

**LOW STUDENTS' ENROLMENT IN LITERATURE- IN-ENGLISH IN PUBLIC  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN SAKI WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF  
OYO STATE: CAUSES AND REMEDIES**

**Oladeji, Femi Funmilayo**

*Department of English*

*Emmanuel Alayande College of Education, Oyo, Oyo State.*

*okikifunfemi@gmail.com*

**Abstract**

*This study examined low students' enrolment in Literature-in-English in public secondary schools in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State: Causes and remedies. A descriptive survey method was used in this study. Ten public secondary schools were randomly selected out of nineteen in the LGA. In each school, a purposive sampling technique was used to select 5 students offering Literature-in-English. A total of 50 students were used for the study. The purposive sampling technique was adopted because only those students in senior schools offering Literature-in-English were used for the study. Validity was done by the experts in Literature- in-English and English Language to ensure appropriateness of the instrument. Simple percentage was used to analysis the two research questions. Validity was done by experts in English studies, they scrutinize the contents and corrections were done. Reliability was done by administered the instrument among students of Literature-in-English in other 2 schools apart from the ones selected for the study. The questionnaire was administered in two weeks interval. The reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. Simple percentage was used to analysis the two research questions. This study findings found out that there was low enrolment and poor student's academic performance in Literature-in-English in the area of study due to inadequate libraries facilities, shortage of skilled teachers. The study, therefore, recommended that government should provide a well-equipped and functional library where literature texts will be available for students use, a skilled Literature-in-English teacher should be engaged to teach the subject and that reading habit should inculcated in students. All these when implemented would promote effective teaching and better performance of students in Literature-in-English.*

**Keywords:** Low students' enrolment, Literature- in-English, Libraries facilities, Skilled teachers, Declining performance.

### **Introduction**

Literature had been defined in various ways from time immemorial. In a broader way, it is defined as any written work, etymologically; the term "literature" is derived from Latin "litera" which means "writings formed with letters". More restrictively, it can be defined as writing that possesses literary merit, and language that foregrounds literariness as opposed to ordinary language. Amuseghan and Momoh (2013) defined literature as a collection of writing on any given subject or field of endeavours. This definition clearly reveals that literature can be found in all subjects under the sun.

Olowoyeye and Deji-Afiye (2014) on their own part see literature as the totality of human experiences in social and cultural environment. To them, literature can be defined as life and life as literature. Moody (1975) and Abrams (1981) asserted that literature gives pleasure as well as entertain those who voluntarily attend to it. Mkaanem (2007) explained that literature makes and shapes the society which produces it. In essence, literature is any work of art creates with words oral or written, whose lies in its impressive nature and ability to arouse admiration (Okoli, 1993).

Meanwhile, there is general agreement that literature uses language in artistic manner. Eagleton (2005) succinctly put it this way literature transforms and intensifies ordinary language. It also deviates from everyday speech. In essence, literature is the art from that arises out of human being's ability to create language. Literature- in- English and English language has been many times referred to as a set of Siamese twins which are difficult to separate (Amuseghan and Momoh, 2013). Literature- in- English as a subject has been made compulsory for students in Arts classes in Nigerian secondary schools. It is also mandatory for any student that wants to be admitted for Arts courses ( like English, Linguistic, Foreign Languages) as a course in any Nigerian University to have a credit grade in Literature- in- English without which his/her admission will not considered.

More importantly, in recent years, assessment of students in Literature-in-English in the study area has proved that the interest of students in Literature-in-English appears to be declining. It seems

factors such as technicality of the subject, inadequate skilled teachers of Literature-in-English, poor reading habits among students, society/local influences and poor communication / language skills among students responsible for low students' enrolment are affecting the students enrolment in Literature- in- English.

Other factors been observed are influence of local dialect on students', students' low interest in Literature - in - English responsible for low students' enrolment, Literature - in - English very broad in contents responsible for low students' enrolment, poor accessibility to Literature- in -English texts responsible for low students' enrolment and teachers personality/Influence responsible for low students' enrolment. All these are presently influencing students' performance in Literature-in-English

Obiero (2010) classified assessment into diagnostic, formative and summative. Diagnostic assessment according to Akanbi (2012) provides an indicator of a learner's aptitude and preparedness for an academic programme, it is also used to evaluate the pre-existing knowledge or competence of a student at the start of class (Ulster University, 2015) formative assessment on its own part, look at the progress being made by a student but does not form part of the overall assessment of a student.

On the other hand, summative assessment provides a measure of the achievement made in respect of a learner's performance in relation to the intended learning outcomes of the programme of study. Interestingly, Bond (2010) opined that assessment provides inclusive and trustworthy representation of students' achievement. From all indication, effective teaching and learning cannot take place without an assessment of students. This takes place in form of general examinations like WAEC or NECO.

Dublin City University(2010)agreed that the successful teaching of English to students whose first language is not English is a challenging and frequently demanding role. Once teachers qualify and start working they are quickly caught up in the routine of delivering classes and providing the non-teaching follow-up that is required to both support their students and facilitate school administration. This has a lot of implication on teaching of Literature - in- English as a subject. This is because English Language teachers are seen as proficient and qualified to teach Literature - in- English as a subject.

However, while teachers are busy dealing with their day-to-day workload, the teaching of English is continually evolving in terms of methodology, resources, content and technology. Dedicated teachers understand the need to stay abreast of the latest developments and continuously build on the skills needed to keep students engaged and interested in the subject (Palmer, 2014). Trainings help experienced teachers to quickly absorb and adapt new techniques and material while, at the same time, acting as refresher courses for core skills and competencies. It also enables English Language Teachers address old and new challenges in novel ways. By bringing teachers together in a supportive environment, and by providing expert instructors who have created interesting and enjoyable workshops based on the latest developments in the teaching of English, participants gain new knowledge and skills alongside colleagues who face similar professional challenges (Dublin City University, 2010).

More so, it will enable teachers to engage more successfully with students and achieve desired learning outcomes. Aside from acquiring new skills and methodologies our courses also provide a motivational boost to teachers to try out their newly-learned ideas on their students. This has insinuation on lessons of Literature - in- English as a subject (Sadler, 2005). In most public, even private schools, English Language teachers are seen as proficient and qualified to teach Literature - in- English as a subject.

Consequently, this study examined the low enrolment and poor performance of students in Literature-in-English in public secondary schools in Saki West Local Government of Oyo State.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Over the years, it appears that most public secondary schools in Nigeria have problems with enrolment of students offering Literature - in - English. Most students for one reason or the other just do not want to enrol for Literature - in - English classes while few that actually enrolled always performed below expectations. This has become a concern to education stakeholders.

It seems factors such as technicality of the subject responsible for low students' enrolment, inadequate skilled teachers of Literature-in-English, poor reading habits among students, society/local influences on students, poor communication / language skills among students

responsible are affecting the students enrolment in Literature- in-English, influence of local dialect, broadness of Literature- in -English contents, poor accessibility to Literature- in -English texts and teachers personality/Influence responsible for low students' enrolment are presently influencing students' performance in Literature-in-English

Factors identified by scholars are general yet the study focussed on selected public secondary schools in sub-urban in order to examine the peculiarities of the area. Therefore, this study examined low enrolment and poor students' academic performance in Literature - in - English in public secondary schools in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions were formulated and tested in the study:

1. What are the factors for low enrolment student in Literature- in - English in public secondary schools in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State?
2. In what ways can these problems be solved in public secondary schools in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State?

### **Purpose of the study**

- i. To sought the problems (factors) accountable for low enrolments of students in Literature - in - English examinations in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State.
- ii. To provides solution to the factors responsible for low enrolment of students in Literature - in - English examinations in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State.

### **Methodology**

A descriptive survey was used for this study. The population for this study covers all students in public secondary schools in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State. Ten (10) public secondary schools were randomly selected in the study area. Also, in each school, a purposive sampling technique was used to select 5 students offering Literature - in - English. A total of 50 students were used for the study.

For this study, the main instrument used was self developed questionnaire titled "Students' Enrolment in Literature- in-English Questionnaire, (SELEQ)". Validity was done by the experts in Literature-

in-English and English Language to ensure appropriateness of the instrument. They scrutinize the contents and corrections were done. Simple percentage was used to analysis the two research questions.

Reliability was done by administered the instrument among students of Literature - in - English in other 2 public secondary schools apart from the ones selected for the study. The questionnaire was administered in two weeks interval. The reliability coefficient of 0.84 was obtained. Simple percentage was used to analysis the two research questions.

### Answering of Research Questions

**Research Questions 1:** What are the factors for low student enrolment in Literature - in - English in Saki West Local Government Area of Oyo State?

**Table 1:** Factors responsible for low students' enrolment in Literature - in - English

No	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Inadequate skilled teachers of Literature-in-English responsible for low students' enrolment	45 (90%)	- (0.00%)	-- (10%)	- (0.00%)
2.	Poor reading habits among students responsible for low students' enrolment	50 (100%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)
3.	Society/Local influences on students responsible for low students' enrolment	45 (90%)	3 (6%)	2 (4%)	- (0.00%)
4.	Poor communication/language skills among students responsible for low students' enrolment	30 (60%)	20 (40%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)
5.	Technicality of the subject responsible for low students' enrolment	50 (100%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)

6.	Influence of local dialect on students' ability responsible for low students' enrolment in Literature - in – English	40 (80%)	10 (20%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)
7.	Students' low interest in Literature - in -English responsible for low students' enrolment	50 (100.0%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)
8.	Literature - in - English very broad in contents responsible for low students' enrolment	45 (90%)	5 (10%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)
9	Poor accessibility to Literature - in - English texts responsible for low students' enrolment	50 (100.0%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)
10	Teachers personality/Influence responsible for low students' enrolment	50 (100.0%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)	- (0.00%)

From table 1, 40 respondents (80.0%)strongly agreed that inadequate skilled teachers of Literature- in-English responsible for low students' enrolment while 10 (20.0 %) disagreed. All the respondents, 50 (100.0%) affirmed that poor reading habits among students responsible for low students' enrolment, technicality of the subject responsible for low students' enrolment. On the statement that Literature - in - English very broad in contents responsible for low students' enrolment, 45 (90.0%) agreed. On poor communication / language skills among students responsible for low students' enrolment,30 (60%) strongly agreed while 20 (40%) agreed. Also, all the 50 respondents, (100.0%) confirmed that teachers personality/Influence responsible for low students' enrolment, teachers personality/ influence responsible for low students' enrolment and students' low interest in Literature- in - English responsible for low students' enrolment. The statement that influence of local dialect on students' ability responsible for low students' enrolment in Literature-

in- English, 40 respondents (80%) strongly agreed while 10 (20%) agreed.

In this regard, Dublin City University (2010) agreed that the successful teaching of English to students whose first language is not English is a challenging and frequently demanding role. Once teachers qualify and start working they are quickly caught up in the routine of delivering classes and providing the non-teaching follow-up that is required to both support their students and facilitate school administration. However, while teachers are busy dealing with their day-to-day workload, the teaching of English is continually evolving in terms of methodology, resources and contents.

**Research Question 2:** In what ways can low enrolment of students in Literature - in - English be solved?

**Table 2:** Remedies for low enrolment of students in Literature - in - English

No	Items	SA	A	D	SD
1.	Provision of necessary and adequate Literature - in - English textbooks to public secondary schools study is very paramount.	50	-	-	-
2.	More skilled teachers in the area of literature be recruited into service to teach the subject	50	-	-	-
3.	Students should be encouraged by their teachers to read more during their leisure time	50	-	-	-
4.	Reading clubs like literary and debating clubs, farmer's club, poetry club etc should be introduced in schools to enhance reading habits of students.	50	-	-	-
5.	Parents/guardians should encourage their wards to read always particularly at home	50	-	-	-
6.	Library should be equipped with Literature - in - English textbooks to encourage students.	50	-	-	-
7.	Literature-in-English teacher should apply good methodology to their teaching	40	10	-	-



Based on the table 2, remedies are suggested by the Literature - in - English students in the schools selected for the study. All the 50 respondents which is 100% strongly agreed that provision of necessary and adequate Literature - in - English textbooks to public secondary schools study is very paramount, more skilled teachers in the area of literature be recruited into service to teach the subject, students should be encouraged by their teachers to read more during their leisure time, reading clubs like literary and debating clubs, farmer's club, poetry club etc should be introduced in schools to enhance reading habits of students, More so, they all affirmed that parents/guardians should encourage their wards to read always particularly at home, library should be equipped with Literature - in - English textbooks to encourage students. Meanwhile 40 (80%) strongly agreed while 10 (20%) agreed that Literature - in - English teacher should apply good methodology to their teaching.

Dublin City University (2010) agreed that trainings help experienced teachers to quickly absorb and adapt new techniques and material while, at the same time, acting as refresher courses for core skills and competencies. It also enables English Language Teachers address old and new challenges in novel ways. By bringing teachers together in a supportive environment, and by providing expert instructors who have created interesting and enjoyable workshops based on the latest developments in the teaching of English, participants gain new knowledge and skills alongside colleagues who face similar professional challenges.

Palmer (2014) also agreed that the dedicated teachers that understand the need to stay abreast of the latest developments and continuously build on the skills needed to keep students engaged and interested in the subject.

### **Conclusion**

In recent years Literature - in - English is seen as a must subject for students who want to excel in Arts courses in the tertiary institutions. Hence, it contributes immeasurable skills and knowledge to students' career and future. Consequently, it is expected that factors responsible for the failure of students in Literature - in - English in the public secondary schools such as inadequate skilled Literature - in - English teachers, technicality of the subjects, low students' interest, poor

reading habit of students and so can be curbed when necessary and suggested solution are followed strictly. By so doing, the education objectives can be achieved.

**Recommendations**

Based on the conclusion of this study the following were recommended:

- Adequate and skilled Literature - in - English teachers should be recruited into public secondary schools.
- There is the need for orientation through media to sensitize the public on the danger of low reading habit among students.
- Students should be encouraged by their teachers to read more during their leisure time, reading clubs like literary and debating clubs, farmer's club, poetry club etc
- Parents should be encouraged to support their wards at home in reading habit
- The society should encourage uses of both foreign and local languages within the school.
- There is the need to lay emphasis on extra-curricular activities such as reading debates, reading quiz and competition among students. This will definitely enhance reading of literatures
- There is need for well equip library where students should be able to read literatures hence promoting their English proficiency.
- Encouragement of students to cultivate reading habit in classroom by teachers.

### References

- Abrams, M. (1981). A glossary of literary terms. New York: P and P Publications.
- Amusegha, T. & Momoh, K. (2013). Classroom assessment techniques; a handbook for college teachers. English language and literature- in- English at senior secondary school certificate level. *Journal of Education and Practice* 5, 16
- Bond, J. (2010). Informative assessment: Teacher and students together. Washington State, Kappam 1 (91), 8 – 10
- Dublin City University (2010). Professional development programme for second level English language teachers. Experts in language training. Dublin City University, Dublin 9, Ireland. Retrieved on: May 5 2014 from: [www.http://eglisg.dcu.ie](http://eglisg.dcu.ie)
- Mkaanem, E. (2007). The literature of the people: A critical appraisal of selected play. Enugu: Ubahon Publishers Ltd
- Moody, H. (2012,). Literary appreciation; London: Longman Group Ltd
- Obiero, O. (2010). From assessing language endangerment or vitality to creating and evaluating Nigerian independence, In: G. Anasiudu; C. Nwaozuzu and C. Okebalanta (eds). Language and literature in a developing country. Onitsha: African First Publishers Ltd
- Okoli, F. (1993). "Labour management relations in depressed federal structure". A paper presented at two day workshop on trade unionism and industrial harmony in a depressed economy, Maiduguri 8<sup>th</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup>, July.
- Olowoyeye, C. & Deji-Afuye, O. (2014). Relationship between the performances of students in language revitalization programme. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. 19(4): 201 – 226
- Palmer, H. (2014). The scientific study and teaching of language. London: Oxford University Press.19-26
- Sadler, R. (2005). Interpretation of criteria-based assessment and grading in higher education. UK: Taylor and Francy Printer Ltd. Pp.65
- Ulster University (2015). English teaching. Retrieved on 15 April, 2018 from: [www.hppl: uueducationforall.com](http://www.hppl: uueducationforall.com)