
**'LANGUAGE EDUCATORS' GENDER VIEWS ON ARABIC
LANGUAGE AS TOOL FOR COMBATING ECONOMIC RECESSION
IN NIGERIA**

MUSIBAU ADEBAYO, LAWAL (Ph.D)

Department of Arts Education,
University of Ilorin, Ilorin,
Nigeria

ABSTRACT

Economic recession is a significant decline in economic activity which spread across the economy lasting more than a few months, normally visible in a real gross domestic product (GDP), real income, employment, industrial production and wholesale-retail sales. The purpose of this research is to find the view of language educators of the university Ilorin at both faculty of Arts and Education on Arabic as a tool for combating economic recession in Nigeria. The variables considered are all the language educators. The population for this study was all the language educators at both faculty of Arts and Education which is 45. A purposive sampling technique was used to select this number. There is only a research question with a corresponding hypothesis which was tested using mean, standard deviation and t-test at 0.05 level of significance. The instrument used for the study was a checklist which includes of 15 items. The result shows that there was no significant difference between male and female lecturers' views on the Arabic language as a tool for combating economic recession in Nigeria. From the result above, it could be concluded that an Arabic Language is a tool for combating economic recession in Nigeria and recommended that government should encourage the teaching of Arabic Language in the various institutes of the nation to encourage its facilitation.

Keywords: Gender, Language Educators, Recession, Arabic Language.

INTRODUCTION

Gender is described according to Sagir, Ashfag & Noreen (2009) as the roles and responsibilities of man and woman and the relationships that exist between them. It is a comparative measure of activities that took place between male and female as to draw a conclusion on their performances (Lawal, 2014). Although, gender does not simply refer to women or men, but to the way their qualities, behaviours and identities are determined through the process of socialization. In the same vein, Ewhrudjakpor (2006) referred to gender as social attributes and opportunities associated with being male or female and the mutual relationships that connect them. These attributes and relationships are socially constructed and learned through the process of socialization. Some of these research findings have been revealed by various scholars within and outside Nigeria. For instance, Iwadi

(2009) found that female students perform better academically than their male students' counterpart. While some researchers such as Onasanya, Daramola and Asuqur (2006) observed that, there is no statistically significant difference in performance when gender is employed. Having reviewed literature on gender, it is pertinent to proceed to the economic recession.

The National Bureau of Economic Research defines a recession as "a significant decline in economic activity spread across the economy, lasting more than a few months, normally visible in the real gross domestic product {GDP}, real income, employment, industrial production and wholesale-retail sales". In short, the recession is a period of reduced economic activities whereby selling and buying of commodities are negatively affected, cost of production is very high, no money to adequately purchase goods and services, no good gain on transactions and business transactions are deadly affected, in fact, people living conditions are not palatable.

Economic recession can also be defined as a negative real GDP growth rate for two consecutive quarters [say first and second quarters]. (Noko,2016) Judging by the above definition, Nigeria is experiencing economic recession currently, since her first and second-quarter growth in 2016 are 0.36% and 1.5% although, the second definition times might be miss- leading because recession can quietly begin before the quarterly gross domestic product reports are out.

Causes of Economic Recession

The major cause of economic recession in any economy [lesson from the great depression, 1981, 1991, 2004, 2008-2009 global economic recessions] may include:

- High inflation, a general or sharp rise in the price of commodities leading to low purchasing power.
- Accumulation of debt servicing especially foreign debts.
- Fall in aggregate demand, fall in wages, income.
- Mass unemployment and several loss of confidence on the government due to economic indices
- Leading economic indicators(Noko,2016)

Causes of Economic Recession in Nigeria

Poor economic planning: poor economic planning and no concrete implementation of her economic planning is the major cause of Nigeria current recession, budget delay, exchange rate policy. Yes, the government has proclaimed the usual generalities that every government indulges itself in about:

- a) diversifying the economic
- b) improving the manufacturing/ mining sector
- c) raising agricultural output
- d) Encouraging foreign investment, among others strategic plan for growth.

No doubt the government has taken some steps like the elimination of dollar purchase privileges for importers of 40 items such as rice, cement, toothpicks, private planes, poultry, meats, margarine, wheelbarrows, textiles and soaps.

The government has, on the other hand, caused serious poverty in the land by herself, i.e. the government through her policy widen the gap between the rich and poor-creating economic hardship. An illustration was when the CBN was selling the dollar at the official rate. This they later result at the parallel market rate of 480 nairas. The question is now to think of how much some of them were making. An individual can make as much as 1 billion nairas without doing anything according to the former CBN government (Lamido, 2016).

The people that were profiting from this were telling the government that if it didn't devalue the naira that people would suffer. The poor paid the price of a devalued currency and the rich schemed off the profits. Remember Nigeria currency was devalued when crude oil price in the international market was very low and crude oil export was largely affected by the activities of the Niger-Delta militants as such as the policy was useless since Nigeria is a mono-product economy. For instance, should you take a dollar for every 1 billion taken from the federation account and sold by the CBN at 200 nairas to the dollars, the states were losing 100 billion that could have been into salaries, agriculture, and healthcare? Yet the states were giving to borrow from the same government on a bailout when the government was selling dollars cheaply to a small group of people. This incidence is still ongoing and the government is doing nothing about it.

2. High Inflation Rate: Government banning the importation of certain essential agricultural products like rice without considering gestation period is an error. Removal of fuel subsidy shouldn't be simultaneous with the banning of agricultural products. Major causes of inflation speculation in the stock market due to budget delay, rise in domestic oil price due to subsidy removal, fall in the global crude oil price, deteriorating, Nigeria exchange Rate, almost the household price skyrocket as seen in the lineage below.

3. High-Interest Rate: The interest rate is between 26.77-27% is very high for investors. This high-interest rate is discouraging investors. The poor investment culminates into high rate of unemployment in the country, reduction in aggregate demand, especially from the household.

4. High taxation: it is only in Nigeria that I see government changing high rate during an economic recession. Small businesses are slaughtered with high interest and tax rate has lowered Nigeria aggregate demand especially from the households.

5. Policy conflict: The economic policy appears conflicting. How? High interest rate, high taxation, and high monetary policy measures, but told the public they are adopting expansionary policy budget deficit.

President Buhari Economic Growth Evaluation

1. Reduction in the tax rate

2. Effective spending
3. enhanced access to credit
4. Nigeria government should increase her expenditure on skills
5. Increase agriculture product and export
6. Increase manufacturing produce and export

How to tackle the economic recession

- Investment in the energy sector to reduce power outage by the government.
- The Niger-delta militants should be engaged in a dialogue.
- Reduction in the tax rate or regulate the same to avoid double taxation.
- Borrowing from both domestic and foreign investors to avoid the incidence of capital flight.
- The government should work with the legislative body to ensure speed execution to her project.
- Commodity price and raw material should be regulated through a consumer protection agency to avoid further inflation.
- The Government should learn from Ethiopia as other developed countries.
- The Government should grow Nigeria economy and should kindly allow the name to be let the force of market control the value of Naira

The Economy and Social Benefits of Language Education

Dabo (2001)in Akaito and Dowyaro (2007) defined language as” a method, or means, a system of sharing of ideas, thought, feelings, experiences, etc. using sound, signs or symbols” The advocators of minimum standards for Nigeria Certificate in Education (2002)observes that “ modern man can hardly contemplate communal life without the instrument of language. Performance, especially spoken language, defines personality. For the teacher, his credibility is almost entirely anchored on his competence in communicating ideas and stimulating learning through his use of language articulate and well-spoken teachers also invariable win the hearts and respect of their students and pupils. (Yaqub, 2005, Onisabi and Adamu, 2007) Arabic, which is the focus of this study, is the language of the Arabs. It belongs to the Semitic group of languages, other living languages, of this group are Modern Hebrew, Amharic and another spoken language of Ethiopia.

Language is obviously vital tool, not only is it a means of communicating thoughts and ideas but it for just friendships, cultural ties, and economic relationships, History reflects on the importance of languages, for instance, the scholar Benjamin Whorf has noted that languages shape thoughts and emotion, determine ones perception of reality, john Stuart mill said that “Language is the light of mind” lionel Groulx, a Quebec historian, put it in this way: language is not only a vehicle for the expression of thought, perception sentiments, and value characteristic of a community, it also represents of social identity, Edward Sapir; ”the mere fact of a common speech as a particularly potent symbol of the social solidarity of those who speak the language “ in short language retention helps maintain a feeling of Cultural kinship Language, of courses, is a knowledge and in our world today, knowledge is one of the key factors in competitiveness. Brain and knowledge are what create the propensity and growth

we tend to take for granted in an advanced industrial society is an increasingly independent world, the knowledge of other languages becomes indispensable, just think of how the advent of the internet has changed our lives a few years ago, millions of people across the world, who share common interests, are able to communicate with each other and exchange ideas. Not only are they able to do this due to the various technological advances, but also because they share a common language. There is of course and denying that the knowledge of English language is one of the most important tools available to our children, it is one of the international languages a tool of communication between comities coeternal groups, various companies and organization, communities and friends. Language, being an important tool for business people and official seeking to binned on those ties. As we move toward hemispheric economic integration, the knowledge of another language of the hemisphere is being a highly marketable skill (Kilgour, 1999).

Arabic is the second largest most widely used alphabetic writing system in the world (the Latin alphabet is the most widespread). The Arabic script has been adapted to such diverse languages, Persian, Turkish, Spanish and Swahili (Seriki, 2004). Today Arabic has universally recognized language occupying a position, which is not less in status and rank than such International Language as English, French or Germany. It has long been adopted by the African Union (AU), Oil Producing and Exporting Countries (OPEC), United Nations (UN). Arabic also is an official language of Non- Aligned Movement (NAM), Confederation of African Football (CAF), Federation of International Football Association (FIFA) (Amuni, 2004) and other internationally recognized Organizations as a tool for political and other diplomatic transactions. It is studied and accorded high status like others in the world.

f. The Role of Arabic Language in Economy

Economy: Arabic had been the language of commerce for centuries. As mentioned earlier, there was a commercial link between North Africa and West Africa before the advent of Islam in West Africa. This explains why the historical development of the Arabic language was tied to commercial activities. Moreover, there is a strong commercial link between Nigeria and Arab countries in Asia and Africa. Since Nigerian citizens transact business in Egypt, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia, among others, the knowledge of Arabic and ability to speak Arabic will assist in boosting the Nigerian economy (Ajape, 2014)

The introduction of Arabic in Nigeria also creates a situation of positive economic life because it guaranteed a good source of income for indigenous Arabic scholars. They became employers by establishing Arabic schools and employed Arabic specialists, thereby reducing the rate of unemployment in the country. Also, Nigeria is a strong member of Organization established to ensure the stability of the price of petroleum in the international market. As many of the most influential member nations are Arab countries, Arabic language will create opportunities to enter into an agreement with them and there will be better interaction between us (Abdelali, 2003).

Statement of the problem

- Nigeria has been in the state of an economic mess over a long period of time and the country has been trying to get herself out of it which has been

difficult due to political and national insecurity from agitated individuals; economy meltdown, immorality, social vices such as kidnapping, bribery, corruption, embezzlement, fornication, adultery, lack of adequate fund to finance development, revenue, corrupt leaders among y the governor, senators, representative and bad governance. The government has been trying in one way or the other to get this nation out of this economic recession but still, the country is wallowing in the state of serious pandemonium. The researcher therefore want to identify weather language, especially Arabic because of the significant roles its plays in the world in term of development, economic, political, culture and civilization etc.(Lawal, 2006), can serve as toll to liberate or prevent Nigeria from this economic instability.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine whether Arabic as a language can serve as a tool through the language educators' gender views at the University of Ilorin, for combating economic recession in Nigeria. Specifically, the study finds out:

a). the difference on language educators views in both faculty of arts and education in the university of Ilorin as regard Arabic as a tool to combat economic recession based on gender?

Research Question

1) What are the differences on language educator's views in both faculty of arts and education in the University of Ilorin as regard Arabic as a tool to combat economic recession based on gender?

Research Hypothesis

HO1 There is no significant difference in the views of language educator in both faculty of arts and education on Arabic as a tool to combat the economic recession of Nigeria on the basis of gender

Research Design

This study is a descriptive survey of nature. It describes how the Arabic language serves as a tool to combat the economic recession in Nigeria using Arabic checklist to elicit responses from various language experts from both faculty of art and education. Daramola (2006) defined descriptive survey as a research type that makes a collection of information from various sources easier. The researcher collects information from all the language educators at the University of Ilorin from where he draws inferences on the information gathered. The survey is a systematic collection of data from the population of language educators. The justification for this is based on the view of Gay (2006) who opines that descriptive research is a process of describing and reporting the educational phenomenon the way it is. This research describes and reports how Arabic on language educators' gender views serves as a tool to curb economic recession in Nigeria.

Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was a checklist of fifteen questions item on the economic recession as regard Arabic language. Each of the item in the statement has four options of strongly agree which attracts four marks, agree which attracts three marks, disagree which attracts two marks and strongly disagree which attracts one mark. The respondents, male and female are to tick the option that best represents their views. The face and content validity of the instrument was determined by two Arabic language experts and two language educators' expert at the University of Ilorin, while the reliability of the instrument was assessed within a time interval of about three weeks using Pearson correlation co-efficient to correlate the score of the first and second administration of the instrument. The value of the correlation was 0.73

Analysis of Demographic Information of the Respondents

This section presents the results of data obtained from the respondents in percentages. The variable considered was gender from the faculty of Arts and Education.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Per cent
Male	37	82.2
Female	8	17.8
Total	45	100.0

From table 1, the result shows that the male respondents are 82.2% (37) while the female respondents are 17.8% (8) which makes the total number of respondents to be 45. The result implies that the male respondents who participated in this study are more than the female respondents.

Data Analysis and Findings

The research questions which had the corresponding hypothesis were tested using t-test at 0.05, level of significance.

Research Question: What are the differences in language educator's views in both faculty of arts and education at the University of Ilorin as regard Arabic as a tool to combat economic recession based on gender?

Since the research question corresponds with the research hypothesis, only the hypothesis was tested.

Hypothesis Testing

Research hypothesis postulated for this study was tested using t-test statistics at 0.05 level of significance.

Research Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the views of language educators in both faculty of Arts and Education on Arabic as a tool to combat the economic recession in Nigeria on the basis of gender

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation and t-test analysis on the difference in the views of language educators in both faculty of Arts and Education on Arabic as a tool to combat economic recession in Nigeria on the basis of gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig (2 tailed)	Decision
Male	37	46.1	6.87	1.736	43	.090	Not Rejected
Female	8	41.8	2.96				

P>0.05

The result from table 3 shows the t value yielded 1.736 which is not significant with P-value .090 > 0.05. This shows a non-significant result. Hence, the null hypothesis is not rejected. This means that there is no significant difference in the views of language educators in both faculty of Arts and Education on Arabic as a tool to combat economic recession in Nigeria on the basis of gender ($t(43) = 1.736$; $P >$).

Summary of Findings

The outcome of this study revealed that there is no significant difference in the views of language educators in both faculty of Arts and Education on Arabic as a tool to combat economic recession in Nigeria on the basis of gender ($t(43) = 1.736$; $P > 0.05$).

Significance of the Study

The outcome of this study would encourage the facilitation of teaching of the Arabic language in the various institutions of the nation. It will strengthen diplomatic and economic relations between Nigeria and the Arab Nation. It is hoped that Nigeria economy will be out of economic recession if the Arabic language is properly understood by its learning as it would empower the learners to solve problems relating to the language of transactions between Nigeria and Arab Nations. Also, its status would be emancipated from elective to compulsory

The local scholars who were knowledgeable in Arabic enjoyed some socio-political privileges in the society which ordinary people could not enjoy. This greatly motivated people to learn Arabic. Arabic, therefore, successfully competed with local languages such as Kanuri, Fulfude, Hausa and Yoruba. In other words, the Arabic language enriched these

indigenous languages with hundreds of religious, political and commercial words and expressions.

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