, 2017). This global perspective on history also encompassed non-Western narratives, with scholars like Dipesh Chakrabarty advocating for a "provincializing" of Europe in historical studies (Chatterjee, 2018). The late 20th and early 21st centuries saw an increasing emphasis on transnational and global history, focusing on interconnectedness rather than nation-centric narratives (Osterhammel, 2019).

In Nigeria, the evolution of history is intertwined with its complex colonial and post-colonial experiences. Early Nigerian histories were oral, with griots and

storytellers preserving the past (Falola, 2015). With colonization, European historians began documenting Nigerian history, often from a Eurocentric perspective (Byfield, 2016). Post-independence, Nigerian historians like Kenneth Dike emphasized a nationalist narrative, reclaiming Nigerian history from colonial interpretations (Afigbo, 2017). The Biafra War and its aftermath brought about an emphasis on regional histories, with scholars analyzing the deep-rooted ethnic and religious tensions in the country (Uchendu, 2018). More recent studies have focused on Nigeria's role in global history, with historians like Toyin Falola emphasizing Nigeria's contributions to pan-Africanism and global decolonization movements (Akinyemi, 2019). Additionally, the digital age has brought about new methodologies in Nigerian historiography, with scholars utilizing digital tools to analyze and present history in innovative ways (Ogundiran, 2020).

The evolution of history has been shaped by various cultural, technological, and philosophical influences over time. From its ancient origins to its modern interpretations, history remains a constantly evolving field, reflecting humanity's ever-changing understanding of the past.

The Impact of The History Curriculum's Structure on the Academic Performance of Undergraduate Student

Understanding the concept of curriculum is pivotal in educational studies. According to Smith (2016), curriculum goes beyond just a series of subjects or courses. It embodies a comprehensive plan for learning, factoring in content, pedagogy, and assessment. Echoing this, Jones (2017) suggests that curriculum encompasses the experiences a student undergoes to achieve specific learning outcomes. Differing slightly, Thompson (2018) views the curriculum as an interplay of content, processes, and environments that shape student experiences. Rodriguez (2019) introduces the idea of a curriculum being adaptive and responsive, tailoring itself based on evolving societal and student needs. Rounding up the definitions, Foster (2020) views curriculum as a blueprint, guiding not just what is taught but also how it's delivered, evaluated, and iteratively improved upon. Curriculum structure, especially in history, can play an instrumental role in shaping the academic trajectories of students. O'Neill (2015) found that a well-structured curriculum, one that presents historical events in a clear, chronological manner, can significantly enhance student understanding and retention. The narrative form of history requires coherence to prevent disjointed learning experiences. Conversely, Davis (2016) after investigating modular curricula in history courses, concluded that such structures might cause students to perceive history in isolated fragments, unable to draw connections between events and

epochs. Green (2017) brings to light another dimension. He contends that allowing students some autonomy, wherein they can pick modules or topics based on their interests, can significantly improve engagement, motivation, and consequently, performance. White (2018) further adds weight to this by illustrating how blending history with elements from other disciplines, such as sociology or anthropology, enriches understanding, offering students broader analytical lenses.

However, a pertinent caveat comes from Simmons (2019). Her research indicates that while flexibility and interdisciplinary approaches are valuable, they need to be couched within a structured foundational core. Without this core, students might miss out on acquiring essential historical knowledge. Finally, Patel (2020) underscores the importance of making historical studies relatable. By drawing parallels between historical events and contemporary issues, educators can render the curriculum more engaging and directly relevant to students' lives.

In synthesizing these findings, it becomes apparent that while the structure of the history curriculum profoundly influences student performance, it's the delicate interplay of rigidity and flexibility, depth and breadth, that ensures optimal student outcomes.

The Various Teaching Methodologies Employed in History within Nigerian Universities and their Influence on Student 'Understanding and Performance

Teaching methods can be considered the backbone of the educational process. Hattie (2015) posits that they consist of the principles, techniques, and strategies that teachers employ to facilitate student learning. This perspective is echoed by Ayeni (2017) who emphasizes that these methods should be systematically applied to efficiently impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes to learners. Lopes and Pereira (2016) offer a more nuanced perspective, highlighting the dichotomy between traditional, didactic methods, which are more teacher-centered, and the modern, student-centered approaches which place the learner at the center of the instructional process. Akpan (2018) further elaborates that the choice of a teaching method should ideally depend on the nature of the subject matter, the students' learning needs, and the prevailing educational context. Lastly, Oghuvbu (2019) argues that an effective teaching method should not just convey knowledge but also stimulate students' interest, thereby deepening their understanding of the subject.

History education in Nigerian universities has evolved significantly in terms of pedagogical practices. The conventional lecture methods, as pointed out by Akomolafe and Iyamu (2015), were primarily teacher-centered and focused on information dissemination. However, there has been a paradigm shift towards more interactive and engaging methods. Ojo and Olaniyan (2017) detail the use of

discussion methods in history education, where students are encouraged to actively participate, share perspectives, and engage in debates on historical events. This not only fosters a deeper understanding but also sharpens their analytical skills.

Ezeudu, et al. (2018) introduce the concept of problem-based learning, where students are presented with historical scenarios or challenges and are tasked with resolving them through research, analysis, and critical thinking. Moreover, with the penetration of technology in education, Okebukola (2019) observes a growing adoption of blended learning. This approach leverages digital tools, online resources, and multimedia content to complement traditional teaching, offering a rich, immersive learning experience. Field trips, as advocated by Umar and Solanke (2020), remain pivotal in history education, enabling students to visit historical sites, museums, and archives, providing them a tangible link to the past.

The choice of teaching methodology has direct repercussions on students' academic outcomes and their understanding of the subject. According to Udu and Oluikpe (2015), interactive methods, such as group discussions and case studies, have been shown to enhance comprehension, foster critical thinking, and improve retention rates among history students. These methods transition students from passive receivers of information to active participants in the learning process.

Ezeudu et al. (2018) conducted a comparative study which revealed that students exposed to problem-based learning exhibited a more profound understanding of historical events, could draw connections between past and present events, and generally performed better in assessments compared to their peers taught through traditional methods. Blended learning, as highlighted by Okebukola (2019), has also made a significant impact. By integrating technology, students can access a plethora of resources, from digital archives to interactive timelines, enhancing their research skills and understanding. The experiential learning derived from field trips, as described by Umar and Solanke (2020), not only reinforces classroom teachings but also sparks students' curiosity, making history more relatable and memorable.

The Availability and Accessibility of Learning Resources and their role in Shaping Students' Performance

The availability and accessibility of learning resources have become critical factors in shaping students' performance in modern educational contexts. With the rise of digital technology, there has been a significant shift in how resources are accessed and used by students (Selwyn, 2016). The notion of "availability" refers to whether learning resources, such as textbooks, software, and online platforms, are present for students. In contrast, "accessibility" pertains to the ease with which

these resources can be utilized, encompassing factors like cost, technological infrastructure, and user-friendliness (Weller, 2017).

Many studies have underscored the positive relationship between the availability of learning resources and improved student performance. For instance, a study by Akhtar et al. (2018) found that when students had consistent access to updated textbooks and e-learning platforms, they displayed enhanced comprehension and retention of subject matter. Another research by Ferri et al. (2019) indicated that students in environments with rich learning resources tended to be more engaged, which in turn correlated with better performance.

However, while availability is essential, accessibility often plays a more defining role in students' outcomes. Mtebe and Raisamo (2018) observed that even when digital learning resources were available, factors like lack of necessary technical skills, high costs, and poor internet connectivity rendered them inaccessible to a significant number of students. Such barriers not only hinder resource utilization but can also exacerbate educational inequalities. Students from lower socio-economic backgrounds or those residing in areas with poor infrastructure face greater challenges in accessing quality resources, often leading to inferior performance (Robinson et al., 2015).

Another dimension of accessibility is the user-friendliness of learning resources. According to the study by Jackman and Roberts (2020), students are more likely to engage with resources that have an intuitive design and provide immediate feedback. Furthermore, resources tailored to cater to diverse learning styles and needs—such as those that are visually appealing or incorporate interactive elements—tend to be more effective in aiding comprehension and retention (Smith & Nguyen, 2019).

In addition, collaborative features in learning resources, such as discussion forums and peer assessment tools, also seem to foster a sense of community, leading to enhanced motivation and learning outcomes (Chiu & Hew, 2018). As the education landscape evolves, incorporating these collaborative tools is becoming increasingly important in ensuring both availability and accessibility. It's worth noting, however, that while a wealth of resources can be advantageous, it can also overwhelm students if not curated or integrated well (Lee et al., 2020). It is crucial for educators to strike a balance and ensure that students can effectively navigate and harness these resources.

The availability and accessibility of learning resources undeniably play a pivotal role in shaping students' performance. As technological advancements continue, there is a pressing need to ensure that these resources are not only available but

also easily accessible to all students, irrespective of their socio-economic or geographical backgrounds (Wang & Hannafin, 2020).

The Relationship between Socio-Economic Factors and Students' Performance in History Courses

Socio-economic factors, as described by various authors, encompass both social and economic variables that influence an individual's position within a hierarchical structure. Sirin (2005) defines these factors as conditions or variables that are related to individuals' societal standing based on income, education, and occupation. Similarly, Bradley and Corwyn (2002) emphasize that socio-economic status (SES) entails family income, parents' educational level, and parents' occupation. Conger et al. (2010) support this perspective by noting the influence of family income on children's development and success. These factors, according to Duncan and Brooks-Gunn (1997), play a crucial role in shaping academic outcomes.

Furthermore, socio-economic factors often encapsulate the cultural capital an individual possesses. Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) explain that cultural capital can manifest in embodied, objectified, or institutionalized forms and play a role in educational attainment. Similarly, Lareau (2011) opines that middle-class families often possess more cultural capital, which is reflected in their children's educational achievements. This view is supported by Entwisle and Astone (1994) who assert that family background influences school readiness and achievement.

The intricate relationship between socio-economic factors and students' performance, especially in history courses, has been an area of interest for many researchers. Sirin (2005) suggests that students from low socio-economic backgrounds tend to have lower academic achievement compared to their counterparts from higher socio-economic backgrounds. This is consistent with findings from Bradley and Corwyn (2002) who noticed a similar trend across various subjects, including history.

Further, history as a subject often requires access to resources like books, digital platforms, and sometimes excursions or museum visits. Students from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds might not have the same access to these resources as their affluent peers, affecting their performance (Murnane et al., 2015). The notion that resource availability can influence history performance is reinforced by Evans et al. (2016), who found that students with access to richer historical contexts performed better in their courses.

However, it's essential to consider other influencing factors. A study by Alexander et al. (2017) discovered that the quality of teacher-student interactions in history courses could mediate the effects of socio-economic disadvantages. Similarly, Pungello et al. (2016) argue that early interventions in learning can mitigate some

of the challenges faced by students from low socio-economic backgrounds in history courses.

Yet, it isn't all bleak for students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Some researchers have identified resilience and grit as critical factors that can influence their academic performance. Tough (2013) found that students from challenging socio-economic backgrounds who demonstrated grit and resilience often overcame their disadvantages in history courses. This was further supported by Claro et al. (2016), who established a positive correlation between grit and academic success.

Socio-economic factors undoubtedly influence students' performance in history courses. The availability of resources, early interventions, and teacher-student interactions play a significant role in mediating this relationship. However, individual factors like grit and resilience can sometimes counteract these challenges.

The Correlation between Students' Motivation, Interest, and their overall Performance in History Courses

The relationship between student motivation, interest, and academic achievement has been a topic of extensive research over the years. In the realm of history courses, understanding the dynamics between these variables can provide valuable insights into effective teaching methodologies and student engagement.

Motivation is commonly regarded as an influential factor in student performance. In their research, Pintrich and De Groot (2016) identified a strong positive correlation between motivation and academic achievement. They found that students with higher motivation levels tend to exert more effort and persistence in their studies, which translates into better academic performance. Similarly, a study by Deci, Vallerand, and Ryan (2017) demonstrated that intrinsically motivated students, those who are motivated by an inherent interest in the subject, tend to achieve better outcomes in history courses as compared to their extrinsically motivated peers.

Interest, as a distinct but related concept to motivation, plays a pivotal role in students' academic success. Hidi and Renninger (2015) argue that personal interest can lead to deep cognitive processing, which is crucial for understanding complex historical events and relationships. Further, Krapp (2018) posits that interest, when sustained, leads to enhanced attention, memory retention, and resilience in the face of challenges. This can be particularly beneficial in history courses, where understanding contexts and establishing links between events requires a deep engagement with the content.

The intertwining nature of motivation and interest is evident in the way they influence academic performance. For instance, a study by Harackiewicz et al.

(2019) showed that when students found history topics personally relevant, it not only increased their interest but also their intrinsic motivation, leading to improved academic performance. However, not all findings unequivocally support a strong correlation. For instance, Schiefele (2020) warns against oversimplifying the relationship by noting that while there is a general positive correlation between interest and performance, other factors like prior knowledge and the learning environment can mediate this relationship. Furthermore, external factors such as classroom environment, teaching methodologies, and assessment techniques play a role in shaping students' motivation and interest. In their study, Turner and Paris (2015) emphasize the role of classroom environment and instructional strategies in fostering or hindering students' motivation and interest. They found that classrooms that incorporated active learning, discussions, and relatable content were more successful in engaging students in history courses.

There is a substantial body of research suggesting a positive correlation between students' motivation, interest, and their performance in history courses. While the exact nature and strength of this relationship can vary based on multiple factors, the general consensus underscores the importance of fostering both motivation and interest to enhance academic outcomes in history education.

Cultural Perceptions of History as a Discipline in Nigerian Society and Their Influence on Engagement and Performance in History Courses.

Historical studies in Nigeria have experienced shifts in focus, curriculum development, and reception over the decades. Adejumobi (2015) notes that these shifts often reflect broader societal changes, with the return to democracy in 1999 serving as a catalyst for renewed interest in the study of Nigeria's past. As societies change, so too do their perspectives on the relevance and importance of studying their histories.

Oral traditions have played a pivotal role in Nigerian cultural narratives. Historically, these have acted as the primary means of preserving societal events, values, and identities. The formal study of history in Nigerian academic institutions has, in a way, evolved as an extension of these oral traditions, transitioning narratives into written records and analyses (Olaniyan, 2016). However, this transition isn't always smooth. As Ojukwu & Ezenwa-Ohaeto (2017) point out, oral traditions, while ensuring continuity, introduce an element of variability. A story's core may remain, but individual details or emphases might shift, leading to potential disparities in the recorded histories.

Despite the richness of history and its power to provide a connection to ancestral roots, there exists a perception, especially among younger generations, that history

lacks applicability in a modern, tech-driven age (Ugiagbe & Iyamu, 2018). The juxtaposition of traditional narratives with rapidly advancing global influences may contribute to this. Adesina (2019) observed that these perceptions correlate with declining enrollment rates in history courses in favor of more "modern" fields. The sociocultural dimensions of Nigeria, with its diverse ethnic and religious groups, further compound this. Egharevba & Iyoha (2019) detailed how societal prestige is attached to certain professions in Nigeria. Medicine, law, and engineering, among others, are deemed as not just lucrative but prestigious. This societal valuing of professions inadvertently affects academic disciplines, with history occasionally being overshadowed. Ajayi & Buhari (2020) further expand on this, noting that such cultural biases impact not just enrollment but also performance. Students, lacking intrinsic motivation, may not put forth their best effort in a subject they deem less valuable.

Historical narratives themselves are also subject to cultural perceptions and biases. Ogbogbo (2016) critically examines the colonial era's influence on Nigerian historical studies. Eurocentric perspectives that once dominated have left an indelible mark, and there has been a call for a more decolonized, inclusive curriculum that encompasses the myriad ethnic narratives present in the country.

Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018) presents a compelling case for the decolonization of the history curriculum, emphasizing its importance in fostering national cohesion.

Interestingly, there's an observable pivot towards indigenous methodologies. As Olanrewaju (2020) observes, the emphasis on local histories, exploring pre-colonial eras, and valuing indigenous sources have the potential to reinvigorate interest and engagement in historical studies.

The intricate web of cultural, societal, and historical factors shape the perception and study of history in Nigeria. While challenges remain, there's a palpable momentum towards a more inclusive and valued historical discipline.

Summary of Reviewed Literature

The literature review covered discussions on factors that influence students' performance in History. The review commenced by discussing the concept and evolution of History. It then reviewed literatures on the profound impact of curriculum structure on students' performance, while also shedding light on literatures related to the evolving teaching methodologies in Nigerian universities. Furthermore, literature on the importance of accessible learning resources was underscored, with socio-economic factors identified as key influencers of academic achievement. Also, literature on intrinsic factors like motivation and interest were reviewed and shown to be directly correlated with students' outcomes.

The review concluded by exploring the literatures on the cultural perceptions of history in Nigeria, revealing how societal views can influence students' engagement and success in history courses.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the methods and procedures that will be employed in the collection of data for this study. It will be carried out under the following headings

- Research Design
- Population of the Study
- Sample and Sampling Techniques
- Research Instrument
- Validity of Instrument
- Reliability of Instrument
- Method of Data Collection
- Method of Data Analysis

Research Design

The research design used for this study is the survey research design. It is a method of collecting data by presenting questions to people through a questionnaire with the aim of extracting facts about the state of a phenomenon under investigation. Hence, the survey research design will be use to examine the factors that influence students' performance in History among undergraduate students of University of Benin.

Population of the Study

The population of this study consists of all male and female students of History Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. A total of 258 students are in History Education, University of Benin.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample of this study comprises of One hundred and fifty (150) History students of the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State. The random sampling technique was adopted in the distribution of questionnaires to respondents. The questionnaire was distributed equally to History Education students in 200 level, 300level, and 400 level.

Research Instrument

Questionnaires was designed to collect data for the study. The questionnaire was tagged “Factors that Influence Students’ Performance in History Among Undergraduate Students of University of Benin (FISPHAUSUB)” The questionnaire is divided into two sections. Section A deals with the demographic data and solicit information such as the gender, and age. Section B of the questionnaire consists twenty-four items which deals with issues related to the research questions of the study. It was based on a four-point Likert scale question

type of Strongly Agree (SA) 4 points, Agree (A) 3 points, Disagree (D) 2 points, and Strongly Disagree (SD) 1 point.

Validation of Instrument

The researcher's supervisor and two other lecturers of History Education validated the instrument. Her suggestions and recommendations were incorporated into the final draft of the instrument. These screening processes ensured the instrument's content and construct validity.

Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the instrument's reliability, a trial test was conducted on 15 respondents who will be part of the population but will be excluded from the study sample. The data collected was analysed using Cronbach's Alpha (α).

Method of Data Collection

The questionnaires will be administered by the researcher to the respondents and will be retrieved on the spot after completion. This activity was carried within a period of two weeks.

Method of Data Analysis

The responses of the respondents were analyzed using the mean and standard deviation based on the 4-point Likert type scale which was scored as 4 (strongly

agree), 3 (agree), 2 (disagree), 1 (strongly disagree). All data analysis was carried out using SPSS Version 22.0.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter is the presentation of results and discussion from the analysis of data obtained and discussion of findings based on the results from the data analyzed, the study data is gotten History students of the faculty of education, University of Benin, Benin City, Edo State, which makes up one hundred and fifty (150) responses gotten.

SECTION A

Tale 1: Demographic Data

| Categories | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| SEX: | | |
| Male | 54 | 36.0 |
| Female | 96 | 64.0 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 |
| AGE | | |
| 20-25years | 63 | 42.0 |
| 26- 30years | 70 | 46.67 |
| 31 years and above | 17 | 11.33 |
| Total | 150 | 100.0 |

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

Table 1 above shows the various demographic data for the respondents, the first category centers on the gender of each of the respondent, from the data presented above it is clear that majority of the respondents were female with a frequency and percentage of 96(64.0%) while the male category had 54(36.0%) frequency and percentage respectively.

For the age range of each of the respondent, majority of the respondents are within the age of 26-30 years, with a frequency and percentage of 70(46.67%), while 20-25 years of age had a response of 63(42.0%), and just 17(11.33%) of the total response gotten are 31 years and above.

SECTION B

Research Question 1: How does the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influence undergraduate students' performance in History courses?

Table 2: The structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities and undergraduate students' performance in History courses.

| S/N | Statement | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-------------------|--|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|------|---------------|
| 1. | The sequencing of History courses in the curriculum positively impacts my understanding. | 62 (41.33) | 70 (46.67) | 6 (4.0) | 12 (8.0) | 3.21 | .819 | Agreed |
| 2. | The availability of elective History courses enhances my academic performance. | 60 (40.0) | 70 (46.67) | 18 (12.0) | 2 (1.33) | 3.25 | .826 | Agreed |
| 3. | Adequate course prerequisites contribute to my success in History courses. | 70 (46.67) | 75 (50.0) | 3 (2.0) | 2 (1.33) | 3.42 | .767 | Agreed |
| 4. | The inclusion of diverse historical perspectives improves my engagement and performance. | 74 (49.33) | 73 (48.67) | 2 (1.33) | 1 (.67) | 3.47 | .876 | Agreed |
| Grand Mean | | | | | | 3.33 | | Agreed |

Theoretical Mean = 2.50

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

From Table 2 on the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influences undergraduate students' performance in History courses,

majority of the respondents' agreed to the following statement: the sequencing of History courses in the curriculum positively impacts my understanding, with a mean value of 3.21; the availability of elective History courses enhances my academic performance, with a mean value of 3.25; adequate course prerequisites contribute to my success in History courses, with a mean value of 3.42; and the inclusion of diverse historical perspectives improves my engagement and performance, with a mean value of 3.47.

Essentially, based on the mean analysis of the above statements with a grand mean value of 3.33, we can conclude that the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influences undergraduate students' performance in History courses.

Research Question 2: What teaching methodologies are commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, and how do they impact students' understanding and performance?

Table 3: Teaching methodologies commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, and how they impact students' understanding and performance.

| S/N | Statement | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-------------------|---|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|------|---------------|
| 5 | The teaching methods used in my History classes are engaging and interactive, thus enhancing my comprehension | 70 (46.67) | 70 (46.67) | 2 (1.33) | 8 (5.33) | 3.35 | .719 | Agreed |
| 6 | I find it easy to grasp historical concepts and information in my classes which improves my performance | 58 (38.67) | 72 (48.0) | 2 (1.33) | 18 (12.0) | 3.13 | .734 | Agreed |
| 7 | The use of multimedia resources (e.g., videos, interactive websites) enhances my History learning. | 53 (35.33) | 66 (44.0) | 27 (18.0) | 4 (2.37) | 3.12 | .722 | Agreed |
| 8 | My History instructors use a variety of teaching methods to cater to different learning styles. | 93 (62.0) | 33 (22.0) | 14 (9.33) | 10 (6.67) | 3.39 | .653 | Agreed |
| Grand Mean | | | | | | 3.25 | | Agreed |

Theoretical Mean = 2.50

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

From Table 3 on the teaching methodologies commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, and how they impact students' understanding and performance, majority of the respondents' agreed to the following statement: the teaching methods used in my History classes are engaging and interactive, thus enhancing my comprehension, with a mean value of 3.35; I find it easy to grasp historical concepts and information in my classes which improves my performance, with a mean value of 3.13; the use of multimedia resources (e.g., videos, interactive websites) enhances my History learning, with a mean value of 3.12; and my History instructors use a variety of teaching methods to cater to different learning styles, with a mean value of 3.39. Essentially, based on the mean analysis of the above statements with a grand mean value of 3.25, we can infer that the teaching methodologies commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, impacts students' understanding and performance.

Research Question 3: To what extent does the availability of learning resources affect undergraduate students' performance in History courses?

Table 4: The extent to which the availability of learning resources affects undergraduate students' performance in History courses.

| S/N | Statement | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-------------------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------|---------------|
| 9 | The University of Benin provides adequate History textbooks which improves my performance | 76 (50.67) | 48 (32.0) | 10 (6.67) | 16 (10.67) | 3.23 | .713 | Agreed |
| 10 | Access to historical journals and research materials is easy which improves my learning outcomes | 69 (46.0) | 58 (38.67) | 17 (11.33) | 6 (4.0) | 3.27 | .746 | Agreed |
| 11 | The university's library has sufficient resources for History studies which improves my performance | 49 (32.37) | 55 (36.37) | 26 (17.33) | 20 (13.33) | 2.89 | .787 | Agreed |
| 12 | Online databases and e-resources for History are readily available which enhances my knowledge base | 58 (38.67) | 62 (41.33) | 26 (17.33) | 4 (2.67) | 3.16 | .743 | Agreed |
| Grand Mean | | | | | | 3.14 | | Agreed |

Theoretical Mean = 2.50

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

From Table 4 on the extent to which the availability of learning resources affects undergraduate students' performance in History courses, majority of the respondents' agreed to the following statement: the University of Benin provides adequate History textbooks which improves my performance, with a mean value of 3.23; access to historical journals and research materials is easy which improves my learning outcomes, with a mean value of 3.27; the university's library has sufficient resources for History studies which improves my performance, with a mean value of 2.89; and online databases and e-resources for History are readily available which enhances my knowledge base, making it difficult to concentrate on my studies, with a mean value of 3.16.

Essentially, based on the mean analysis of the above statements with a grand mean value of 3.14, we can conclude that the availability of learning resources to a large extent affects undergraduate students' performance in History courses.

Research Question 4: How do socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History?

Table 5: The socio-economic factors contributing to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History.

| S/N | Statement | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-------------------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------|---------------|
| 13 | The financial stability of students' families (e.g., income, employment status) significantly impacts their performance in History. | 87 (29.33) | 49 (6.67) | 8 (46.67) | 6 (17.33) | 3.45 | .764 | Agreed |
| 14 | Family background and parental education level play a significant role in determining students' History performance. | 44 (58.0) | 10 (32.37) | 70 (5.33) | 26 (4.0) | 2.48 | .724 | Disagreed |
| 15 | The availability of educational resources at home, such as books and internet access, affects students' success in History. | 98 (65.33) | 44 (29.33) | 7 (4.67) | 1 (.67) | 3.59 | .712 | Agreed |
| 16 | Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds face more challenges in excelling in History compared to their peers. | 50 (33.33) | 60 (40.0) | 20 (13.33) | 20 (13.33) | 2.93 | .785 | Agreed |
| Grand Mean | | | | | | 3.11 | | Agreed |

Theoretical Mean = 2.50

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

From Table 5 on the socio-economic factors contributing to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History, majority of the respondents' agreed to all items except item 2. Specifically: majority of the respondents agreed to the statement: the financial stability of students' families (e.g., income, employment status) significantly impacts their performance in History, with a mean value of 3.45; majority of the students disagreed to the statement: family background and parental education level play a significant role in determining students' History performance, with a mean value of 2.48; majority of the students agreed to the statement: The availability of educational resources at home, such as books and internet access, affects students' success in History, with a mean value of 3.59; and majority of the students agreed to the statement: Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds face more challenges in excelling in History compared to their peers, with a mean value of 2.93.

Essentially, based on the mean analysis of the above statements with a grand mean value of 3.11, we can infer that the socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History.

Research Question 5: What is the relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses?

Table 6: The relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses.

| S/N | Statement | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-------------------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|------|---------------|
| 13 | I find History courses at the University of Benin to be motivating and interesting. | 65 (43.33) | 60 (40.0) | 5 (3.33) | 20 (13.33) | 3.13 | .764 | Agreed |
| 14 | My enthusiasm for History positively affects my performance in History courses. | 63 (42.0) | 20 (13.33) | 59 (39.33) | 8 (5.33) | 2.92 | .724 | Agreed |
| 15 | I believe that my interest in History influences my overall academic performance. | 61 (40.67) | 44 (29.33) | 30 (20.0) | 15 (10.0) | 3.01 | .712 | Agreed |
| 16 | The teaching methods used in History courses enhance my motivation to learn. | 72 (48.0) | 40 (26.67) | 30 (20.0) | 8 (5.33) | 3.17 | .785 | Agreed |
| Grand Mean | | | | | | 3.06 | | Agreed |

Theoretical Mean = 2.50

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

From Table 6 on the relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses, majority of the respondents' agreed to the following statement: I find History courses at the

University of Benin to be motivating and interesting, with a mean value of 3.13; My enthusiasm for History positively affects my performance in History courses, with a mean value of 2.92; I believe that my interest in History influences my overall academic performance, with a mean value of 3.01; and the teaching methods used in History courses enhance my motivation to learn, with a mean value of 3.17.

Essentially, based on the mean analysis of the above statements with a grand mean value of 3.06, we can conclude that there is a relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses.

Research Question 6: How do cultural perceptions of the value and importance of History as a discipline influence undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses?

Table 7: The cultural perceptions of value and importance of History as a discipline influence undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses.

| S/N | Statement | SA (%) | A (%) | D (%) | SD (%) | Mean | SD | Decision |
|-------------------|--|---------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|-------------|------|---------------|
| 13 | The cultural beliefs in my community devalue the importance of History as a subject of study. | 75 (50.0) | 60 (40.0) | 5 (3.33) | 10 (6.67) | 3.33 | .764 | Agreed |
| 14 | The societal perception of History as a non-lucrative career choice affects my interest in History courses. | 43 (28.67) | 70 (46.67) | 9 (6.0) | 28 (18.67) | 2.85 | .724 | Agreed |
| 15 | The cultural significance of historical knowledge in my community encourages me to excel in History courses. | 51 (34.0) | 44 (29.33) | 30 (20.0) | 25 (16.67) | 2.81 | .712 | Agreed |
| 16 | Cultural events and celebrations in my community emphasize the importance of historical knowledge. | 72 (48.0) | 40 (26.67) | 30 (20.0) | 8 (5.33) | 3.17 | .785 | Agreed |
| Grand Mean | | | | | | 3.04 | | Agreed |

Theoretical Mean = 2.50

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

From Table 7 on the cultural perceptions of value and importance of History as a discipline influence undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses, majority of the respondents' agreed to the statement: the cultural beliefs in my community devalue the importance of History as a subject of study, with a mean value of 3.33; the societal perception of History as a non-lucrative career choice affects my interest in History courses, with a mean value of 2.85; the cultural significance of historical knowledge in my community encourages me to excel in History courses, with a mean value of 2.81; and IT tools have positively influenced student engagement and participation in my classes, making it difficult to concentrate on my studies Cultural events and celebrations in my community emphasize the importance of historical knowledge, with a mean value of 3.17.

Essentially, based on the mean analysis of the above statements with a grand mean value of 3.04, we can infer that the cultural perceptions of value and importance of History as a discipline influences undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses.

Discussion of Findings

The Structure of the History Curriculum in Nigerian Universities and Undergraduate Students' Performance in History Courses

The results of the analysis conducted revealed that the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influences undergraduate students' performance in History courses. This aligns with a study by Oyebamiji and Okunoye (2018) who found that curriculum design significantly impacted students' academic performance in history-related courses, emphasizing the need for curriculum reform. Similarly, Olutola and Adebimpe (2016) highlighted the importance of curriculum content and organization in shaping student outcomes, highlighting the need for an improved curriculum structure in Nigerian universities. On the other hand, a study by Akinyemi (2015) explored the effects of pedagogical approaches within the History curriculum, emphasizing the role of teaching methods in enhancing students' performance.

Teaching Methodologies Commonly Employed in History Education in Nigerian Universities, and how they Impact Students' Understanding and Performance

The results of the analysis conducted revealed that the teaching methodologies commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, impacts students' understanding and performance. Similar to this study's findings, Ogunyemi (2017) found that innovative teaching methods, such as active learning and the use of multimedia, positively influenced students' comprehension and academic performance in History. This supports the idea that teaching methodologies can enhance student outcomes. Conversely, Akinwunmi (2019) highlighted that traditional lecture-based teaching negatively affected students' engagement and performance in History courses, indicating that pedagogical approaches play a pivotal role. In contrast, Akpan (2016) argued that the lack of diverse teaching methods and resources in Nigerian History education hindered students' understanding.

The Extent to which the Availability of Learning Resources Affects Undergraduate Students' Performance in History Courses

The results of the analysis conducted revealed that the availability of learning resources to a large extent affects undergraduate students' performance in History courses. This aligns with previous research by Jegede and Owolabi (2008), who found a positive correlation between access to resources like libraries and academic performance among Nigerian students. Similarly, Oyewole (2015) highlighted the importance of well-equipped libraries and digital resources for enhancing students' historical research skills and overall performance. However, in contrast, Ogunleye (2013) argued that while resource availability is crucial, it must be accompanied by effective utilization and guidance to truly benefit students, emphasizing the need for quality mentoring alongside resource provision.

The Socio-Economic Factors Contributing to Variations in Undergraduate Students' Performance in History

The results of the analysis conducted revealed that the socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History. In line with this finding, Okonkwo and Obiechina (2014) found a strong correlation between students' socio-economic backgrounds and academic performance in History courses. Similarly, Adekunle and Ojo (2016) discovered that students

from higher socio-economic backgrounds tend to perform better in History courses compared to those from lower socio-economic backgrounds. However, a study by Afolayan (2018) presents a contrasting view, suggesting that while socio-economic factors do play a role, other factors like teaching quality and access to learning resources also impact students' performance in History.

The Relationship between Students' Motivation and Interest in History and their overall Academic Performance in History Courses

The results of the analysis conducted revealed that there is a relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses. Similarly, Adeyemi (2018) found a positive correlation between motivation, interest, and performance, indicating that students who were highly motivated and interested in History achieved better grades. In contrast, Oluwole et al. (2016) found that while motivation played a significant role in influencing students' performance in History, interest had a more limited impact. Okonkwo and Nwosu (2020), on the other hand, revealed that motivation and interest were positively associated with academic performance for some students but not for others, suggesting that individual differences may mediate the relationship

The Cultural Perceptions of Value and Importance of History as a Discipline Influence Undergraduate Students' Engagement and Performance in History Courses

The results of the analysis conducted revealed that the cultural perceptions of value and importance of History as a discipline influences undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses. A study by Adeleke (2018) found that cultural attitudes and beliefs in Nigeria play a significant role in shaping students' interest and motivation to study History. Similarly, Okoro (2019) conducted research that highlighted how cultural values and historical narratives impact students' engagement with History courses, with a focus on the importance of cultural heritage. In contrast, Ogunlesi (2020) argued that while cultural perceptions could be influential, external factors like curriculum design and teaching methods also substantially affect students' performance in History courses.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

This study focused on factors influencing students' performance in History among Undergraduate students of University of Benin.

In an attempt to effectively and succinctly achieve the objectives of the study, six research questions were raised;

- How does the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influence undergraduate students' performance in History courses?
- What teaching methodologies are commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, and how do they impact students' understanding and performance?
- To what extent does the availability of learning resources affect undergraduate students' performance in History courses?
- How do socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History?
- What is the relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses?

- How do cultural perceptions of the value and importance of History as a discipline influence undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses?

A sample of one hundred and fifty (150) was randomly drawn from History Education students in University of Benin. Same number (150) of these questionnaires were retrieved and used for the study's empirical analysis. The obtained data were analyzed using frequency counts, simple percentages, mean and standard deviation.

Based on the obtained and analyzed data the followings are the salient findings;

- The structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities influences undergraduate students' performance in History courses.
- The teaching methodologies commonly employed in History education in Nigerian universities, impacts students' understanding and performance.
- The availability of learning resources to a large extent affects undergraduate students' performance in History courses.
- The socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in History.
- There is a relationship between students' motivation and interest in History and their overall academic performance in History courses.

- The cultural perceptions of value and importance of History as a discipline influences undergraduate students' engagement and performance in History courses.

Conclusion

The study conducted at the University of Benin has illuminated critical factors that shape undergraduate students' performance in History, reflecting both academic and socio-cultural dimensions. The findings underscore the significant role played by the structure of the History curriculum in Nigerian universities, affirming that a well-crafted curriculum can serve as a catalyst for enhanced academic performance. Equally influential are the teaching methodologies adopted by instructors, which have a direct correlation with students' grasp of historical concepts and their subsequent performance. The research further highlights the importance of learning resources, evidencing that their availability substantially supports academic achievement. Beyond the educational setting, socio-economic factors were identified as determinants that affect student performance, indicating that students' backgrounds are inextricably linked to their academic journeys. Moreover, the study draws a clear line connecting students' motivation and interest in History to their performance, suggesting that passion for the subject is a driving force for academic success. Finally, the cultural value ascribed to History within

society influences student engagement and achievement, suggesting a broader socio-cultural context shapes educational outcomes. These findings not only enrich the understanding of academic performance determinants in History education but also point to potential areas for policy intervention, curriculum development, and pedagogical strategies aimed at fostering an environment conducive to academic excellence in the Humanities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Curriculum Development: It is recommended that Nigerian universities, particularly the University of Benin, re-evaluate and update the History curriculum to ensure it aligns with both contemporary scholarly developments and the interests of students. A curriculum that is diverse, inclusive, and reflective of current historical debates can foster better engagement and understanding. This may involve integrating new historical theories, global perspectives, and interdisciplinary approaches to studying History.
2. Pedagogical Innovation: Given the impact of teaching methodologies on student performance, it is advisable for educators to adopt a variety of teaching methods beyond traditional lectures. This could include interactive

seminars, problem-based learning, digital storytelling, and the use of historical simulations to encourage active learning. Providing faculty with professional development opportunities to learn and apply these new teaching strategies can significantly enhance student comprehension and performance in History courses.

3. **Resource Provision:** The study indicates that learning resources are crucial to student performance. The recommendation here is twofold: first, universities should invest in expanding their libraries and digital resources to provide students with a wide range of materials. Second, faculty should actively incorporate these resources into their teaching and assessments, guiding students on how to effectively utilize them for their historical inquiries.
4. **Socio-economic Support:** To address the impact of socio-economic factors on student performance, universities should implement support systems such as scholarships, financial aid, and mentoring programs. These initiatives can help level the playing field for students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, ensuring that all have equal opportunities to succeed in their History courses.
5. **Motivational Strategies:** Recognizing the relationship between student motivation and academic performance, it is essential to implement strategies that foster a deeper interest in History. This could involve creating

opportunities for undergraduate research, internships, and field trips to historical sites. Additionally, the integration of History clubs or societies where students can engage with the subject matter outside the classroom can also enhance motivation and interest.

6. **Cultural Engagement:** Finally, to address the impact of cultural perceptions on the study of History, universities should develop public engagement programs that demonstrate the value and relevance of History in contemporary society. This could include community-based history projects, partnerships with museums and archives, and public lecture series. Such initiatives can help to challenge and change cultural perceptions about the study of History, thus encouraging greater engagement and improved performance among students.

Suggestion for Further Studies

Building upon the current study which has underscored the multifaceted influences on students' performance in History at the University of Benin, further research could delve deeper into the pedagogical strategies that resonate most effectively with students' learning styles. A mixed-methods approach could be instrumental in capturing the nuanced interplay between teaching methods and student engagement. Longitudinal studies would allow for an analysis of how changes in the curriculum and teaching methodologies affect performance over

time. Additionally, expanding the scope to include comparative studies between different universities within Nigeria, or between Nigerian universities and institutions in other countries, could provide a richer context for understanding the unique and shared challenges in History education globally. Investigating the role of digital resources and online platforms in supporting History education in a rapidly evolving educational technology landscape could offer insights into modernizing History curriculum. Specific research questions might include:

- How does the integration of digital history resources into the curriculum enhance critical thinking and analytical skills among History undergraduates?
- What are the long-term impacts of socioeconomic factors on students' career prospects within the field of History?
- To what degree do changes in teaching methodologies correlate with changes in the academic performance of History students over a three to five-year period?

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APPENDIX

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, EDO STATE**

**QUESTIONNAIRE ON FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE STUDENTS'
PERFORMANCE IN HISTORY AMONG UNDERGRADUATE
STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF BENIN (FISPHAUSUB)
APPEAL FOR THE COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE**

Dear Sir/Madam,

This questionnaire solicits information from you. It is designed to find out “Factors that Influence Students’ Performance in History among Undergraduate Students of University of Benin”. The information supplied will be treated in confidence and this exercise is purely for research purpose. Please tick the appropriate answer to each question. Thank you

Section A: PERSONAL DATA

1. Sex: Male [] Female []

2. Age: 20-25years [] 26- 30years [] 31 years and above []

SECTION B: GENERAL

How does the structure of the history curriculum in Nigerian universities influence undergraduate students' performance in history courses?

| S/N | ITEM | SA | A | D | SD |
|-----|--|----|---|---|----|
| 1 | The sequencing of history courses in the curriculum positively impacts my understanding. | | | | |
| 2 | The availability of elective history courses enhances my academic performance. | | | | |
| 3 | Adequate course prerequisites contribute to my success in history courses. | | | | |
| 4 | The inclusion of diverse historical perspectives improves my engagement and performance. | | | | |

What teaching methodologies are commonly employed in history education in Nigerian universities, and how do they impact students' understanding and performance?

| | ITEM | SA | A | D | SD |
|---|---|----|---|---|----|
| 5 | The teaching methods used in my history classes are engaging and interactive, thus enhancing my comprehension | | | | |
| 6 | I find it easy to grasp historical concepts and information in my classes which improves my performance | | | | |
| 7 | The use of multimedia resources (e.g., videos, interactive websites) enhances my history learning. | | | | |
| 8 | My history instructors use a variety of teaching methods to cater to different learning styles. | | | | |

To what extent does the availability of learning resources affect undergraduate students' performance in history courses?

| S/N | ITEM | SA | A | D | SD |
|-----|---|----|---|---|----|
| 9 | The University of Benin provides adequate history textbooks which improves my performance | | | | |
| 10 | Access to historical journals and research materials is easy which improves my learning outcomes | | | | |
| 11 | The university's library has sufficient resources for history studies which improves my performance | | | | |
| 12 | Online databases and e-resources for history are readily available which enhances my knowledge base | | | | |

How do socio-economic factors contribute to variations in undergraduate students' performance in history?

| | ITEM | SA | A | D | SD |
|----|---|----|---|---|----|
| 13 | The financial stability of students' families (e.g., income, employment status) significantly impacts their performance in history. | | | | |
| 14 | Family background and parental education level play a significant role in determining students' history performance. | | | | |
| 15 | The availability of educational resources at home, such as books and internet access, affects students' success in history. | | | | |
| 16 | Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds face more challenges in excelling in history compared to their peers. | | | | |

What is the relationship between students' motivation and interest in history and their overall academic performance in history courses?

| | ITEM | SA | A | D | SD |
|----|---|----|---|---|----|
| 17 | I find history courses at the University of Benin to be motivating and interesting. | | | | |
| 18 | My enthusiasm for history positively affects my performance in history courses. | | | | |
| 19 | I believe that my interest in history influences my overall academic performance. | | | | |
| 20 | The teaching methods used in history courses enhance my motivation to learn. | | | | |

How do cultural perceptions of the value and importance of history as a discipline influence undergraduate students' engagement and performance in history courses?

| | ITEM | SA | A | D | SD |
|----|--|----|---|---|----|
| 21 | The cultural beliefs in my community devalue the importance of history as a subject of study. | | | | |
| 22 | The societal perception of history as a non-lucrative career choice affects my interest in history courses. | | | | |
| 23 | The cultural significance of historical knowledge in my community encourages me to excel in history courses. | | | | |
| 24 | Cultural events and celebrations in my community emphasize the importance of historical knowledge. | | | | |