

## **Lecturers' Perception of the Note-Taking Challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria**

by

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### **Abstract**

*Note-taking is an indispensable skill that help improve students' coping abilities in the learning environment and beyond. Despite the relevance of notetaking to students and teachers, College of Education students are confronted with diverse challenges in taking accurate notes. Therefore, this study investigated lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria using descriptive survey design of a mixed method research. The population of the study was all lecturers of English in private, State-government owned, and Federal Colleges of Education in Kwara State, Nigeria. The sample size consisted of forty-eight respondents from ten (10) colleges. A questionnaire was used to elicit information and data. The study revealed that the perception of lecturers at colleges of education on students' note-taking challenges were high with inferred/grand mean of 2.97 and 0.76, respectively. Also, a significant difference based on gender existed in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of college of education students in Kwara State. However, there was no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on college type. The study also indicated that no significant difference existed in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges lecturers' qualifications of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on lecturers' qualifications. The study also pointed out that no significant difference existed in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on lecturers' years of*

*experience. It was therefore, recommended that students should take note-taking skills more seriously. Lecturers should encourage learners in attaching importance to note-taking, while other stakeholders create enabling environment in this regard.*

**Keywords:** *Note-taking, Perception, Listening skill, College Type, Qualification*

## **Introduction**

The relevance of notetaking in effective teaching and learning processes cannot be over-emphasised. Babatunde (2005) affirms that note-taking is an active learning technique which requires students not only to interpret, but also to sift information to take cognisance of relevant points to ensure proper sequencing and logical presentation of relevant ideas. As such, note-taking is an essential tool in diverse information-transmission situations. At the College of Education, note-taking allows students gather information from lectures, books, or any other situation that they will later have to memorise or use to successfully complete their academic programme (Piolat, Olive and Kellogg, 2005).

Note-taking is a skill that is encompassing. Suritsky and Hughes (1991) observe that notetaking involves four broad skills: listening, cognitive processing, recording lecture content in written form, and reviewing noted information. According to Suritsky and Hughes (1991), the first three skills usually occur contiguously. Listening and cognitive processing may occur virtually simultaneously, with notetaking typically following in a matter of seconds. Reviewing noted information comes afterwards. Kiewra, Benton, & Lewis (2007) discover that students who take notes, but do not review, earn lower examination scores than students who review notes prior to the examination. The most challenging part of the note-taking skills is the listening skill which is the foundation and the basis of all the note-taking skills. When effective listening skill are acquired, other note-taking skills start to develop almost immediately. Effective listening is essential to taking good notes, producing a good summary, responding appropriately and intelligently to questions, and transmitting knowledge gained to others (Ferit, 2009).

The skill of effective listening is essential for academic success across disciplines. Students perform well in their academic courses if they are effective listeners. Listening is the process of receiving acoustic signals, which are then transformed into meaningful utterances (Ferit, 2009). During this process, three types of knowledge are activated, namely situational knowledge, linguistic knowledge, and background knowledge. The situational knowledge refers to the context of the discourse. A listener can see the person who is speaking while his/her bodily movements provide clues for the listener to comprehend the discourse. Linguistic knowledge refers to listeners' comprehension of structures and vocabulary in utterances. Background knowledge of the listeners plays a role in comprehension of the utterances. The listener connects added information provided by the utterances with the knowledge they have possessed before (Ferit, 2009). The result of this process is creating meaning and comprehending spoken language.

It often takes significant effort from both lecturers and students to master the skill of notetaking before it begins to positively take effect on students' performance. This is achievable with consistent joint efforts of both lecturers and students. Lecturers need to be conscious of the vital roles which effective listening skill plays in enhancing students' better performance. Hartley (2002) notes that it is not appropriate to conclude that students do not take notes, rather, they simply face challenges in trying to take good notes. Some of these challenges are perceived differently by lecturers. It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to analyse lecturers' perception of the challenges such as students' low writing pace, unfavourable lecture atmosphere, use of ambiguous terminologies lecturers, lecturers' speed of expression, among others, associated with notetaking of College of Education students with the aim of enumerating the factors that hinder students' maximum focus during lectures. This is in view of the influence of gender, college type, qualification, and years of experience on lecturers' perception considering what effect such would have on students' academic performance.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Since the general behaviour of students include notetaking, reviewing and then studying those notes, their abilities to take good notes must have direct connection with

their academic achievement. Historically, in class, note-taking has been a common phenomenon among higher institution students, especially, College of Education students. Dunkel and Davy (2009) indicated that 94% of college students regard notetaking as pivotal to assimilating lecture contents. Despite the number of students who take notes during lectures, there is an increasing number of poor academic performances among College of Education students which has been a source of worry to educationists. Most of them have attributed this situation to several factors which include truancy, laziness, and poor note-taking skills, among other factors. This is in line with the observation of Norwalk, Norvilitis and MacLean (2009) whose observations was that low academic achievement among post-secondary students is partly due to inadequate study skills and poor note-taking behaviour. As true as these might sound, it is yet to gather adequate research evidence to prove that they are key factors on why students fail.

Hence, this prompted the intent of the researcher to investigate lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State. Thus, multiple studies have been conducted on notetaking across different academic levels (Meer, 2010; Boyle and Forchelli, 2014; Jacqueline, Erik & Ben, 2015). None of the existing studies focused on College of Education students neither were they conducted in Kwara State. This has created a gap in knowledge part of which this study attempts to fill by exploring lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria. This was with the aim of finding out the challenges students encounter during lectures through the perception of lecturers since they have knowledge of students' academic strengths and weaknesses.

### **Objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study is to analyse lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges among students at College of Education students. Specifically, the study sought:

1. To examine the influence of gender on the lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.

2. To examine the influence of college type on lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.
3. influence of qualification on lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.
4. influence of teaching experience on lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the general perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria?
2. What is the difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria?
3. Is there any difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on college type?
4. Does Lecturers' qualification have any significant difference on their perception towards note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria?
5. What difference would Lecturers' experience have on their perception towards note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria?

### **Hypotheses**

- H<sub>01</sub>:** No significant difference existed in the Perception of male and female lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.
- H<sub>02</sub>:** No significant difference existed in the Perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on college type.
- H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on qualifications.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** Teaching Experience does not have any significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.

## **Methodology**

This study was a descriptive survey type of mixed research method of quantitative and qualitative research approach in analysing lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria. The target population included lecturers of English in ten (10) Colleges of Education in Kwara State, Nigeria. Available data from Ministry of Tertiary Education showed that there were three (3) State government owned College of Education with twenty-four (24) English lecturers, One (1) Federal College of Education with six (6) English lecturers and six (6) private Colleges of Education with eighteen (18) English lecturers. Therefore, there is a total of ten (10) Colleges of Education with forty-eight (48) English lecturers. Based on general observation, lecturers considered these challenges as inimical to learners' progress. Lectures from much of the sampled Colleges of Education discovered these as general trends hampering students' note-taking exercise.

A researcher-designed questionnaire and a section for interview where the respondents provided further information on lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria. Section A of the questionnaire was designed to deduce demographic information of the respondents. Section B was designed to contain information on lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria. The questionnaire comprised of ten (10) items in which the respondents were required to tick on close-ended items on a 4-point Likert rating scale with the responses of "Strongly Disagree" (1), "Disagree" (2), "Agree" (3) "Strongly Agree" (4). Percentages were used in presenting the analysed demographic data in Section A. Hypothesis 1 and 5 were assessed using independent t-test. The critical ranges of scores on a four-level scale was used to draw inferences from the mean scores on the research questions. The inferences are shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Table of Inference

Critical Range	Inferences
1 – 1.49	Strongly Disagree
1.5 – 2.49	Disagree
2.5 – 3.49	Agree
3.5 – 4	Strongly Agree

## Results

### Demographic Data of the Respondents

Table 2: Demographic Information of the Respondents

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	33	71.7
Female	13	28.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>College Type</b>		
Federal Government	6	13.0
State Government	24	52.2
Private Owned	16	34.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Lecturers' Qualification</b>		
Bachelor's degree	14	30.4
Master's degree	28	60.9
PhD	4	8.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Years of Experience</b>		
1 to 5Years	14	30.4
6 to 10Years	6	13.0
11years and above	26	56.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Research Question 1:** What is the general perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria

**Table 3: Perception of Lecturers on the Note-Taking Challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria.**

S/N	Note-taking Challenges	Mean	S.D.	Rank	Remark/ level of perception
7	Students' slow writing pace	3.52	0.51	1 <sup>st</sup>	Very high
9	Students' willingness to learn	3.24	0.67	2 <sup>nd</sup>	High
1	Disinterest among students	3.17	0.68	3 <sup>rd</sup>	High
2	Inability to balance the efforts of writing and listening at the same time	3.11	0.64	3 <sup>rd</sup>	High
10	Ignorance about the concepts being discussed	3.07	0.83	5 <sup>th</sup>	High
4	Unfavourable lecture atmosphere	2.87	0.83	6 <sup>th</sup>	High
8	Using ambiguous terminologies by lecturers	2.76	0.87	7 <sup>th</sup>	High
6	Poor articulations in delivery	2.74	0.88	8 <sup>th</sup>	High
3	Lecturers' high speed of expression	2.72	0.81	9 <sup>th</sup>	High
5	Lecturers' refusal to repeat an expression	2.46	0.86	10 <sup>th</sup>	Low
<b>Inferred/Grand mean</b>		<b>2.97</b>	<b>0.76</b>		<b>High Perception</b>

As revealed in Table 3, the level of lecturers' general perception of students' note-taking challenges was high. This implies that note-taking challenges among students as perceived by lecturers at Colleges of Education in Kwara State were high.

Research Question 2: What is the difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria?

**Table 4:** The t-test Statistics Showing the Difference between Male and Female Lecturers' Perceptions on the Note-Taking Challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria.

Gender	No	Mean	S.D.	df	t-value	Sig	Remark
Male	33	30.12	5.134				
				44	1.11	.02	<b>Rejected</b>
Female	13	28.46	2.44				

\*Significant at  $p < 0.05$

As revealed on table 4, the mean score obtained by male lecturers was higher than that of the female lecturers. Hence there exists a difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.

**H<sub>01</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the Perception of male and female lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria.*

Table 4 also shows that the t-value of 1.11 obtained with a p-value of .02 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of .02 is less than 0.05 level of significance, the hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there was a significant difference in the perceptions of male and female lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria ( $t_{44} = 1.112, p < 0.05$ ). The mean score obtained by male lecturers (30.12) was higher than that of female lecturers. This implies that male lecturers'

perception on challenges of notetaking among College of Education students is higher than their female counterparts.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on college type.*

**Table 5:** ANOVA Summary of the Difference in the Perception of Lecturers on the Note-Taking Challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria Based on College Type

Groups	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	101.679	2	50.840	2.606	.085	<b>Not Rejected</b>
Within Groups	838.756	43	19.506			
Total	940.435	45				

\*Insignificant at  $p > 0.05$

As shown in Table 5, the F-value of 2.606 was obtained with a p-value of 0.085 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.085 obtained is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis two was confirmed. This implies that there was no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on college type. ( $F_{\{2, 43\}} = 2.606; p > 0.05$ ).

**H<sub>02</sub>** *There is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on qualifications.*

**Table 6:** ANOVA Summary of the Difference in the Perception of Lecturers on the Note-Taking Challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria Based on Qualification

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	42.470	2	21.235	1.017	.370	<b>Not Rejected</b>
Within Groups	897.964	43	20.883			
Total	940.435	45				
		5				

\*Insignificant at  $p > 0.05$

As indicated in Table 6, the F-value of 1.017 was obtained with a p-value of 0.370 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.370 obtained is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis three is not rejected. This thus implies that there was no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on qualifications ( $F_{(2, 43)} = 1.017, p > 0.05$ ).

**H<sub>04</sub>:** *There is no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on teaching experience*

**Table 7:** ANOVA Summary of the Difference in the Perception of Lecturers on the Note-Taking Challenges of College of Education Students in Kwara State, Nigeria Based on Teaching Experience

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Remark
Between Groups	5.530	2	2.765	.092	.912	<b>Not Rejected</b>
Within Groups	1285.449	43	29.894			
Total	1290.978	45				



As revealed in Table 7, the F-value of 0.092 with a p-value of 0.912 computed at 0.05 alpha level. Since the p-value of 0.912 obtained is greater than 0.05 level of significance, the null hypothesis four is not rejected. This thus implies that there was no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on teaching experience ( $F_{\{2, 43\}} = 0.092$   $p > 0.05$ ).

## **Discussion**

The finding from this study disclosed that lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in Kwara State, Nigeria was negatively ranked high. This outcome is in line with Boyle (2010) who submitted that taking good notes is not just a skill that is inbuilt among students. He believes that students face considerable challenges while taking notes especially during their first year in school. Thus, note-taking is rarely formally taught in schools and most students do not apply meta-cognitive strategies to improve their note-taking styles. As a result, students most times find it difficult to balance active listening, comprehension, selecting important information and writing all at once which constituted the challenges obstructing student's efficient notetaking during lectures. Again, the study showed that there was a significant difference between male and female lecturers' perception of students note-taking challenges. The difference is in favour of the male lecturers as the mean score obtained by male lecturers (30.12) was higher than that of female lecturers. This outcome supports Ige (2012) whose study asserted that males have more ability to withstand a reasonable duration of listening, reading, and writing than their female counterparts. In other words, males due to their masculine prowess function better in the classroom mostly during lectures. The outcome of this study also confirms the research findings of Nwobia (2007) who observed that males displayed verbal skills better than the females. This study tends to contradict the findings conducted by Llewellyn-Jones (2005) assertion who confirmed that a woman can succeed in most activities as well as a man.

This study further revealed that there was no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of College of Education students in

Kwara State, Nigeria based on college type. This finding agreed with Haghverdi, Biria and Karimi (2010) whose finding revealed that there was no significant difference in the opinion of teachers on the note-taking challenges of students of private and public universities. Nevertheless, this finding negated the opinions of Ayodele and Ige (2012), just as Oke and Maliki (2009) asserted that there are more experienced lecturers and better qualified ones in public colleges than in private.

Again, the finding showed that there was no significant difference in the perception of lecturers on the note-taking challenges of college of education students in Kwara State, Nigeria based on qualification. In other words, lecturers did not significantly differ in their perception of the note-taking challenges based on qualification. This assertion is in accordance with Adegbola (2017) finding which affirms that there was no significant difference in the techniques used by qualified and less qualified teachers of prose-fiction. This means that both qualified and unqualified teachers can improve their teaching and classroom management with the use of different techniques at the same level. Ajibade's (2017) study corroborates this finding by stressing that teacher's qualification does not necessarily result in student's effective note-taking skills and the use of resources for teaching vocabulary.

Lastly, years of experience has no significant difference on lecturers' perception of the note-taking challenges of college of education students in kwara state. This outcome indicated that a similar positive opinion was expressed by the less experienced, experienced, and more experienced lecturers as regards their perception on the note-taking challenges of college of education students. In this regard, Abiola, Egwuatu and Njoku's (2016) empirical studies revealed a no significant difference among less experienced, experienced and more experienced English Language teachers' use of instructional resources for teaching English Language.

Nevertheless, the finding of this study negated the opinions of Abiri (2008). As Abiri (2008) asserted that professionals become more efficient and effective when he/she stays longer on his/her job and not staying longer alone, but should update himself by attending seminars, conferences, workshops, and educational programmes.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

In conclusion, the findings revealed that students' note-taking challenges as perceived by lecturers at College of Education in Kwara State, Nigeria were evaluated to be high and there exists a significant difference in the perception of male and female lecturers on the challenges of notetaking of College of Education students in Kwara State, in favour of male lecturers. In the light of the findings obtained from this study, it could be concluded that there are several factors militating against students' effective note-taking during lectures, part of which are students' slow writing pace, student's state of mind, inability to balance the efforts of writing and listening at the same time, disinterest among students, ignorance about the concepts being discussed, lecturers' high speed of expression, use of ambiguous terminologies by lecturers, poor articulations in lecture delivery, unfavourable lecture atmosphere, etc. It could also be concluded that the male lecturers tended to view more of the challenges students encounter while taking notes than their female counterparts.

It is therefore, recommended that policy makers in education, school proprietors and lecturers who are the major players in higher institutions are to provide better solutions to the causes of challenges facing students in note-taking such as cultivation of zeal for active learning by students, reduction in speed of expressions by lecturers. Similarly, Lecturers should endeavour to create connections between their presentations of instruction; students' listening and comprehension abilities so that students would be able to engage in effective notetaking via the use of innovative teaching methods to overcome note-taking challenges. It was reported that male lecturers are more concerned about the challenges students at colleges of education are facing in note taking, it was also recommended that both male and female lecturers should focus more on the challenges Colleges of Education students are facing seriously and find means to resolve them.

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