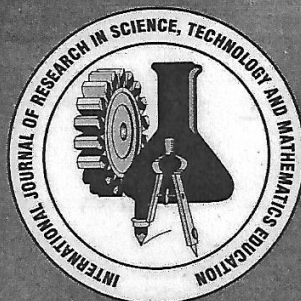


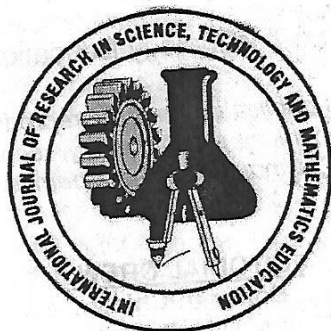


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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Effect ff Field Trip Instructional Strategy on Ss1students' Interest and Achievement in Ecological Concepts Denen D. Ukor, Mtsan & Isah, Suleiman Abduljabbar	1
Effect of Mastery Learning on Low-And High-Ability Chemistry Students' Achievement in Jos North Local Government Area Of Plateau State Akor, Gloria Ene	12
Various Ways of Exempting or Excluding Children with Disabilities from Education Jurmang Jikukka Isuwa, Ph.D & Jikukka Jurmang Lengnen	23
The Functional Role of Conceptual Analysis in Educational Research and Some Implication Daku Noah Jimba, Ph.D & James Nuhu Bature, Ph.D	39
Attribution of Infant Mortality by Literate Adults in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria. Bolu-Steve, Foluke Nike	48
Teacher Preparation: The Role of Teachers' Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) Etejere, Patricia Agnes Ovigueraye, Ph.D, Ogunniyi, Modupe Louise, Ph.D & Aliyu, Olumayowa Kabir	62
Assessment of Gender Differences in Students' Achievement and Retention in Physics Using Explicit Problem-Solving Strategy In Bauchi State Sa'adatu Abubakar Mohammed	72
Education and Social Media Networks in Nigeria: Issues and Prospects Fatimayin Foluke Florence, Ph.D	83
The Relevance of Teaching Practice to Undergraduate Students Teacher Quality and Productivity in Science Technology Education, University of Jos Ahmodu, Jacob Shaibu, Shuaibu, Saidu Ph.D. & Msheliza, I. A.	94
Human Capacity Building through Information and Communication Technology in Educational Technology I.S. Daramola, Ph.D & Babagbemi Adebayo Patrick	105

ATTRIBUTION OF INFANT MORTALITY BY LITERATE ADULTS IN ILORIN, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

Infant mortality is the death rate of infants between delivery and age of five years. This study was aimed at surveying the attribution of infant mortality among literate adults in Ilorin metropolis. Descriptive survey method was used in this study. The target population of this study comprised of all literate adults in Ilorin metropolis. The target population was all literate adults in Ilorin metropolis. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 5 wards from the four Local Government Areas so that all LGSA have equal and an independent chance of being selected. These Local Government Area (L.G.A) includes Ilorin East with 12 wards; Ilorin South, 11 wards, Ilorin West consist of 12 wards, while Asa has 17 wards. A purposive sampling technique was used in picking 10 educated respondents from each of the ward. Literate adults from the state ministries participated in this study. The instrument used to obtain relevant data for this research was titled "Attribution of Infant Mortality Questionnaire" (AIMQ). The instrument for this study was divided into three sections. Section A elicited the demographic data. Section B contained 24 items. Data collected were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages, t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). All hypotheses were tested at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Result of this study revealed that there was significant difference in the attribution of literate adults on the basis of age, educational qualification, religion and marital status. No significant difference was found on the basis of gender. It was therefore recommended that medical treatment for children under the age of 5 years should be made free and that laws should be enacted against treatment of children in local setting while modern medical technology should be encouraged and affordable.

Keywords: Infant, mortality, Attribution, literate, Age, Adults, Gender

Introduction

The high rate of infant mortality in Nigeria has become a concern to stakeholders despite the various intervention programmes from the government and non-governmental organizations. Infant mortality is a major societal problem and this has been blamed on inadequate health facilities, parent's attribution pattern and lack of financial resources to access medical care. Protuero (2010) reported that nearly 10 million children under the age five die daily worldwide. Infant mortality is the death of children before the age of five years after birth (Kessel, 2011). Gray (2001) defined infant mortality as the number of infant death per 1000 live birth.

Attribution of infant mortality refers to cultural beliefs that people consider to be the major cause of a child's death. Ogunjuyigbe (2004) explained that most Yoruba's attributes measles and diarrhea attack to the breaking of the family taboos. In Nigeria, parents attribute the death of children to witches. They are believed to exist and are regarded as enemies of the community. It is also believed that they unpredictably and malevolently bring sickness, cause accident and some disorder in children (Ojikutu, 2000). Children are protected from witches, evil eyes, and sickness by wearing charms and amulets. The Yoruba also hold some aspect of movement restrictions; they commonly believe that if a pregnant woman walks in the hot afternoon or midnight without tying a stone on her wrapper, she is likely to meet some evil spirits that can exchange the baby in her womb. This seems to be responsible for still births.

Another traditional belief that is of grave concern is the traditional prohibition of newly delivered mothers. It is known as "ate" a practice that forbids newly delivered mothers from eating foods that contain salt, seasoning, oil and pepper, for seven or nine days depending on whether the child is a male or female in Nigeria. Iyun and Oke (2000) reported that Yorubas believe that when this not done it could lead to the death of the baby. In the same vein, if a child becomes ill frequently, the child is assumed by the society to be an "Abiku" sent from the spirit world. This belief assumed that such children will die eventually irrespective of the efforts of the parents in protecting them. Echekwube (1991) confirmed this relationship between culture and health by showing how traditional practices can lead to ill health in children.

Gage, Fang, O'Neil and Dirienzo (2013) explained that mothers education played a significant impact in the reduction of infant death. They discovered that infant mortality declined through the direct effect of education and that maternal age can positively affect infant mortality rate. Kana, Edward and Crenshaw (2006) noted gender differences arise from genetic factors and that girls are biologically advantaged in surviving than males.

A careful analysis of literature showed that infant mortality has continued to increase in Nigeria and Africa at large. Ngulde (1997) estimated infant death rates to be

about 40,000 out of 100,000 live birth. Akhigbe (2011) revealed that about one million children under the age of five years die annually in Nigeria. Veneman (2009) asserted that infant mortality rate in Nigeria is unacceptably high and that most children die as a result of preventable diseases.

However, with the improvement in basic health facilities one would have expected that infant mortality rate should have reduced significantly, this is not so because many Nigerians tend to ignore scientific explanations of natural phenomena for the unscientific (Ojikutu, 2000). This has resulted in the consistent increase in infant mortality rate. Regardless of the educational attainment, most Nigerians tend to attribute death to external rather than internal factors. Individuals with an external attribution regard the events in their lives as occurring regardless of their own efforts. People who have an internal tend to be less influenced by others or environmental factors (Chegg, 2012).

Research Questions

1. What is the attribution direction of respondents to infant mortality?

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were generated for this study.

1. There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of age.
3. There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of educational qualification.
4. There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of marital status.
5. There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults in Ilorin metropolis on the basis of religion.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the attribution of infant mortality among the literate adults in Ilorin metropolis. The study also sought to find out whether variables such as gender, age, educational qualification, marital status, and religion had significant influence on the attribution direction of the respondents.

Methodology

Research Design

The descriptive method was adopted. Hassan (1995) stated that descriptive survey method describes variables in a given situations. Stangor (2004) pointed out that this method is preferred to other research designs because it systematically describes an event in a factual manner.

Sample and Sampling Procedure

The target population was all literate adults in Ilorin metropolis. A simple random sampling technique was used to select 5 wards from the four Local Government Areas so that all LGSA have equal and an independent chance of being selected. These Local Government Area (L.G.A) includes Ilorin East with 12 wards; Ilorin South, 11 wards, Ilorin West consist of 12 wards, while Asa has 17 wards. A purposive sampling technique was used in picking 10 educated respondents from each of the ward.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to obtain relevant data for this research was a self-developed questionnaire titled "Attribution of Infant Mortality Questionnaire" (AIMQ). The instrument for this study was divided into two sections. Section A elicited the demographic data. Section B consisted 24 items which was divided into three sections. Section A of the instrument was scored using frequency counts and simple percentages. In section B (which was scored on a four-point Likert scale), scores were allotted as follows: Strongly Agree - 4 points, Agree -3 points, Disagree- 2 points and Strongly Disagree -1 point.

Respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement on each of the items using the Four Point Likert -Type scale. The instrument contained twenty four items. The highest possible score is 96 (4x24), while the lowest possible score is 24 (24x1). Therefore the range is 72 (96-24). The mid-point of range is 36 (72/2) .the cut-off point is therefore 96-36 (I,e maximum score minus the mid-point of the range) or 24 +36 (i.e maximum scores plus range) in which either case is 60. Thus respondents who score 60 and above are positive in their attributions, while those scoring below 60 are negative. Item analysis was done using SPSS. A mean score of above or below 2.50 are accepted or rejected respectively.

Psychometric Properties of the Instrument

Validity: The validity of any instrument is the degree to which the instrument measures what it purport to measure (Hassan, 1995). In order to determine the validity of the

instrument, the researcher gave the draft of the questionnaire to some lecturers in the Department of Counsellor Education for content validity. The modification and comments made by these experts were considered in the final selection of items on the questionnaire as content validity.

Reliability: This means the extent to which the results obtained from the test can be consistent if the same test is administered to the same group of persons (Stangor, 2004). To ensure the reliability of the instrument, the test re-test method was adopted. The researcher administered the same instrument on twenty (20) respondents at an interval of four weeks. The 2 group's scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient and a reliability index of 0.73 was found. Therefore, the questionnaire is believed to be statistically said to be reliable for the study.

Research Questions

1. What is the attribution direction of respondents to infant mortality?

Results

Table1: Means and Rank Order of Responses on the Attribution of Infant Mortality

Item No.	When a child dies, it is always caused by:	Mean	Rank
17	poor medical attention during pre-natal period.	3.45	1 st
1	destiny.	3.33	2 nd
2	will of God.	3.19	3 rd
18	poor trained mid-wives during delivery.	3.18	4 th
19	unhygienic living condition.	3.16	5 th
20	lack of proper immunization against preventable diseases.	3.12	6 th
3	misfortune.	2.99	7 th
21	genetic disorder.	2.98	8 th
4	natural phenomenon e.g. war, earthquake disaster.	2.98	8 th
22	poisoning.	2.76	10 th
9	witchcraft.	2.68	11 th
23	premature birth.	2.63	12 th
5	inherited generational curses.	2.56	13 th
12	evil eyes of co-wives.	2.47	14 th
24	lack of adequate breast feeding.	2.44	15 th
10	charm.	2.42	16 th
6	near relatives marrying.	2.37	17 th
7	being an Abiku.	2.36	18 th
11	god and goddess being angry.	2.34	19 th
8	accident.	2.30	20 th
13	seeing blood and masquerade in the dream.	2.27	21 st
14	walking at night during pregnancy.	2.24	22 nd
15	mother not obeying the taboo of not eating salt after birth.	2.13	23 rd
16	mother of twins refusing to dance in the market after birth.	1.85	24 th

Table 1 indicates the means and rank order of the items in the questionnaire. Majority of the respondents believed that poor medical attention during pre-natal period

is responsible for infant mortality. This factor was closely followed by destiny and will of God. However, factors such as; mother of twins refusing to dance in the market after birth, mother not obeying the taboo of not eating salt after birth, and walking at night during pregnancy were ranked as least factors responsible for infant mortality by the respondents. From the table above it could be seen that literate adult attributed to both scientific and cultural belief system. Thirteen statements were positive while eleven items were negative having scored below a mean of 2.50.

Hypotheses Testing

Five (5) null hypotheses were generated and tested in this study. They were tested using the t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical procedures.

Hypothesis1:

There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality by Literate Adults on the basis of gender

Table 2: Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value on the Attribution of Infant Mortality by Literate Adults on the Basis of Gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. t-value	Crit. t-value
Male	83	64.12	7.616	198	1.02	1.96
Female	117	64.15	8.195			

Table2 indicated that the calculated t-value of 1.02 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. Since the calculated t-value of 1.02 is less than the critical t-value of 1.96 therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of gender was accepted because no significant difference was observed.

Hypothesis 2:

There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of age

Table 3: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Attribution of Infant Mortality by Literate Adults on the Basis of Age

Age	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio
Between Groups	745.538	4	186.38	3.08*	2.37
Within Groups	11801.817	195	60.52		
Total	12547.355	199			

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 3 indicated that the calculated F-ratio of 3.08 is greater than the Critical F-ratio of 2.37 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. As such the null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults on the basis of age was rejected, $F(4 \& 195 \text{ df}) = 3.08, p < 0.05$. In order to bring out the differences, further analysis was carried out using Duncan Multiple Range test.

Table 4: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Comparing Means of Attribution on the basis of age

Duncan Groupings	N	Mean	Group	Age
A	2	72.50	4	51 - 60 years
B	23	68.73	3	41 - 50 years
C	21	64.00	5	61 years and above
C	57	63.87	2	31 - 40 years
C	97	63.05	1	20 - 30 years

Table 4 showed the DMRT comparing the differences in attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults on the basis of age. Group 4 with a mean score of 72.50 differ significantly from Groups 5, 2 and 1 with mean scores of 64.00, 63.87 and 63.05 respectively. Equally, group 3 with a mean score of 68.73 significantly differ from other groups, hence group 4 and 3 are responsible for the difference found in ANOVA used to test hypothesis 4.

Hypothesis 3:

There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of educational qualification

Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Attribution of Infant Mortality by Literate Adults on the Basis of Educational Qualification

Educational Qualification	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio
Between Groups	1310.596	5	262.11	4.52*	2.21
Within Groups	11236.759	194	57.92		
Total	12547.355	199			

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 5 shows that the calculated F-ratio was 4.52 while the critical F-ratio was 2.21 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the attribution of infant

mortality by literate adults on the basis of educational qualification was rejected $F(5&194 \text{ df}) = 4.52$ $P < 0.05$. As a result of the significant difference observed; the Duncan Multiple Range Test was employed.

Table 6: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Comparing Means of Attribution on the Basis of Educational Qualification

Duncan Groupings	N	Mean	Group	Educational Qualification
A	18	70.44	6	First School Leaving Certificate
B	6	67.67	1	Ph.D
C	18	65.83	2	Master Degree
C	13	65.54	5	Grade II/WASC
D	61	64.28	4	OND/HND
E	84	61.85	3	B.A/B.Sc./B.Ed.

Table 6 shows result of the DMRT comparing the differences in attribution of infant mortality as expressed by literate adults on the basis of educational qualification. Groups 6 with a mean scores of 70.44, differ significantly from Groups 1, 2, 5, 4 and 3 with mean scores of 67.67 65.83, 65.54, 64.28 and 61.85 respectively. while Group 1 with a mean score of 67.67 differ from Group 6 with a mean score of 70.44 and differ significantly from Groups 2,5,and 4 with mean scores of 65.83, 65.54 and 65.28. Group 3 differ significantly from Groups 4, 5,2,1and 6 with mean scores of 64.28, 65.54, 65.83, 67.67 and 70.44 respectively.

Hypothesis 4:

There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of marital status

Table 7: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Attribution of Infant Mortality by Literate Adults on the Basis of Marital Status

Marital Status	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Squares	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio
Between Groups	809.996	2	404.998	6.40*	3.00
Within Groups	12466.357	197	63.281		
Total	13276.353	199			

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 7 indicated that the calculated F-ratio is 6.40 while the critical F-ratio is 3.00 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the attribution of infant

mortality by literate adults on the basis of marital status was rejected $F(2 \& 197df) = 6.40$, $p < 0.05$. In order to determine the magnitude and direction of this difference Duncan Multiple Range Test was used.

Table 8: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Comparing Means of Attribution on the Basis of Marital Status

Duncan Groupings	N	Mean	Group	Marital Status
A	14	65.43	3	Divorce
A	113	64.48	1	Married
B	73	63.36	2	Single

Table 8 showed the DMRT comparing the differences in attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of marital status. Group 2 with a mean score of 63.36 differed significantly from Groups 1 and 3 with mean scores of 65.43 and 64.48 respectively. Since group 3 and 1 are similar group 2 is therefore responsible for the difference found on the ANOVA table. Hence, the hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 5: *There is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of Religion*

Table 9: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) showing the Attribution of Infant Mortality by Literate Adults on the Basis of Religion

Religion	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	Cal. F-ratio	Crit. F-ratio
Between Groups	2946.45	5	589.29	9.34*	2.21
Within Groups	12239.46	194	63.09		
Total	15185.91	199			

* Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 9 indicated that the calculated F-ratio was 9.34 while the critical F-ratio was 2.21 at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The null hypothesis was rejected. Therefore, the hypothesis which stated that there is no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of religion was rejected $F(5 \& 194df) = 9.34$, $p < 0.05$. As such the Duncan Multiple Ranged Test was also employed.

Table 10: Duncan Multiple Range Test (DMRT) Comparing Means of Attribution on the Basis of Religion

Duncan Groupings	N	Mean	Group	Educational Qualification
A	7	68.14	1	African Traditional Religion
B	107	64.07	2	Christianity
B	86	63.89	3	Islam

Table 10 showed the DUNCAN comparing the differences in attribution of infant mortality by literate adults on the basis of religion. Group 1 with a mean score of 68.14 differed significantly from Groups 2 and 3 with mean scores of 64.07 and 63.89, respectively. Since group 2 and 3 are similar, group 1 accounts for the difference found on the ANOVA table.

Discussion

From the findings of this study the attribution direction of respondents showed that the literate adults believe that children die as a result of poor medical attention during pre-natal period. Eildh, (2007) also explained that dehydration, infection and lack of medical attention among women during pregnancy has caused high infant mortality rate in Nigeria. Attribution of infant mortality is not gender stereotyped. This implied that male and female literate adults do not differ in their attribution of infant mortality. This corroborates the views of Mason (2004) that cultural belief is derived from the belief system of a community irrespective of gender.

A significant difference was found among the respondents on the basis of age. The way the older generation will view an issue will definitely be different from young people perspectives. This finding agrees with the observation of Johnson (2008) which stated that exposures of different age groups to life issues, shapes their views of life experiences. Despite the fact that the respondents are all educated, the study showed that they have different views. This could be as a result of the respondents' educational exposure. This findings is in line with the report of Bolu-steve (2013) that the differences in educational background of respondents has a way of exposing them to different views which eventually affects their belief system.

It is expected that the married and the divorced will have more experience on the causes of infant mortality than their unmarried counterparts. Abimbola (1997) stated the irrespective of one's marital status Nigerians have the tendency to be externally controlled. Dimkpa (1999) explained that married adults in the North also believe that the death of a child can be attributed to unseen forces.

Respondents differ in their opinion on the basis of religion. This finding agreed with the report of Bolu-steve (2013) that there is always variation in the beliefs, doctrines

and practices of the three religions. However, this observation disagrees with the findings of Dimkpa (1999) who found no significant difference in the attribution of infant mortality among parents and teachers on the basis of religion.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, literate adults in Ilorin metropolis differ in their attribution of infant mortality based on age, educational qualification, marital status and religion, but no significant difference was found irrespective of their gender.

Implication for Counselling

- Counsellors should organize enlightenment programmers and partner with medical personnel's, religious organizations, non-governmental agencies in encouraging the use of modern medical facilities rather than traditional/local ways of treating illness especially in children. This will help to replace the unscientific beliefs with scientific.
- Counselling techniques should be taught right from the secondary to the University level. It will help those who are traumatized as a result of child or siblings death to face the future with hope.
- Counsellors can also organize individual and group counselling especially among women experiencing infant mortality.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

- (1) Medical treatment for children under the age of 5 years should be free.
- (2) Government should encourage free education for all. This will allow people to bring in their wards to school, which will positively affect their belief system.
- (3) Laws should be enacted against treatment of children in local settings while modern medical technology should be encouraged and affordable for all.

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