

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of the study is anchored by and draws on Freize *et al.*'s (1983) expanded achievement attributional model and Ulrich Beck's (1992) individualised individual theory. The expanded achievement attributional model is used to show, understand and explain academic performance as a variable in the research question and hypotheses, while Beck's (1992) individualised individual theory is used in understanding and explaining the behaviour and attitude of married women towards higher education. This theory states that women's liberation is not only rewarding to people as individuals but also to societies, and depends largely on the empowerment of people.

The expanded achievement attribution model (Freize *et al.*, 1983) was proposed to consider the individual definitions people have for achievement, success and failure. Achievement and performance are used interchangeably by researchers in the field of education and social science. The model is an expansion of the original achievement attribution model (Weiner *et al.*, 1971), the criticism of which was based on neglect of prior judgement of success on which the attribution process depends, insensitivity to the impact of causal attributions on affective, cognitive or emotional factors, reaction to success and failure, and lack of in-depth integration of internal and controllable determinants of performance and attribution in relation to external and uncontrollable factors such as culture.

The expanded achievement attribution model (Freize *et al.*, 1983) explicitly allows for the determination of the subjective level of academic success before an attribution is made; which is what I propose to do in this study. The Frieze *et al.* (1983) expanded achievement attributional model pinpoints the fact that the academic performance of adult students involves a process and is interconnected. This process forms a link between the different stages of the entire performance evaluation cycle. In addition, the expanded achievement attributional model is concerned with the values people have with regard to appropriate areas where achievement is strived for, and it relates these values to

the cognitive and affective responses to success or failure. Furthermore, as it is typical of performance or achievement-driven research (Weiner *et al.*, 1971), the expanded model of attribution requires an understanding of the “attribution process” (Frieze *et al.*, 1983; Doolittle, 2007).

Frieze *et al.* (1983) and Doolittle (2007) reveal that the attribution process focuses on what happens to a person in achievement behaviour. They argue by means of the expanded achievement attributional model that, once achievement behaviour occurs, information about the performance is used immediately to infer why the outcome occurred. In terms of the model, before the determination of the level of success or failure is made, a more complex sequence of initial information processing is required. The initial information includes task, self and social standards which are categorised into controllable and uncontrollable. In a different but similar tone, Maehr and Nicholls (1974) show that the association between internal attributions and perceptions of success and failure may depend on the specific value system of the culture (e.g. our cultural practice or cultural value efforts). Weiner *et al.*'s (1971) work shows that pride and shame are not the only, or even necessarily the dominant, emotions associated with academic achievement outcomes; a wide variety of emotions such as surprise, frustration, anger and gratitude occur as a result of achievement-oriented behaviour. This seems to agree with the opinion of Beck when he explains the obstacles to women's liberalisation in the context of culture, self and identity.

However, other work indicates that attributions affect the judgement of success. For example, Maehr and Nicholls (1974) suggest that a person does not feel successful doing a task unless there is a sense that the outcome is the result of internal, controllable factors. I add to this: a person will feel successful and fulfilled if he/she knows that people or the community believe in or support what he/she is doing. Unfortunately for women, culture often does not allow society to see any good in their education because of their confined roles and duties (Haese & Kirsten, 2002). Also, the marginalisation of females in decision making on the institutional and national contemporary political scene, where women are regulated or denied participation in the decision-making process, further legitimises the situation. For instance, in Nigeria, women are not given the space to operate or express

themselves in the political arena like their male counterparts in institutions in the country, including higher education institutions. At all levels of government women are under-represented. Even the seemingly gender consciousness of Nigerian society aroused by the Better Life Programme, the Family Support Programme and the Beijing Conference has not improved women's political participation. The gender profile of the National Constitutional Conference mandated by the late General Abacha to draft a new constitution to be promulgated into law by the Provisional Ruling Council is 361 males to eight females. However, this is an improvement on the Constitutional Drafting Committee set up by the Obasanjo Military Regime in 1978, which did not appoint one woman among the 40 men charged with the responsibility for drafting a new constitution (Ezeilo, 1999). Recently, in this fourth republic, out of a total of 11,881 positions open for election, only 631 women contested and only 181 won, representing a mere 1.62% (Ezeilo, 2000).

Outside elected positions, women's participation in politics and national decision making is usually at the peripheral level. That is, at the level of the women's wing of their political parties or the first ladies of their states, local government areas or the federation, depending on the political office their husband occupies. This situation attests to the under-representation of women in decision making and national affairs.

Moreover, in agreement with Pereira (2003), Odejide (2004:453) states in his recent study title *What can a woman do? Being women in a Nigerian university*, that Nigerian universities, like other similar institutions in the country, function as major sites for the production and reproduction of contemporary gender identities and gender inequalities. "Part of the lived experience of being female on a Nigerian university campus is being portrayed and treated as subordinate ostensibly because of 'traditional culture' and social and familial factors which view women as fragile and dependant on male protection ..." (Odejide *et al.*, 2005). This corroborates the arguments of those who point to the influence of contemporary politics on gender inequalities in Nigeria and in other developing countries (Nzegwu, 2001; Oyewumi, 2002; Bennett, 2002; Mama, 2003). These scholars note that women experience higher education differently and that social

relations within the education which replicate in the larger society depict inequalities in the operations of power, as is evident in the statistics of access, employment, decision-making bodies and welfare and the capacity to access research and professional opportunities. The experience and behaviour of women and men, both at institutional and at the societal level at large, are a core consideration for an achievement model (Weiner *et al.*, 1971).

Freize *et al.*'s (1983) expanded achievement attributional model is one of the most influential of all achievement and performance conceptualisations because of the encompassed variegated integers or determinants of achievement, the high cognisance of affective achievement outcomes and a touch of what I call "academic competition".

Academic competition is an achievement behaviour concerned with competition against personal standards of excellence, and success is equated with achieving those standards. Within this framework, academic success should be seen as involving competition with others as well as hard work; hence, the enrolment and access of women students in higher education. Using the enrolment rates of women students in higher education, the rationality and relationship between enrolment/access and academic performance can be extensively understood. The expanded achievement attribution model stresses that an increase in the number of students of the same age group, sex, status, and so forth, stirs up competition among them. On account of this, a call for increasing the participation and enrolment of women in higher education should be a "thing of consciousness" (Bolarin, 2001; Mukangara & Koda, 1997).

Although Maslow (1954), in his famous theory of motivation, regards competition as fundamental to success, his ideas stress intellectual and social products that are socially validated. According to Beck (1999; 2002; 2005), the demonstration of competence and independence, and support from family members and husband/wife are also essential to performance success or failure.

In summary, Frieze *et al.* (1983) used the attribution process to buttress their expanded achievement attribution model to show factors that determine academic performance and their interconnectivity.

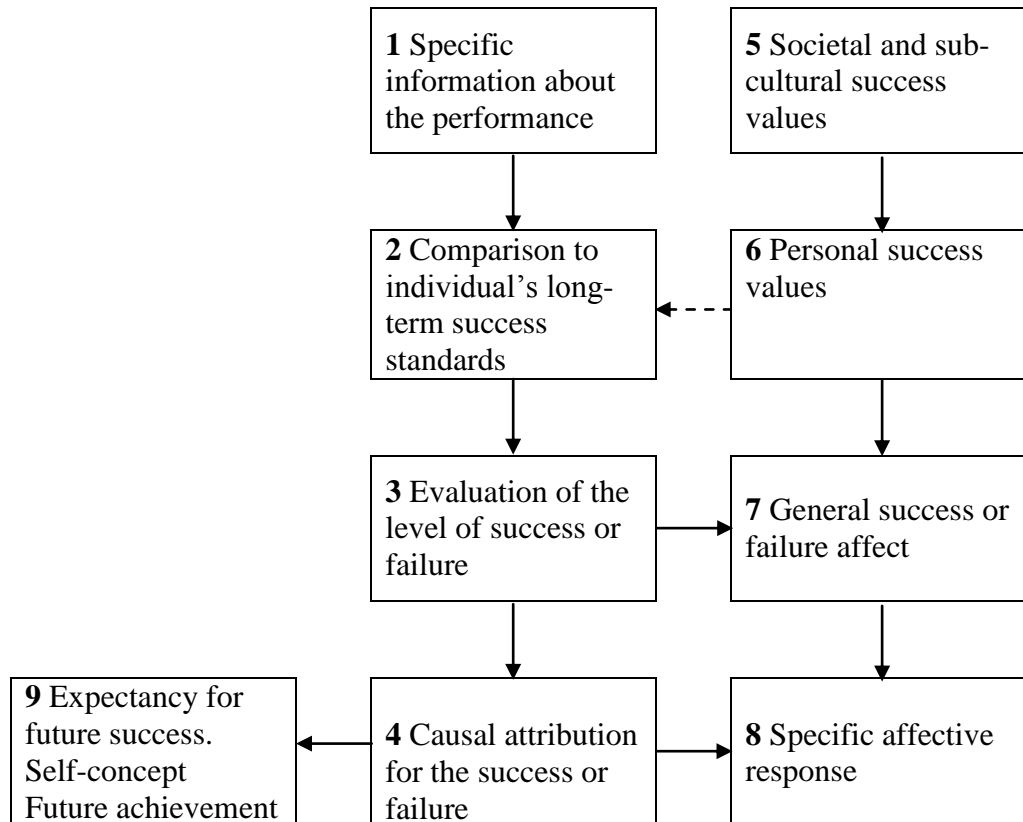


Figure 1.1: Short-term reactions to the achievement/performance event

Source: Frieze *et al.* (1983:14)

In Figure 1.1 above, Box 1 is used to infer why the outcome occurred in Box 4. In the model, before the determination of the level of success can be made, a more complex sequence of initial information processing is proposed (Boxes 1, 2 and 3). The information included in Box 1, which is believed to be relevant in determining the level of success or failure, includes the objective score or performance level (if such information is available), as well as other information already available to the person, such as how much effort was put into the performance, the prior performance expectation, and how challenging the task was. These bits of information are then

assessed against the long-term personal success standards of the individual (Box 2). For example, the objective performance level may be compared to the person's previous performance. The level of effort and mood are also evaluated. These assessments may be made relative to outcomes experienced in the past, or they may be compared to absolute standards. This information processing stage then results in a subjective evaluation of how good (or how successful) the performance was (Box 3). The model postulates that it is this subjective success evaluation that influences the general positive or negative affect associated with the outcome (Box 7), as well as the causal attribution made (Box 4). Both of these steps then lead to a specific attribution – dependent affective response (Box 8). The model proposes that both the general affective responses and the attribution dependent affect are moderated by the values of the society (Box 5) and the personal values of the individual (Box 6). Lastly, (Box 9) in alignment with previous attribution research (McClelland, 1961; Weiner, 1971), the causal attribution is seen as influencing an individual's expectancies for future success, future achievement behaviour and general self-concept.

According to Frieze *et al.* (1983; Doolittle, 2007), the major feature of the model is that the subjective evaluation of the outcome precedes the formation of the causal attribution, but follows the information acquisition stage. Also, the objective and the subjective outcomes are seen as separate variables, with the objective outcome being considered as just one of several determinants of subjective success appraisal. The affective response is divided into two components, one dependent on the causal attribution and the other a direct result of the success appraisal. Finally, the model specifically incorporates the influence of values on the affective responses to various levels of outcomes.

Having identified cultural practices as a potential factor in women's academic performance in higher education (see pages 73, 74, 75 & 76), I proceed to locate culture within a suitable framework that will be helpful in understanding culture and women in relation to education and empowerment. Beck's individualised individual theory is embraced to understand the dynamism of culture and women's liberation and empowerment. Ulrich Beck, a German sociologist, used his theory of the individualised individual in his work, *Risk society: Towards a new modernity*, to show the interplay

between social actors and the desires of women in a contemporary society. Beck (1992; 2002) and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) reveal that social factors, such as culture and tradition, necessitate changes in the attitude, behaviour and perception of women towards marriage, education and general life style. Falola (2001) believes that change is an attitude, and that the behaviour of individuals is a fallout of culture. Culture is embedded in society; people live and are part of society, and culture and society are inseparable. For this reason, it is almost impossible for people to take themselves out of a culture – no wonder sociologists say it is a way of life.

A key contributory factor to the development of the individualised individual is the liberation of women. As Beck (1992:105) states, in a reflexive modernity, “people ... are removed from the constraints of gender”. His argument points to the idea that men and women are being released from their traditional, ascribed gender roles. Concurrently, Beck points out that these changes reside more in people’s minds than in their actual practices. His strong advocacy for women’s liberation is linked to feminist exploration and explanations of structures of power and gender, and particularly, in second-wave feminism (see Barret, 1980; Bank, 1981; Skelton, 2005). Second-wave feminism sought to actively re-evaluate femininity and masculinity and develop new understandings of what it means to be human (Wetherell, 2006:216). Second-wave feminism encouraged women to understand aspects of their personal lives as being deeply politicised, and reflective of a sexist structure of power (Brittan, 1984). While first-wave feminism focused on absolute rights such as suffrage, second-wavers were largely concerned with other issues of equality, such as an end to discrimination (Freedman, 2003) and entrance to liberation.

Women’s liberation, according to Beck (2002:202) and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995; 2002), is identified as the release from ‘compulsory housework and support by a husband’. This, I believe, is good for women as it will motivate and encourage them in their education. Although Beck writes that power brings about liberation, he fails to provide a concrete, clear and precise definition for what he means by power and how it informs his theory. In my own understanding, and aligning to Skelton’s (2002) opinion, Beck (1999; 2005) sees power as a limited resource with the implication that men,

through masculinism, are able to access it and that this is enabling for them but disabling for women. Moreover, liberal feminist theorists see equal opportunities for men and women as a vehicle for power balancing. With equal opportunities, women will be able to compete with men and their talents, as well as to productively utilise their abilities in the general interests of the society. Equal educational, economic and political access; quality health care; freedom from violence; and protected human rights are necessary conditions for women's wellbeing (Harrison, 2009). Women's wellbeing is the rationale behind gender equality, which, in turn, enhances inclusiveness. More inclusive human rights movements informed by feminist thought and action are central to cultivating that collective will and the wellbeing of a nation (Billson & Fleuhr-Lobban, 2005:411). Given the argument of liberal feminists, I suggest that power is, *inter alia*, the availability of opportunities. Women are regarded as powerless because the opportunities needed for them to demonstrate their potential, abilities and talents are structurally absent.

I consider Beck's theory of the individualised individual for the study because of the increasing attention it is receiving from social scientists, especially those interested in social justice, women's education and equality issues (Reay, 2003; Skelton, 2005). Secondly, Beck's argument has some commonalities with Buchmann (1989) and Giddens (1991; 1992), who reveal that societies have moved away from the old "left versus right" political distinction (societies where people are born, live and die within a confined boundary with the same way of life as their parents) and are being replaced by globalisation and globalised citizenship.

Skelton (2005) uses the individualised individual model to explain the tension and struggles that exist between men and women and between women and women in the academic workplace. The study examines the ways in which power differentials emerge for younger female academics through a combination of their age and marital status. Also, it discusses the importance of higher qualifications (degrees) for female academics in order for them to compete with their male counterparts locally and in a global context. As Beck emphasises, ideally women are part of modern society and should move to being politically distinct and a part of globalisation and should become globalised citizens.

In agreement with Beck, it is now generally accepted that the modern state must promote the course of social justice. Most modern constitutions recognise this as one of the cardinal functions of the state. The foundation on which this philosophy rests is the equality of human beings irrespective of colour, status, gender, social class and so on. This rests on the assumption and embraces thinking that human beings are created equal. The individualised individual theory will help me to understand how culture can sustain irrationality, unfulfilling lifestyles and social injustice, revealing the degree to which certain ways of life within culture are strategically organised to preserve the interests of some members of the society to the detriment of others (Hebert & Beardsley, 2001). I am aware of the argument against the individualised individual model and other similar theories as revealed by the literature. These arguments basically state that such theories tend to split the world rather than unifying it by exposing the oppressed and the oppressor. This, they say, will pave the way for conflict. This contribution to knowledge is appreciated but I disagree with it because it is only when the oppressed and the oppressor are known and separately understood that reconciliation can take place and the world becomes unified and a better place for all.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter examines the research design used in this study. In order to focus on the discussion, the purpose of the study, research questions and research hypotheses are restated below.

4.1.1 Purpose of the study restated

Through this study, I aimed to show the experiences of women students in higher education and how their experiences influence their academic performance. Linked to this is my aim to understand and explain the academic performance of *married women students* in higher education in Nigeria. It is my contention that there could be a relationship between cultural practices and the academic performance of women students in higher education; that there could be differences in the academic performance of married women students as they progress from one year or level of study to another; and that there is the possibility of differences in the academic performance of married women students and single women students in higher education.

4.1.2 Research questions restated

What is the understanding of and explanation for the academic performance of married women students in Nigeria?

4.1.2.1 Sub research questions restated

- What are the dominant cultural practices that impact the education of married women in Nigeria?

- What are the key trends in the academic performance of married women students in higher education in Nigeria?
- What are the differences/similarities in the academic performance of married women students and single women students in Nigerian higher education?

4.1.3 Research hypotheses restated

Before conducting an empirical investigation to determine relationships and differences between variables, I deem it necessary to formulate hypotheses. Hypotheses are educated “guesses about how the social world works” (Neuman, 1997:128). Tredoux and Durrheim (2002) state that a hypothesis is a tentative statement of a relationship between two variables. In order for the research questions to be answered, I formulated hypotheses, which helped me to remain focused as I conducted and wrote the study (Knight, 2002:15).

For the purpose of this study, the hypotheses were stated in null form. A null hypothesis is a statement in which it is stated and maintained that there is no difference or relationship between groups or variables (Tredoux & Durrheim, 2002). I opt to state the hypotheses in the null form because I do not know the level of significant difference or the relationship between the research question variables. Therefore the following hypotheses were formulated:

- Ho1: There is no significant relationship between cultural practices and the academic performance of women students in higher education.
- Ho2: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of married women students in year 1 and in year 2 of study.
- Ho3: There is no significant difference in the academic performance of married women students and single women students in higher education.

4.2 Research design

4.2.1 Introduction

In line with the theoretical framework that informs this study, a mixed method research design was employed: quantitative and qualitative research methods were combined.

4.2.2 Research design and method

This study is analytical and was aimed at understanding and explaining the academic performance of married women students in higher education. I employed a mixed research design, which is said to mirror “real life”. “Mixed method research is both a method and a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing, and integrating quantitative and qualitative research in a single study or longitudinal programme of inquiry” (Creswell, 2003). The purpose of this form of research is “that both quantitative and qualitative research, combined, provides a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either research approach alone” (Creswell, 2007). In this study, qualitative methods are used to facilitate ‘understanding’ while quantitative methods are used to facilitate ‘explaining’. When both of these are merged they give better insight into the study than if only one method was used.

4.2.3 Quantitative research

Quantitative research is an inquiry that is concerned with numerical representation and manipulation of observations and responses for the purpose of describing and explaining the phenomena that those observations and responses reflect (Babbie, 2008:443). Put differently, Blanche *et al.* (2006:563) define quantitative research as research in which data are collected or coded into numerical forms, and to which statistical analyses may be applied to determine the significance of the findings.

Mouton's (2006) argument in favour of a quantitative research method for analytical study is partly the reason for my choice of a mixed research design. Mouton recommends that a quantitative research method is appropriate for analytical research because it involves scientific analysis. As a researcher with a background in economics and with adequate knowledge of statistics, I believe like other quantitative researchers that measuring the properties of phenomena (e.g. the attitudes and performance of individuals with regard to a certain topic) should be through quantitative measurement, that is, by assigning numbers to the perceived qualities of variables (Pidgeon, 1995:438). With this, the formulated hypothesis (HO1, HO2 and HO3) can be scientifically tested (Whitley, 2002:344). Moreover, quantitative research is highly formalised and explicitly controlled, and its range is more exact (Mouton & Marais, 1999:155–156; De Vos *et al.*, 2007).

4.2.4 Qualitative research

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social or human problem (Creswell, 1998:15). Qualitative research seeks to preserve the integrity of narrative data and attempts to use the data to exemplify unusual or core themes embedded in contexts (Blanche, Durrheim & Painter, 2006:563).

Qualitative research encourages both inductive and deductive reasoning which is one component of an analytical study like this current study (Gilbert, 2001; Frankel & Devers, 2000). Also, given the fact that I used the conversation as one mean of data collection, I align myself with Harre (1983) who states that one good way of understanding a person or people is to see them as a set of possible and actual locations which emerge from conversations and social acts. The person comprises a changing location in an interaction or process rather than an object with a predefined essential character and abilities. The activities and practices associated with teaching and learning and their outcomes, as for the case of women students in higher education, provide a good example of what Harre means by the notion of a location or position in a set of social practices or a social world.

4.2.5 Mixed research design: The researcher's choice

Logically, quantitative research plus qualitative research is equal to mixed research design. Using only a quantitative or a qualitative approach in a research falls short of what is used in the social and human sciences today (Makhanu, 2010; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003:5). On the account of this, I considered mixed research design to be my choice of design for this study. Apart from the fact that mixed research design suit most the purpose of the study and will provide answers to the research questions in one study; my philosophical assumptions – pragmatism (see page 13) which underline this study played an important role in my choice of research design. Proponents of mixed research design adhere to the compatibility thesis (Johnson & Christensen, 2004:1) as they explain that quantitative and qualitative research methods are compatible and they can both be used in a single research study. They also believe that adopting a mixed method design is pragmatic since the researchers are not committed to any system of philosophy and reality. In same Opinion to Makhanu (2010) who carried out a study on ‘principals’ literacy in information and communication technology: Towards improving secondary school performance in Kenya’, this study therefore employed a mixed research design with a concurrent strategy of inquiry. Creswell (2003:16) note that “the concurrent strategy enables a researcher to investigate different issues at the same time”. In this study, I investigated the academic performance of married women students in higher education. While I do this, I seek to understand and explain the academic performance of women students in higher education; to know whether there is a significant difference in the academic performance of married women students and single women students in higher education; to know whether there is a significant relationship between cultural practices and academic performance of women students in higher education and lastly to know if there is a significant difference in the academic performance of married women students in year one and year two of their study in higher education, all at the same time and in one study. Importantly, my choice for mixed research design was linked to my intention to gather the same type of data via different means. Also, as a means to triangulate knowing that triangulation will be useful in cross checking between data collected. The advantages of mixed method together with my personal reasons above are my reasons for choosing mixed research design for this study. The advantages of mixed

research design according to Creswell (1994:175) include: (a) it is complimentary, because overlapping and different facts of a phenomenon may emerge; (b) it helps to integrate results; (c) it helps contradictions and fresh perspectives to emerge; (d) it is developmental because the quantitative method is used sequentially to help inform on the qualitative method; (e) and mixed research design adds scope and breadth to the study.

4.3 Data collection method

With regard to data collection, a survey was employed. A survey supports the collection of data by asking questions and recording peoples' answers or responses (Whitley, 2002). Surveys are fundamentally a matter of asking a sample of people from a population a set of questions to describe their opinion, beliefs and experiences and perhaps to draw conclusions (Floyd & Fowler, 2009:1). The use of a survey was imperative and inevitable in this study because it is probably the best method available to the social researcher who is interested in collecting original data for describing and understanding a population too large to observe directly (Babbie, 2008:270). Besides, in agreement, Whitley (2002) and Babbie (2008) beautifully express that survey is an excellent vehicle for measuring or understanding attitudes and orientations towards a given subject in a large population, and is chiefly used in studies like this one where individual people are the units of analysis. Survey as a means of collecting data is compatible with mixed research design (Floyd & Fowler, 2009).

4.3.1 Research instruments

Whitley (2005) and De Vos *et al.* (2005) note that there are six ways in which survey data can be collected group administered questionnaires, mail questionnaires, personal interviews, telephone interviews, focus groups, and computer-administered questionnaires. Although each method has its advantages and disadvantages, each also has situations to which it is best suited. From the six data collection methods it can thus be extrapolated that the research instruments available in terms of the research design that

I have chosen are questionnaires and interviews. Hence, in this study questionnaire and interviews, as well as the examination results of respondents, was used as research instruments.

4.3.1.1 Quantitative research instruments

A questionnaire was designed to collect data from the respondents (see attached appendix L). This questionnaire was titled the ‘The academic performance of married women students in Nigerian higher education questionnaire’ and both closed and open-ended questions were used. The questionnaire is a suitable instrument for quantitative research because it allowed me to give a number of options as responses in determining the extent to which respondents hold a particular view on what I was investigating (Babbie & Mouton, 2001:233). My reason for using a questionnaire was because it helps to generate quantifiable data that are ready for statistical analysis (Mugenda, 2008:285). The questionnaire allowed the respondents to read and answer identical questions related to the topic that I was investigating, thereby ensuring consistency in the data collection (Saunders *et al.*, 2007:357). Another reason for using a questionnaire was because it helped to generate standardised data, which made the processing of responses easier. According to Panneerselvam (2008:93), standardised data help to increase the validity and reliability of the results.

Furthermore, the use of a questionnaire enabled me to obtain data and opinions about a phenomenon from people who are informed on the issue under investigation (Delpont, 2007). Open-ended questions allow respondents to say anything they like and to say it in their own words. Closed-ended questions involve multiple-choice questions: respondents were required to select one alternative from a list of options provided by the researcher. I used more closed-ended questions because the response option can be chosen to represent categories of interest to the researcher and because it can be designed in such a way as to be easily quantified (Whitley, 2002:345). The questionnaire is divided into five sections: section A (Demographic data), section B (Attitude of women to higher education),

section C (Academic performance of women students in higher education), section D (Culture, women and higher education), section E (General).

Collectively, the questionnaire comprises thirty two (32) questions. In each section, there are ten (10) questions expect for section E that has two questions. All ten questions for sections A-D are all closed - ended questions that are related to each section's 'heading or caption' while the two questions for section E are open - ended questions aimed at knowing from the participants if there was anything that they wish to ask me or something that I did not ask them concerning the research topic.

4.3.1.2 Qualitative research instruments

For the qualitative data I used semi-structured interviews. Kvale (in Sewell, 2001:1) and Kvale (2007) define interviews as “attempts to understand the world from the participant's point of view, to unfold the meaning of people's experiences, and to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanation”. Interviewing is the predominant mode of data or information collecting, especially in qualitative research, an integer of mixed method research. Interviews was used because I was interested in the stories of other people in order to find out whether there are any similarities or differences to my wife's story (see rationale for the study) (Seidman, 1998:1).

Stories are a way of knowing. According to Greef, cited in De Vos *et al.* (2005) telling and perhaps listening to stories is essentially a meaning-making process. In other word, all interviews are interactional events and interviews are deeply and unavoidably implicated in creating meanings that ostensibly resides within participants (Manning, in Holstein & Gubrium, 1995:4). In this study, the focused group interview was used.

4.3.1.2.1 Focus group interview

A focus group interview is a semi structured group that deals with a specific topic or experience that is familiar to members of the group (Whitley, 2002:380). Babbie

(2008:338) writes that focus group is a group of subjects interviewed together, prompting a discussion. The focus group interview was used in this study because the study (the academic performance of married women students in higher education) is tentatively a new area yet to be explored in Nigeria. This reason tallies with the opinion of Carey (in Morise, 1994:224) that focus group interviews could be meaningful in the case of a new topic, or when one is trying to take a new topic to a population, or if one wants to explore thoughts and feelings and not just behaviour. Importantly, and as it specifically apply to this study, Focus group interview provides a basis for interpreting statistically significant findings from a parallel qualitative study. This enables a distinction to be made between “objective” facts of the situation (quantitative) and the interviewees’ subject definitions (qualitative) of with a view of comparing them (Flick, 2009:150).

The focus group interview in this study was made up of focus group conversation and interview protocol.

4.3.1.2.2 Focus Group Conversation

Using the focus group conversation, I engaged the participants in a semi structured conversation. The conversation led to participants narrating their experiences in form of storytelling.

All together twelve research participants took part in the focus group conversation. These participants were part of the respondents, who completed the questionnaire. They showed further interest in participating in the focus group conversation when I seek for participants to participate in the focus group conversation. The participants for the focus group conversation were randomly selected after many of the respondents who completed the questionnaire showed their interest in the focus group conversation. Twelve participants all together were selected for both institutions (Lagos State University and Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education) – research sites. Of these participants, six are married women and six are single women studying in higher education. The focus group conversation was held at two research site: Lagos State University and the Adeniran

Ogunsanya College of Education. Three married women and three single women took part as research participants in the conversation at each of the sites.

4.3.1.2.3 Recording the focus group conversation

There is need to mention here that I reside in South Africa where I am studying for my PhD despite linkage of my research title to Nigeria. On the account of this, I had to travel to Nigeria for the collection of data. On the day of the focus group conversation I went to the research sites armed with a tape recorder to record the conversation. Unfortunately, when I arrived I found that no electricity was available. This meant that I was unable to record the discussion. As a solution I wrote detailed notes and tried, as far as possible, to capture the actual words of the participants. As a consequence, the discussion lasted much longer than anticipated, with each discussion lasting approximately two hours instead of the planned one hour. However, the participants did not complain of the additional time spent.

4.3.1.2.4 Interview Protocol

Creswell (2007:133) describe interview protocol as a form about four to five pages in length, with approximately five open-ended questions and ample space between the questions to write responses to the interviewee's or research participants' responses. In this study the interview protocol used is made up of sixteen (16) open –ended questions and instead of writing the responses of participants myself (researcher) on the space between the questions, I gave the form to the participants since they can read to complete. My aim was to get their opinion or responses in writing form knowing that the same participants were going to participate in the focus group conversation where they will be speaking. The interview protocol was completed individually. Twelve research participants, six in each research site (three married and three single women student) participated in the completion of the interview protocol. For the purpose of data organisation and classification of responses from the interview protocol, themes were

generated. To generate themes, the subheadings of the reviewed literature for this study were considered and used as a yardstick. These themes include higher education, the academic performance of women students, and cultural practice in Nigeria (see chapter 2). In addition other themes include educational support and challenges. Educational support and challenges were considered as one theme because of its cognitive emphasis by participants.

In analysing data gathered from the interview protocol, all the completed interview protocols were read through several times to obtain an overall feeling for the opinions of the participants.

From each interview protocol, significant statements that pertain directly to the experience of women students studying in higher education, and which also relate to the generated themes, were identified. Meanings were then formulated or derived from the significant statements. I referred to these meanings as ‘deduced’ meanings. The deduced meanings were later clustered allowing for the emergence of the common experiences of participants. Therefore, the experiences or results from the cluster were then integrated into an in-depth, exhaustive discussion or description of the research phenomenon so as to enable the researcher to provide answer(s) to the relevant research question(s).

4.4 Population of the study

The population involved in this study comprised undergraduate women students (married and single) between the ages of 18 and 45 who are currently in their third year of study at a recognised higher education institution in Nigeria. However, I am aware of the fact that, in the course of the study, the marital status of some students might change. For instance, single women students may become married women and some married women may become divorcees or widows. For this reason, the population of the study was much higher than the calculated or required population as stipulated by the sample size percentage guide (Stoker, 1985). Statistically, it is arguable that a higher population

(beyond the determined sample size guide) should be used to counter the problem that might arise as a result of a shift (decrease or increase) in the population of the study.

Secondly, a wide age range to broaden the population was also decided on to take care of such a problem – possible decrease in the number of research respondents and participants as the research progress.

4.5 Sample and sampling technique

The sample for this study comprised women students drawn from the Lagos State University and the Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education. To define them precisely, they are women students from the Faculty of Education and the School of Education respectively. Both faculties focus on similar work. One is based at a university – where there are other faculties and the other is a college dedicated to training teachers.

The students selected for the sample are all in year 3 of their study. Eighty nine women students – married and single, both institutions combined formed the total sampled research participants. I chose both institutions for three reasons: Firstly, the faculty and school of education at both institutions are among the institutions with the highest number of women students in the state's higher education institutions as at the time when the study was carried out (Lagos State University, Faculty of Education Handbook, 2008 and School of Education, Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education Handbook, 2008). Secondly, many teachers in the state were trained in these institutions (my experience as a principal of a group of schools in the state saddled with the responsibility of employing teachers and a lecturer in a polytechnic over the years reveals this).

In this study I combined Graziano and Raulin's (2000) representative sampling method and purposive sampling technique. The representative sampling method helped me to understand the concept of representativeness and its relationship to generalisation, as I make use of questionnaires and examination scores for statistical purposes. With this I was able to draw conclusions about the statistical findings of the study on the assumption that what is observed in the sample of subjects would also be observed in any other group

of subjects from the population. Specifically, the purposive sampling technique was employed because only women studying in tertiary institutions of learning were taken into consideration as a sample of the population (Singleton *et al.*, 1988).

Purposive sampling is done to increase the utility of information obtained from participants who were faced with the research problem(s) the researcher is interested in providing answer(s) to. Patton (1990:169; 2002) describes purposive sampling as “selecting information-rich cases to study in-depth”. Patton (2002:40–41) further asserts that purposive sampling aims to gain insight about a phenomenon, such as the academic performance of married women students in Nigerian higher education and not to develop empirical generalisations. Apart from the faculty handbook of both institutions, which revealed that the number of women students is highest in the sampled or chosen faculty, I was also of the opinion that it makes sense to compare similar institutions and faculties

4.5.1 The respondents and participants

In this study, I was concerned with the use of appropriate and distinguished terminologies knowing that my research is mixed method. I refer to the research participants in quantitative aspect of the study as respondents while the term participant was used in qualitative. The respondents and participants for this study comprised women students drawn from higher education, that is, the Lagos State University and the Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education. The respondents and participants are all in year 3 of their study. I chose respondents and participants in year three of their study because I believed that an in-depth experiences of women studying in higher education can be obtained from women students who are currently studying in higher education and who have spent at least three years in higher education institution. The duration of their higher education programme is four years for the University and three years for College of Education. More so, I needed the academic results of respondents and participants for year one and two of their study therefore, I believe that all their academic results for year 1 and year 2 would be ready and can be collected for use especially at the point of data analysis.

4.5.2 Accessing the respondents and participants

Research without respondents and participants is almost impossible. In this study, accessing the respondents and participants required gaining access to the research sites because the respondents and participants are students who were studying in institutions of learning. Avoiding the inconvenience of arranging research sites elsewhere and the possibility of not getting reasonable number of respondents and participants if research sites are outside the campus of the institutions were reasons for my choice of research sites (Lagos state University and Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education). To access the respondents and participants of this study the following steps were taken:

First, I wrote a letter to both institutions seeking permission to conduct my research in their institutions (see attached appendix). Upon approval of my request, I formally gained access to the research sites. At that point, I realised that there was still the need to access the respondents and participants. To do this, the second step was taken. The second step was concerned with meeting the then prospective respondents and participants. In an attempt to meet them I relied on my familiarity with the institutions and my contacts in the institutions. I obtained both my bachelor's and master's degree from the Lagos State University that makes me an alumina. I am familiar with the settings of the institution. Together with my approval letter to conduct research in the institution, gaining access to the institution and the students did not present a problem. Furthermore, while I was studying for my master degree in Lagos State University I did a three-month practicum (a compulsory course at master's level) at the Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education. While I was there I made friends with some of the academic and non-academic staff at the College, whom I relied on to gain access to the institution. Having gained access to the institutions; it became quite easy to access the respondents. At that point, I found out personally where the group I wanted to work with meet for their lectures. Thereafter I approached them personally. I introduced myself and requested their participation in my research – The academic performance of married women students in Nigerian higher education. The entire women students with no exception agreed to be part of the research. Some of them requested that I show them my identification documents and letter of approval permitting me to carry out my research in their institution before they agreed to

be part of the research. This I did and their agreement to participate in the research was confirmed.

4.6 Validity and reliability

4.6.1 Validity

McMillan and Schumacher (2001:407) say “*validity refers to the degree to which the explanations of phenomena match the realities of the world*”. According to Gay and Airasian (2000:42), validity is that quality of a data gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to measure what it is suppose to measure.

4.6.1.1 Validity in quantitative research

The research instruments in the quantitative aspect of this study include academic results of students for year one and year two of research respondents and participants.

To ensure validity of the academic results used, I collected the academic results directly from the institutions of learning where the research respondents and participants were studying as at the time the study was carried out. With regard to the validity of the questionnaire, I drafted the questionnaire and presented it to my supervisor who scrutinised it to determine the extent to which it, as an empirical measure, accurately reflects the concepts it is intended to measure (Babbie, 2004:143). On the recommendation of my supervisor, I forwarded a copy of the questionnaire to the Department of Statistics at the University of Pretoria in order for qualified statisticians to scrutinise and comment on it. For over three months, my supervisor, the department of statistics and I were regularly in consultation through emails, phone conversation and meetings in their office at the main campus of the University to decide and arrive at the final version of the questionnaire. In addition, I forwarded the questionnaire to Professor T.A Bolarin and Dr Sola Aina of the Lagos State University, Nigeria for comments and

overview. Prof. T.A Bolarin is an expert on gender studies and cultural practices. And Dr. Sola Aina is an expert in educational management and policy studies. The suggestions and comments of all the persons and institution consulted were put to use in making corrections and amendments. Corrections and amendments were effected and the final version of the questionnaire was produced. With this, I was able to know the degree to which the instrument or measurement process measures the variable it claims to measure (Gravetter & Forzano, 2003:87).

4.6.1.2 Validity in qualitative research

In the case of the qualitative research instruments validity, similar procedure as above was taken (as in the case of quantitative research). I drafted the original questions meant for the focus group conversations and interview protocol. The questions were simultaneously presented to my supervisor alongside the questionnaire used for this study. My supervisor spent time to look at the questions. She returned the questions to me with suggestions and comments after a week of thorough review. The same questions were also reviewed by Professor J.W Creswell of the University of Illinois USA Whom, I was privileged to meet when he came to University of Pretoria (faculty of Education) to present a seminar on mixed method research in 2008. I seized that opportunity to request him to help review questions for my research. He was glad and offered the review on hearing my research title and the research design I intend to use. To conclude the validation process of the questions for focus group conversation and interview protocol, the contributions of Professor T.A Bolarin was also sought. Having noted the comments of Prof. J.W Creswell, I then forwarded the questions to Prof. Bolarin through post. On receiving the questions back from her, I put the comments and recommendations to work and the final questions for the focus group conversation and interview protocol was produced. While all the consultations were on going, I was constantly in touch (communicating) with my supervisor.

4.6.1.3 Validity in quantitative and qualitative research combined.

As part of the entire validity process (quantitative and qualitative research) was the role of the ethics committee of the University of Pretoria. The committee issued clearance certificate after a critical look at research instruments especially as it applies to validity, reliability, and ethics amongst others (see attached appendices and ethics clearance certificate).

The validity of the study and the conclusions was based on the richness, honesty, depth and scope of the data I collected (Cohen *et al*, 2003). In addition, the validity of the study was also addressed by triangulation. Triangulation is a check that involves using more than one method of data collection (questionnaire, academic results of research participants, focus group conversation and interview protocol) as a way of explaining intellectually and in detail the complexity of human behaviour (Denzin, 1994; Cohen *et al.*, 2003). I chose to triangulate because it allowed me to use more than one source of data collection to verify and cross-check data. Moreover, the sampled institutions academic results/records were used to verify students' claims about academic performance. The different sources of data used helped to build a coherent justification for the literature theme (Creswell, 2003; Gay & Airasian, 2003). In simple terms, I triangulated by using four different research instruments – questionnaire; academic results of sampled participants; responses of participants from interview protocol; and narrated stories of participants from focus group conversation to provide answers to the research questions and hypotheses thereafter I cross checked the findings from each instrument used against the findings from other instruments equally used.

Furthermore, the validity of the study was tied to the non-adaptation of data (Whitley, 2002). This implies that the questionnaires, academic results of participants, focus group conversations and interview protocol that I accessed, developed and made use of are all from Nigeria where the study was delimited, and not 'imported data'. That is, data generated from other places (countries) and substituted into the Nigerian context. This suggests that the data collected was applicable and highly relevant for the study.

Finally, validity was based on self-reflexivity. According to Lietz, Langer and Furman (2006) and McMillan and Schumacher (2006), self-reflexivity is same as critical reflexivity; it is the researcher's self-examination in order to avoid been judgemental and biased. This helped me as a researcher to make a distinction between respondents' meanings and my personal interpretations or beliefs. Self-reflexivity is concerned with the disclosure of my personal assumptions and bias. It is evident from the rationale of my study that I entered the research with a certain worldview and that the research was greatly influenced by the relationship between emotion, knowledge and decision making.

In this study, as part of the validity checks, my personal assumptions, bias, emotions and beliefs was disclosed. This I deem necessary because I believed that my worldview may not be the same as that of the respondents. A re-call of and reflections on my assumptions with regard to data collected formed the basis for honest, trustworthy, in-depth, open and, possibly, reliable data (Creswell, 2003; Altheide & Johnson, 1998). Altheide and Johnson describe this as "validity as reflexivity accounting", a process that places the researcher, the topic and the sense-making process in interaction. This implies that, as the researcher, I had to substantiate my interpretations and findings with a reflexive account of myself and the process of my research. Using self-reflexivity I was committed to obtaining the respondents' perspectives on the social reality of the observed phenomena, to report the multi-vocality and to show, if possible, where my voice is located.

4.6.2 Reliability

Gay and Airasian (2000:114) write that reliability is the degree of consistency that the research instrument or procedure demonstrates. Makhanu (2010), note that reliability is essential to the effectiveness of any data gathering procedure. I approached the issue of reliability in two ways. First was reliability of the instruments and second, was the reliability of the data itself. Although it is logical to think that the reliability of the research instruments is most likely to result to reliable data.

In order to assess reliability of the research instrument, the test-retest method was employed. This means that the research instruments were re-administered after a week of main research data collection to different respondents who were not part of the study population (Adekoya & Adetoro, 2001). The different research participants were not from the faculty or school of education but the faculty of science and art, Lagos State University. Three of the participants play soccer for the University female team and were on campus for a training session at the sport complex. I wish to remind you that during this period, there was an ongoing strike on campus; lectures and other academic activities were paralysed. The three participants mentioned above were accompanied by two friends of theirs who are married. The five participants (three single women students and two married woman student) completed the questionnaire at the sport complex, Lagos State University campus. I consider my meeting with these participants as luck on my own part. It was just a mere coincidence when a friend of mine, the assistant coach of the female soccer team who knew nothing about my research invited me to come watch their training session. Fortunately for me, my bag containing my documents and the research instruments were in my car's boot parked by the gate of the sport complex. Knowing that my research instruments are in the car nearby, I then spoke to these five participants about being participants for my research and they agreed to be participants on the ground that I was not going to take much of their time. The five participants completed the questionnaire while they waited for the arrival of other team mates and commencement of the training session on the same day. Immediately after the completion of the questionnaire, I persuaded them to make themselves available for a focus group conversation and interview protocol when they are free to do so. But they insisted that they would not be available given the fact the there was an ongoing strike. The finding was in no way different from the main research findings.

Reliability of the data: I adhered to the suggestion of Buchel (2006:246) that before drawing any conclusions from the data to determine whether or not the results are consequent. Any findings in research data that deviate from the regular patterns in the research should be cross- correlated against findings of the literature reviewed.

4.7 Method of data analysis

4.7.1 Method of quantitative data analysis

Data collected for the purposes of this study include students' examination scores and data compiled from the questionnaire. This was statistically quantified and analysed using statistical methods. For hypothesis 1 (Ho1), the Pearson product moment correlation was employed to determine the relationship between cultural practices and the enrolment rate of women students in higher education. *t*-test statistics were used for hypothesis 2 (Ho2) to ascertain or determine whether there is a significant difference or otherwise between the academic performance of married women students in year 1 and year 2 of the study. For hypothesis 3 (Ho3), *t*-test statistics were also employed. The statistical methods used to test the entire set of hypotheses are all appropriate as recommended by the literature (Adekoya & Adetoro, 2001; Sanni, 1998; Hucks, 2008; Coolian, 2008).

4.7.1.1 The questionnaire and response rate

The study's questionnaire is a set of constructed questions put together and aim at understanding and possibly explaining the research phenomena. The literature review was the basis of the questions that formed the questionnaire. As said above (see page 108-109) the questionnaire is divided into five sections: section A (Demographic data), section B (Attitude of women to higher education), section C (Academic performance of women students in higher education), section D (Culture, women and higher education), section E (General). The responses in each section were classified into Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Undecided (UD); Disagree (D); and Strongly Disagree (SD). Each class of respondent's response was scored or weighted ranging from 1 to 5 as shown below:

| | |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Strongly Agree (SA) | = 5points |
| Agree (A) | = 4points |
| Undecided/Neutral (UD) | = 3points |
| Disagree (D) | = 2points |
| Strongly Disagree (SD) | = 1points |

4.7.1.1.1 Response rate in quantitative research

For any sample(s), according to Saunders *et al.* (2007:212), 100 per cent response rate is unlikely and the sample needs to be large to ensure sufficient response for the required margin of error. There is a need to obtain as high a response as possible to ensure that the sample is representative (*ibid.*:215; Stoker, 1985). In this study, unlike many other studies the response rate is 100 per cent. The total respondents for this study were eighty nine. All eighty nine (89) respondents completed the questionnaire and returned it after completion. The method employed in the administration of the questionnaire was the self administered questionnaire, and was accountable for the 100 per cent remarkable response rate.

4.7.1.1.2 Method of qualitative data analysis

Furthermore, data collected for this study was not limited to the examination scores/results of research participants or respondents and data compiled from questionnaire. It also included data collected from the interview protocol and the conversations held in the focus group interview. These data was analysed through verbatim reporting and the interpretation of the completed interview protocol via ‘deduced meanings’ or formulated meanings from significant statements written by research participants (Creswell, 2007:271 - 272).

4.7.1.1.3 Response rate in qualitative research

For qualitative aspect of the research, a total of twelve participants were considered to be the sample. The sample size agrees with the suggested percentage given the number of married women students in the research respondents and participants (Stoker, 1985). All the participants made themselves available for the focus group conversation and the interview protocol.

4.8 Delimitation of the study and rationale for research sites

The study was delimited to public tertiary institutions of learning in Lagos State, Nigeria.

The study was limited to the following institutions and faculty:

- Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos (faculty of education)
- Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education, Ijanikin, Lagos (school of education).

Lagos is a commercial city with a population of 9,013,534 (4,335,514 females) (NPC, 2006; Onuh, 2006) and is situated in Lagos state, the second most populous state in Nigeria. The city accommodates people from different states, from the north to the south. Lagos is known for its cultural diversity and multi-ethnicity, which is one of the reasons why I delimited the study to higher institutions of learning in this state. NPC (2006) and Onuh (2006) reveal that there were more women residing in Lagos.

Lagos state is not a racial or religious state where women's education is overtly hindered by a particular religion/cultural practice like the Sharia in the north. Therefore, it was reasonable to expect a cultural variety of women at these institutions.

With respect to the choice of Lagos State University Ojo, and Adeniran Ogunsanya College of Education Ijanikin, both were considered because of their proximity to residential areas. Both institutions are located in the Ojo local government area along the Badagry expressway. From experience I suggest that women prefer to study near their homes so that they can get home in time after lectures to attend to their domestic duties. In addition, after work women prefer to attend an institution of learning that is close to home, especially in view of the traffic problems encountered on the roads of Lagos. These are reasons why I chose these two institutions.

4.9 Ethical considerations

According to Wisker (2008:86) all research should be ethical. As the researcher, I am the coordinator of all the research activities from the pre-research to the final writing of the research reports. In addition, responsibility for the ethical conduct of the research is vested in me (APA, 1982; 1992). My research proposal was processed by the ethics committee of the University of Pretoria (see ethics clearance certificate attached as Appendix K). It is also important to assist participants and respondents with explanations where required, necessary and to monitor the research to ensure that it is conducted ethically. Importantly, before accessing the research participants, as the researcher it was my responsibility to seek permission from the heads or administrators of the sample institution. This I did by writing to them to ask them to allow me to carry out the investigation/study at their institutions. For the purpose of this research, I divided the ethical issues involved into the following classifications:

4.9.1 Ethical consideration in planning the research:

At this stage, I considered voluntary participation in the research and informed consent. In approaching the research respondents or participants the following steps was adhered to (Gay & Airasian, 2003):

- Respondents were apprised of the purpose of the study and were given an outline of it. Thereafter I asked if they were prepared to be respondents/participants.
- I made it clear that participation in the research as a respondent was not compulsory but voluntary, and that respondents were free to pull out during the course of interviewing and answering questionnaire at any time. This I believe helped me in getting sincere opinions from those who participated. Thomas and Smith (2003:21) state that nobody should ever be coerced into participating in a research project, because participation must always be

voluntary. Expressed differently, Bernnet, Glatter and Levacic (1994:93) state that “research involving human subjects all requires that the participation of individuals be completely voluntarily ... They must be given explicit choice about whether or not they wish to participate on the study”. This study was premised on the belief that women students are adults and have numerous tasks competing for their limited time. In attending to informed consent, I abide to the advice of Young, Hooker and Freeburg (1990) and Ogloff and Otto (1991) that the consent form should be designed carefully and in simple language so that the anticipated respondents will understand it fully.

- Respondents were promised full confidentiality in terms of the events (questionnaire completion, examination results and interview responses) that took place during the investigation or study. It is dangerous and damaging to respondents’ personality and dignity to expose their personal or confidential information (Christensen, 1994:147; Floyd & Fowler, 2009). In addition, I was aware that respondents have a right to privacy and that researchers must safeguard this by keeping the information provided by each individual respondent in the strictest confidence (Whitley, 2002).

4.9.2 Ethical considerations during data collection:

My ethical obligation continued once the respondents had agreed to take part in the research. I thus had an obligation to treat the respondents with courtesy and respect. As I collected the data I needed, I did not lose sight of the fact that the vast majority of respondents were doing me a favour because they were receiving no monetary compensation. This was a gesture of kindness on their part and this had to be reciprocated with politeness and humility, especially in the way I related to them. At this point, I recall the awareness of the problems or difficulties male researchers face when doing this type of research (Skelton, 2005). Being a male researcher researching in ‘women’s world’ and in a culturally sensitive environment like Nigeria, I envisaged difficulties dealing with the

women participants in terms of motivation and relating to them. On the account of this, I requested the voluntarily assistance of female research assistants. In so doing, confidentiality was not compromised because I asked the research assistants to sign a declaration stating that they would maintain confidentiality. I also spelt out the research assistants' role in the research process. This role was confined to their presence at the research site as a witness to conversations between the researcher and participants. The role of the research assistance was to fulfil the presence of females in a conversation between a male (myself) and the research participants in a culturally sensitive Nigerian society. The research assistants did not take part in the research conservation either in the form of questioning or answering questions. Despite the presence of the research assistants they did not have access to the data. Once again, they were only there because I needed the presence of a female.

4.9.3 Ethical consideration following data collection:

After successfully collecting data from the respondents, a number of ethical obligations remained. I owed it to the participants to hold a debriefing session, which took place after the research had been completed. Debriefing basically entails the researcher conducting a post-research interview (Whitley, 2002). This interview has two functions:

- To educate the respondents about the benefits of the research.
- To explain any deception that was used (if any). In this study no deception was used.

I used the debriefing session as an opportunity to thank the respondents. In summary, the researcher's ethical issues and consideration in this study were centred mainly on what I call "participants' sovereignty". This term reminds me that, at the data collection stage of the research, the respondents or participants are central to the study.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter presented a detailed description of the research design used in this study – mixed research design. The purpose of the study, the research questions and the research hypotheses were restated and served as the point of departure. In this chapter, I focused on the theoretical purpose and justification of the research design chosen, data collection method, sample and sampling technique, population of the study, validity and reliability, delimitation of the study, ethics issues and considerations. Quantitative research and qualitative research as methods combined in mixed research design were also explained with regard to how it was employed in this study.