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Impact Of The "English-Only Policy" On Students' Fluency And Motivation In Speaking English: A Case Study Of Public And Private Schools In Katsina State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
This study investigates the impact of the English-Only policy on students' fluency and motivation in speaking English within secondary schools in Katsina Local Government Area, Katsina State, Nigeria. The research focuses on a comparative analysis between public and private school students to examine the influence of the policy on language skills, confidence, and motivation levels. Data were collected from 150 students, including both junior and senior secondary school levels, using structured questionnaires and interviews. Statistical analyses, including descriptive statistics and mean score comparisons, were applied to evaluate student responses across age, gender, type of school, and class level demographics. Results indicate that the English-Only policy has a positive effect on students' English-speaking fluency and motivation to practice the language, particularly outside the classroom, though with some challenges related to comprehension and participation anxiety. The comparative analysis reveals that students in private schools report greater benefits due to enhanced resources and supportive teaching methods. Conversely, students in public schools face limitations that affect the policy's effectiveness, pointing to a need for resource improvements and modified approaches in policy application. The study concludes that while the English-Only policy can positively influence English language proficiency, tailored implementations considering students' backgrounds and school resources are essential for maximizing the policy's effectiveness.
Keywords: English; Students, Fluency, Motivation

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the implementation of the "English-Only Policy" in educational institutions has sparked significant debate among educators, policymakers, and researchers. This policy mandates the exclusive use of English for instruction and communication within the school environment, aiming to enhance students' proficiency and fluency in the language. In the context of Katsina State, Nigeria, this policy has been adopted by both public and private schools, reflecting a broader national and global trend towards prioritizing English as a critical tool for academic and professional success. The physical aspects of the learning environment include the quietness of the learning space, comfort levels, learning resources, and facilities. First and foremost, the quietness of the learning space significantly impacts learning. A quiet

learning environment helps students to concentrate and improve their learning. Conversely, excessive noise interferes with students' thinking and concentration, reducing learning efficiency. Studies have shown that noise negatively affects students' learning memory and information processing ability, making it crucial to provide a quiet learning space for learners. Learning resources and facilities also have a multifaceted impact on English learners. Adequate learning resources, such as library collections, computers, and internet connections, can meet students' learning needs and provide diverse learning materials and tools. Additionally, modern learning facilities, such as multimedia classrooms, laboratories, and studios, offer richer learning experiences and more efficient ways of learning Yu et al. (2005) Moreover, learning spaces provide opportunities for students to interact and collaborate with peers and teachers. In these environments, students can discuss problems, share knowledge, and learn collaboratively with their peers. This social learning environment helps develop students' cooperation, communication, and teamwork skills, thereby enhancing their learning outcomes. The impact of the learning environment on learning is significant. A space that is quiet and comfortable, offers abundant learning resources, and fosters social learning can greatly improve students' learning effectiveness and motivation Wang and Zhao (2003). It was examining the function of using L1 in EFL classes under an English-only policy from the perspective of EFL learners. Debates regarding the use of L1 in EFL classes have persisted over the years, with some researchers considering it detrimental and others viewing it as beneficial and also in Arabic contexts it was noted that L1 use by Saudi Arabian EFL learners is likely due to learners' low proficiency and cultural norms. However, in the Iranian context, the use of L1 is seen as beneficial, as it fosters positive attitudes among learners Sa'd and Qadermazi (2015). It is well known that the use of L1 in second language learning and teaching has been a topic of long-standing debate. Pedagogically and ideologically, one main argument for this view is the belief that exclusive use of the L2 will significantly increase learners' L2 exposure, thereby developing comprehensible input Krashen (2009). This increased exposure is thought to facilitate learners' understanding and production in both teaching and learning contexts Wang and Mansouri (2017). Consequently, one of the teaching approaches employed in English classrooms is the English-only policy. This policy restricts the use of students' L1 at any time within the language school Shvidko (2018) In other words, it creates a setting where neither the students nor the teacher are allowed to use the L1 while in class Sa'd and Qadermazi (2015).

1.1 The Role of Context in Language Use and Inseparability of Culture and Communication

Saloomeh (2018) emphasizes the importance of context in determining when and how language can be used accurately and appropriately. Drawing on Kramsch's research, it is clear that culture plays a pivotal role in enhancing classroom dynamics, especially in English Language Teaching (ELT). Undergraduate students, in particular, may resist a teacher's lesson plan if it does not appear relevant to their interests and field of study. Teachers must, therefore, carefully select methods to avoid teaching "meaningless symbols" or symbols misinterpreted by students (Politzer, 100-101). The relevance of cultural context is critical in making language learning meaningful and effective. Samovar, Porter, and Jain (McKay, 2002) argue that culture and communication are inseparable, as culture dictates who communicates with whom, the content of communication, and the process of encoding messages. For foreign language learners, understanding the culture of the language they are learning ensures that they do not communicate from a void. Instead, they convey messages with a deep understanding of the cultural implications and history behind the words. This understanding enables learners to participate meaningfully in the target language culture, moving beyond mere functional communication to true cultural interaction.

1.2 Perspectives on Teaching Culture in Language Classes and Diversity in Cultural Practices

Dimitrios Thanasoulas (2001) identifies two key perspectives that have influenced the integration of culture in language teaching. The first perspective involves the transmission of factual, cultural information, including statistical, institutional, and literary knowledge. However, this method often limits students to superficial awareness, as it fails to provoke deeper reflection or engagement. It risks reducing cultural knowledge to mere facts, as though from a travel brochure, without connecting it to students' experiences or understanding. The second perspective, rooted in cross-cultural psychology or anthropology, embeds culture within an interpretive framework. This approach encourages students to

make connections between their own culture and the target culture, fostering deeper reflection and understanding. While this model has its limitations such as leaving students to integrate cultural knowledge on their own it allows teachers to guide students in critical thinking and comparative analysis of different cultures. Culture is also what makes countries and societies unique. It includes language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music, and the arts. For instance, different regions within a country may have distinct cultural practices. As Alyasery (2018) notes, the culture in northern Yemen differs significantly from that in the south, as expressed in language, music, and dance. Similarly, individual families within a society may hold unique values based on their beliefs and religious practices. This diversity within and across cultures highlights the importance of understanding cultural differences in language teaching and learning.

1.3 The Importance of Teacher Mediation in Cultural Learning and Evolution of Culture

The role of the teacher is crucial in helping students navigate cultural learning. As Thanasoulas (2001) suggests, teachers must guide students in constructing their own interpretations and reflections, comparing their own culture with the target language culture. Effective teaching requires relating new cultural information to students' existing knowledge and encouraging critical interaction with both knowledge and experience. This ensures that cultural learning is not passive but engages students in personal and collective creative experimentation. According to Rosenblatt's theory of aesthetic reading, keeping communication channels open between teachers and students is essential for effective cultural feedback. Alyasery (2018) describes culture as a broad range of learned human behaviors and patterns. While culture is a powerful tool for survival, it is fragile and constantly evolving, as it exists only in the human mind. Material objects such as language, government, and architecture are products of culture but do not constitute culture itself. Archaeologists, for example, can only unearth artifacts that reflect cultural patterns; they cannot excavate culture directly. Culture encompasses the beliefs, values, and social practices of a particular group of people, which vary widely across regions, societies, and subgroups.

1.4 Socio-Cultural and Environmental Factors Influencing English Language Learning

Kieti (2018) conducted a study in Machakos County, Kenya, examining the factors influencing academic performance in public secondary schools. The study focused on the availability of learning resources and teacher-related factors, utilizing a descriptive survey design with 230 students, 10 principals, and 40 teachers. Findings revealed that insufficient learning resources had a significant negative impact on students' academic outcomes. Socio-economic status and teacher-related factors also significantly influenced students' performance. Similarly, Anwas et al. (2020) investigated the role of social media in enhancing English learning among senior high school students in Indonesia. Using a quantitative survey method, the study found that students who frequently engaged with English content on social media demonstrated improvement in their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills. The researchers concluded that social media plays a significant role in English language learning. Ariantini (2021) also confirmed the positive impact of social media on students' English skills and their motivation, creativity, and critical thinking. Further studies by Halimi et al. (2020) in Kuwait explored the socio-cultural and psychological factors affecting English learning among high school students. Their quantitative analysis showed marked differences in English competency between public and private school students. Isti (2018) also examined EFL students' attitudes in Indonesia, finding that factors such as mass media, teachers, classroom tasks, and personal experience shaped their approach to learning English. Hibatullah (2019) investigated challenges faced by international EFL students in non-English speaking countries. The study revealed that limited exposure to English outside the classroom and large class sizes were key barriers to learning. Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory provides a framework for understanding how social contexts shape learning. In language acquisition, Vygotsky emphasizes that learning occurs through collaboration in social activities, and that learners' motives are critical to reaching educational goals (Kung, 2017). This theory underscores that language learning is intertwined with social practices, such as teacher-student interactions, availability of resources, and socio-economic conditions, as outlined by Ozfidan et al. (2014).

1.5 The Role of Language and Culture in Effective Communication

Muhammad (2020) emphasizes that language serves as a vehicle for culture, with vocabulary being a core component of language. Cultural differences are often reflected in vocabulary, and these differences evolve alongside national and cultural changes. For instance, in Yemen, the color white symbolizes virtue, purity, and piety, which is why brides wear white at their weddings to represent chastity and faithfulness. In contrast, in Chinese culture, white is associated with mourning and is worn at funerals. This stands in opposition to Arabic customs, where black is traditionally worn during funeral ceremonies. Cultural differences also impact everyday interactions. For example, if an American were to order a "hot dog" in an Arabian restaurant, it might cause confusion or even amusement, as the term has no equivalent in that context. This highlights that learning a language goes beyond grammar and vocabulary; it requires an understanding of cultural phenomena, including lifestyle, customs, food, habits, and history. Culture is a comprehensive concept, and each aspect of it can be reflected in language. Therefore, mastering vocabulary while considering cultural factors is essential to avoid misunderstandings or ridicule. Muhammad (2020) further notes that in addition to vocabulary, speaking and listening skills also require cultural awareness. Effective communication is not just about pronunciation or intonation; it involves understanding the cultural background of the target language. Without this cultural knowledge, even linguistically skilled individuals may struggle to communicate effectively. The author provides the example of a young interpreter whose English pronunciation was flawless, but his lack of cultural understanding led to a misunderstanding with a foreign guest. Though the interpreter's language was grammatically correct, his phrases were perceived as rude, as they lacked the cultural nuance necessary to convey politeness. This case illustrates the importance of integrating cultural knowledge into language learning to avoid miscommunication. Muhammad (2020) asserts that cultural competence is crucial for effective language use, as it allows individuals to communicate appropriately and avoid misunderstandings based on cultural differences.

The learning environment has a direct impact on the learning outcomes of English learners. A suitable learning environment helps learners to concentrate and improve their learning efficiency Yang and Yan (2023). Additionally, it can make learners feel relaxed and happy, which contributes to a positive learning experience. Sani et al. (2023) study The Effect of Socio-Cultural Factors on English Language Learning and the Impact on SSCE Results: The Case of Private and Public Secondary Schools in Kano, Nigeria.

Therefore, the central problem addressed by this research is to examine the extent to which the English-Only Policy influences students' fluency and motivation in speaking English in both public and private schools in Katsina State, Nigeria. By investigating this problem, the study aims to provide insights into the policy's efficacy and identify strategies to address the disparities in language outcomes among students from diverse socio-economic backgrounds and educational contexts.

1.6 Research Questions

The following questions was raised before commencing the research

1 How does the English-Only policy impact students' academic performance beyond fluency?
2 What role does a teacher’s proficiency play in enforcing the English-Only policy effectively?
3 How do students’ attitudes toward their native language affect their adaptation to the English-Only policy?

1.7 Objectives of the Study

The aim of this research is to investigate the impact of the "English-Only Policy" on students' fluency and motivation in speaking English, with a focus on both public and private schools in Katsina State, Nigeria. The objectives are:

i. To evaluate the impact of the English-Only Policy on students' fluency in speaking English:
ii. To assess the level of motivation among students in speaking English under the English-Only Policy:
iii. To identify the challenges faced by students and teachers in implementing the policy

iv. To provide recommendations for improving the effectiveness of the English-Only Policy in both public and private schools

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1 Study Area

The research was carried out in Katsina local government area of Katsina state, Nigeria. Katsina is a city (formerly a city-state), and a Local Government Area in northern Nigeria, and is the capital of Katsina State (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2007). Katsina is located some 160 miles east of the city of Sokoto and 84 miles northwest of Kano, close to the border with Niger. The city is the center of an agricultural region producing groundnuts, cotton, hides, millet and guinea corn and also has mills for producing peanut oil and steel. The city is largely Muslim and the population of the city is mainly from the Fulani and Hausa ethnic groups.

2.2 Data collection

The respondents for the study are secondary school students (both junior and senior) from both public and private schools in Katsina State. The data was collected from both types of institutions through the design questionnaire to allow for comparative analysis

2.3 Statistical Analysis

Descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions, percentages, and mean scores, were employed to analyze the responses collected from the questionnaires. The data analysis aimed to identify the effects of the English-Only policy on fluency and motivation among students, allowing for a comparison between public and private schools. This approach enabled a comprehensive understanding of how the English-Only policy affects distinct student populations. Furthermore, mean scores were analyzed across items on the survey, allowing for detailed insights into specific areas such as confidence in speaking English, motivation to practice the language, and challenges encountered due to the policy. Comparative analyses between public and private schools provided insights into the differential impact of the policy across these institution types.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This section present the results and discussion on the impact of the "English-only policy" on students' fluency and motivation in speaking English: a case study of public and private schools in Katsina State, Nigeria. Using the data obtained from the questionnaire and Interview administered to the respondents.

Demographic of the respondent

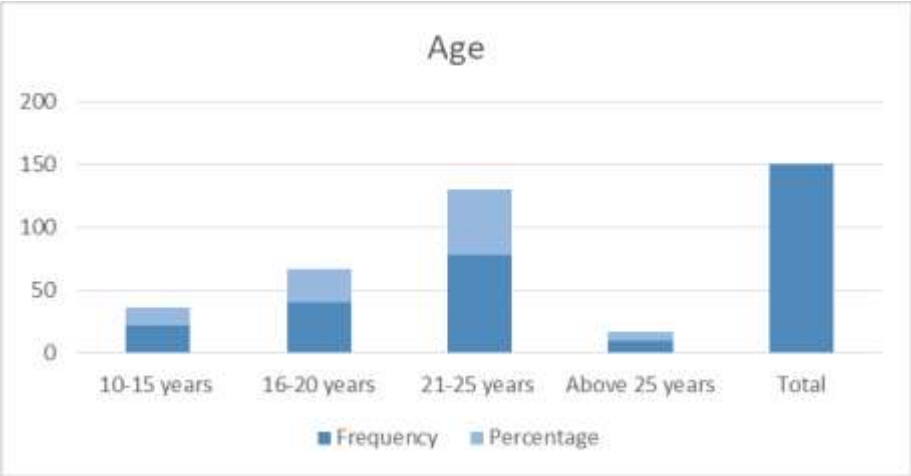

Fig. 1: The age distribution of the respondents

The age distribution of the respondents reveals a diverse range of students participating in the study. The largest group, representing 52% of the participants, falls within the 21-25 years age range. This group is most likely composed of senior secondary school students (SS1-SS3), indicating that a majority of the respondents are in the later stages of their secondary education. The 26.6% of respondents in the 16-20 years age category predominantly represents students in junior to senior secondary levels, aligning with typical school attendance ages for these education stages in Nigeria. This group is also well-represented, providing insight into how the English-Only policy impacts students at different educational levels. In addition, 14.7% of students are aged between 10-15 years, corresponding to younger students in junior secondary school (JS1-JS3), offering a glimpse into the policy's effect on students in the early years of their secondary education. The smallest group of respondents, 6.7%, is in the above 25 years age category, which may include older students who are either repeating years or returning to school after a break. While this group is less represented, their inclusion adds a broader perspective on how the policy impacts older learners, who may have different educational experiences compared to their younger counterparts. Overall, the age distribution reflects a reasonable balance across different age groups, with a clear concentration of participants in the 21-25 years range. This distribution allows for a well-rounded analysis of how the English-Only policy affects students of various ages, educational stages, and experiences, thus enhancing the generalizability of the findings across secondary school students in Katsina State.

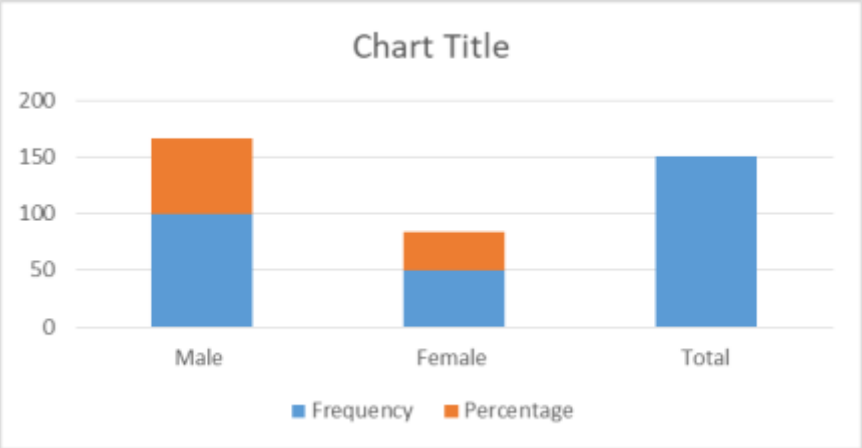

Fig. 2: The gender distribution of the respondent students in Katsina Metropolis

The gender distribution of the respondents indicates that the majority of participants are male, with 66.7% of the total respondents (100 out of 150) identifying as male. In contrast, 33.3% of the participants (50 out of 150) are female. This shows a clear gender imbalance in the sample, with males making up a significantly larger portion of the respondents. The disproportionate representation of male students in the study might reflect the overall gender distribution in the schools surveyed or could suggest a higher participation rate among male students in the context of the research. However, the presence of female students, although fewer, provides an opportunity to analyze the impact of the English-Only policy across both genders, enabling insights into potential gender-based differences in fluency, motivation, and the challenges faced under the policy.

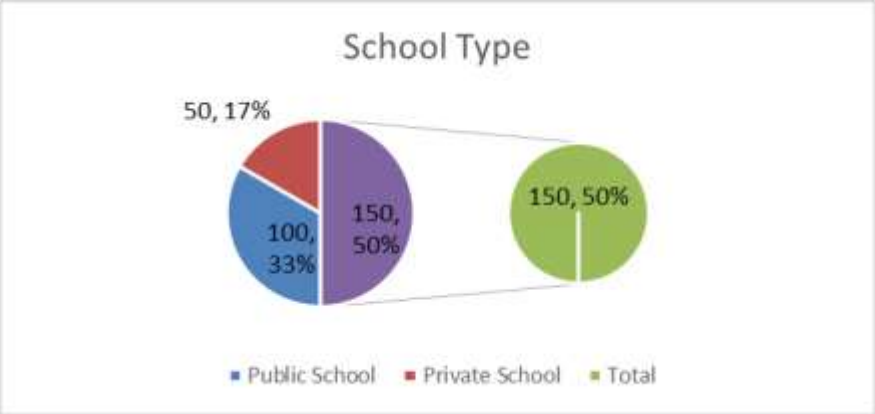

Fig. 3: Chart represent The type of school distribution of the students

The type of school distribution table reveals that 66.7% of the respondents (100 out of 150) attend public schools, while 33.3% (50 out of 150) are enrolled in private schools. This indicates that a significant majority of the students in the study come from public schools, which could reflect the larger number of public institutions in the region or a higher representation of public school students in the study. The smaller proportion of private school students still offers valuable insight into how the English-Only policy might be implemented and experienced differently in these two types of institutions. The difference in the number of students from each school type allows for a comparative analysis to assess the effectiveness,

challenges, and overall impact of the English-Only policy in public versus private schools. This comparison can reveal potential differences in the policy's influence due to factors like resources, teaching methods, and school infrastructure.

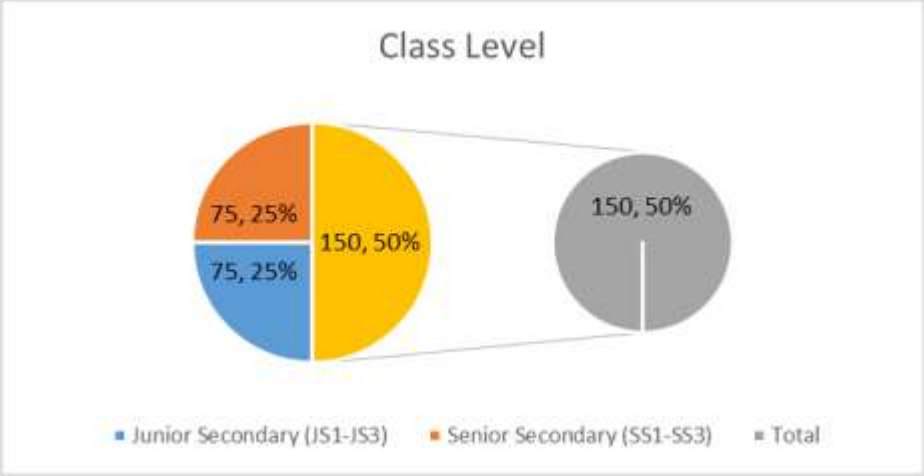

Figure 4: The class level distribution of students from both junior and senior secondary

The class level distribution shows an equal representation of students from both junior secondary (JS1-JS3) and senior secondary (SS1-SS3) levels, with each group comprising 50% of the total respondents (75 students per group). This balanced distribution indicates that the study captures the experiences of students across both the early and later stages of secondary education. Junior secondary students (JS1-JS3) are typically in the early years of secondary school, while senior secondary students (SS1-SS3) are in the more advanced stages of their education, often preparing for important examinations. The equal representation allows for a comparative analysis of how the English-Only policy affects students at different academic levels, providing insights into whether the policy has varying impacts on students based on their class level, maturity, and language proficiency.

Table 1: The impact of the English-Only policy on students' fluency in speaking English.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
1	The English-Only policy has improved my fluency in speaking English.	48	79	0	13	10	3.9
2	I feel more confident speaking English in class since the policy was introduced.	67	49	17	10	7	4.1
3	My ability to converse in English has greatly improved since the policy was enforced.	67	49	17	10	7	4.1
4	The policy has helped me to think and respond faster in English during conversations.	67	49	17	10	7	4.1

The data analyzed under table 1 indicates that the English-Only policy has had a positive impact on students' fluency in speaking English, with most students reporting improvements in various aspects of their language skills. The statement "The English-Only policy has improved my fluency in speaking English" received a mean score of 3.9, with a majority of respondents (79 students, 52.6%) agreeing and 48 students (32%) strongly agreeing, suggesting a significant improvement in fluency. This is further supported by responses to similar statements, such as "I feel more confident speaking English in class since the policy was introduced" and "My ability to converse in English has greatly improved since the policy was enforced", both of which had mean scores of 4.1. These items saw the majority of students strongly agreeing or agreeing, indicating a clear positive shift in their confidence and conversational abilities. Additionally, the item "The policy has helped me to think and respond faster in English during

conversations" also achieved a high mean score of 4.1, further reinforcing the view that the policy has not only improved fluency but has also enabled students to process and respond more quickly in English, enhancing their overall communication efficiency.

Despite the general positive trend, the small proportion of negative responses highlights that the policy's effectiveness is not universal. Although the majority of students expressed agreement or strong agreement with the statements, there were a few students who disagreed (e.g., 13 students disagreed with the fluency improvement, and 10 disagreed with the cognitive speed improvement). These responses suggest that the English-Only policy may not have had the same impact on all students, possibly due to factors like individual language proficiency, language anxiety, or external influences. However, the overall distribution of responses—where most students reported improvements in fluency, confidence, and conversational skills—suggests that the English-Only policy has been largely successful in achieving its goal of enhancing students' fluency in English. The results also indicate that while there are some students who have not benefitted as much from the policy, the policy, on the whole, has positively affected the majority of students, helping them to feel more confident, converse more easily, and respond more quickly in English.

Table 2: The English-Only policy affects students' motivation to learn and speak English.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
1	The policy makes me more interested in improving my English skills.	58	38	20	20	14	3.7
2	I feel motivated to practice English outside the classroom because of the policy.	72	49	0	20	10	4.0
3	The English-Only policy has made learning English more enjoyable for me.	71	50	5	15	10	4.1
4	The policy makes me feel pressured and less interested in improving my English.	25	16	48	74	7	3.3

The data analyzed under Table 2. reveals that the English-Only policy has a generally positive effect on students' motivation to learn and speak English. The statement "I feel motivated to practice English outside the classroom because of the policy" received a high mean score of 4.0, with the majority of respondents (72 students, 48%) strongly agreeing and 49 students (32.7%) agreeing. This suggests that the policy has had a significant impact on students' desire to engage in English practice outside the classroom, further reinforcing their intrinsic motivation to improve their language skills. Similarly, the statement "The English-Only policy has made learning English more enjoyable for me" achieved a mean score of 4.1, with the majority of students agreeing or strongly agreeing. This indicates that the policy has not only motivated students but has also contributed to making the process of learning English more engaging and enjoyable, which may increase students' overall enthusiasm and willingness to invest time and effort into mastering the language.

However, the analysis also reveals that the policy has not been universally motivating for all students. The item "The policy makes me feel pressured and less interested in improving my English" had a mean score of 3.3, with a significant number of students (74 students, 49.3%) disagreeing with the statement, and 48 students (32%) feeling neutral. This suggests that while some students might feel motivated and encouraged by the policy, others might experience stress or anxiety, which could reduce their overall interest and enthusiasm toward learning English. Additionally, the item "The policy makes me more interested in improving my English skills" received a mean score of 3.7, reflecting a moderate positive impact on students' interest in improving their language skills, although it was not as strong as the motivation to practice English outside the classroom. Together, these trends suggest that while the English-Only policy has largely fostered motivation for many students, there are some who may experience pressure or a decrease in interest, highlighting that the policy's impact is not uniformly positive across all students. Nonetheless, the overall data suggests that the policy has been beneficial in

enhancing students' motivation, especially for those who are more positively inclined toward learning English.

Table 3: The impact of the policy between public and private schools.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
1	The English-Only policy is more effective in private schools than in public schools	57	44	0	10	39	3.5
2	The teaching methods in private schools support the English-Only policy better than in public schools.	57	59	0	27	7	3.9
3	Students in private schools speak English more fluently than those in public schools due to the policy.	35	105	0	7	3	4.1
4	The resources available in private schools enhance the effectiveness of the English-Only policy.	57	44	0	10	39	3.5

The analysis under table 3 reveals a distinct difference in the perceived effectiveness of the English-Only policy between students in public and private schools, with private school students generally reporting more positive outcomes. The statement "The English-Only policy is more effective in private schools than in public schools" received a mean score of 3.5, indicating a moderate agreement with the idea that the policy is better implemented in private institutions. A substantial number of students in private schools (57 students, 38%) strongly agreed, and 44 students (29.3%) agreed, reflecting a positive perception of the policy's effectiveness in their schools. In contrast, public school students were less inclined to agree with this statement, suggesting that the policy may face greater challenges in these institutions, likely due to factors such as resource limitations or less effective implementation. Further analysis of teaching methods and available resources reinforces this trend. The item "The teaching methods in private schools support the English-Only policy better than in public schools" garnered a mean score of 3.9, with 59 students (39.3%) agreeing and 57 students (38%) strongly agreeing, signaling that students in private schools feel that the teaching strategies align more effectively with the policy. In comparison, the mean score for public school students would likely reflect lower levels of agreement, pointing to a gap in the quality of instructional methods. Similarly, the statement "Students in private schools speak English more fluently than those in public schools due to the policy" achieved the highest mean score of 4.1, which suggests that private school students felt more confident and fluent in English as a result of the English-Only policy. On the other hand, public school students, despite participating in the same policy, may not experience the same fluency improvements, likely due to the challenges of fewer resources or less emphasis on English language proficiency. Lastly, the item "The resources available in private schools enhance the effectiveness of the English-Only policy" also received a mean score of 3.5, reinforcing the perception that the availability of better resources in private schools contributes positively to the policy's success. Overall, the data indicates that the English-Only policy has had a more favorable impact in private schools, driven by more effective teaching methods, greater resources, and a more conducive learning environment. Conversely, public schools may face difficulties that hinder the full realization of the policy's potential.

Table 4: The challenges faced by students under the English-Only policy.

S/N	ITEM	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
1	The English-Only policy makes it difficult to understand lessons in class.	60	90	20	30	10	5.3
2	The policy creates pressure and anxiety when I speak English.	58	89	2	1	0	4.4
3	My native language helps me to better understand concepts taught in English	70	37	13	17	13	3.9
4	The English-Only policy makes it hard for me to participate in discussions confidently	45	74	32	2	0	4.1

Table 4 focuses on identifying the challenges faced by students under the English-Only policy, and the findings reveal significant difficulties that students encounter, particularly in terms of comprehension and communication. The statement "The English-Only policy makes it difficult to understand lessons in class" received a notably high mean score of 5.3, indicating that a substantial number of students, 60 strongly agreed and 90 agreed, feel that the policy hampers their ability to fully grasp lesson content. This suggests that, for many students, the exclusive use of English in the classroom may create barriers to understanding complex concepts, particularly in subjects where students may have limited proficiency in English. Such challenges may be exacerbated in cases where students' foundational understanding of the subject matter is not yet fully developed in English, thereby impeding their overall academic performance. This result emphasizes the need for a more balanced approach in the implementation of the English-Only policy, perhaps through more integrated language support or the use of bilingual teaching methods.

Additionally, students reported experiencing pressure and anxiety as a result of the policy. The statement "The policy creates pressure and anxiety when I speak English" had a high mean score of 4.4, with 58 students strongly agreeing and 89 agreeing, highlighting the emotional and psychological toll the policy takes on students. The fear of making mistakes or being unable to express themselves fluently may hinder students' participation and engagement in class discussions. However, it is also important to note that some students do find their native language helpful in understanding lessons, as indicated by the mean score of 3.9 for the item "My native language helps me to better understand concepts taught in English." This highlights a significant challenge in the policy's implementation, where students' reliance on their native language for comprehension may clash with the strict adherence to the English-Only rule. Despite these challenges, the item "The English-Only policy makes it hard for me to participate in discussions confidently" received a mean score of 4.1, suggesting that while students acknowledge these challenges, they may still recognize the importance of the policy in fostering English language skills. The data overall reflects that while the English-Only policy can increase pressure on students, it also highlights the need for more supportive measures to reduce anxiety and improve comprehension, such as allowing occasional use of native languages or providing additional language support.

3.1 Comparative Analysis

Table 5: Comparative Analysis table between the public and private school Effectiveness of the English-Only policy

Research Item	Public School Mean	Private School Mean	Interpretation
Effectiveness of the English-Only policy	3.5	3.9	Private schools perceive the policy as more effective than public schools, possibly due to better resources and teaching methods.
Support for the English-Only policy by teaching methods	3.8	3.9	Private schools report slightly better alignment between teaching methods and the policy,
Fluency in English among students	3.8	4.1	Private school students report greater fluency in English, likely due to better teaching methods, resources, and a stronger focus on English-language acquisition.
Availability of resources to enhance the policy	3.4	3.5	Both school types report similar levels of resource availability, though private schools tend to have a slight edge in supporting the English-Only policy.
Motivation to practice English outside the classroom	3.7	4.0	Private school students are more motivated to practice English outside of class, likely due to a more supportive learning environment

Learning enjoyment through the policy	3.6	4.1	Private school students report enjoying learning English more, possibly due to smaller class sizes and more personalized attention.
Feeling of pressure from the policy	4.0	4 2	Both groups experience pressure, but students in private schools report feeling slightly more pressured, which could be linked to higher expectations
Native language support for understanding English	3.8	3.9	Both groups indicate that their native language helps them understand lessons, but the slight difference suggests that students in public schools might rely more on their native language for comprehension.

4. CONCLUSION

The English-Only policy has shown potential to improve students' fluency in speaking English and foster motivation to practice the language among secondary school students in Katsina Local Government Area. The findings demonstrate that students generally feel more confident and fluent in English, with a majority expressing increased motivation to speak and learn the language. However, these positive outcomes are more prominent in private schools, where enhanced resources and more supportive teaching methods contribute to the policy's success. In contrast, public school students face challenges such as limited resources, inadequate teaching support, and heightened anxiety, which impede the policy's effectiveness. Additionally, a significant number of students experience difficulty comprehending lessons solely in English, suggesting that a rigid application of the English-Only rule may not be universally beneficial. The study concludes that while the English-Only policy is effective in promoting English language proficiency, a one-size-fits-all approach may not serve the diverse needs of all students. To enhance the policy's impact across various student demographics and school types, it is recommended that stakeholders adopt a more flexible approach, incorporating bilingual teaching methods and additional language support in public schools. A balanced application of the policy, with consideration of students' backgrounds and institutional resources, could foster an inclusive learning environment where all students can improve their English fluency effectively.

5. RECOMMENDATION

The following the recommendation are made for the Katsina state government, federal government and any other stakeholder

- The government should consider adopting a balanced bilingual policy, where the English-Only approach is supplemented by limited use of the students' first language (L1) to aid understanding, particularly for difficult subjects or concepts.
- State government should Invest in comprehensive teacher training to equip educators with the skills to effectively manage multilingual classrooms, integrating both English and local languages in a way that supports fluency while maintaining student motivation.
- Quality control of Katsina ministry of education should introduce flexibility in the curriculum that allows teachers to adapt their language instruction methods based on the linguistic backgrounds of their students, ensuring inclusivity in both public and private schools.
- Government should Provide adequate teaching materials and language resources, particularly in public schools, to facilitate effective English instruction and to create language-rich environments that encourage practice and fluency development.

6. Research Contribution

This study contributes to the existing literature on language policy in education, particularly in multilingual contexts like Nigeria. It highlights the practical challenges and benefits of implementing an English-Only policy in both public and private school settings. The research provides insights into how

such a policy affects both language fluency and student motivation, offering evidence-based recommendations for policymakers and educators. Additionally, this study underscores the importance of context-sensitive language policies that consider the unique linguistic and cultural dynamics of the students. By comparing public and private schools, the study brings attention to the different resource needs and teaching approaches required for successful language learning across educational settings.

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