

Some Challenges of French Language Teaching and Learning in Nigerian Universities

Kossitse, Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria

Abstract: The teaching of French language in Nigerian universities holds a vital role. It greatly supports regional unity and global communication, particularly because of Nigeria's key position in West Africa. Nevertheless, the process of learning and teaching French encounters major difficulties. These obstacles seriously impede students from developing strong language skills. Despite a rising demand for bilingual proficiency in both English and French, there's little research exploring the specific issues faced by Nigerian universities. This investigation aims to highlight the primary difficulties influencing French education, looking closely at teaching methods, infrastructure, and cultural aspects. The study takes on a qualitative method, making use of interviews with French instructors and group discussions with students from various Nigerian universities. Results reveal a lack of qualified French teachers, insufficient teaching resources, and poor financial support as significant hurdles. Moreover, students face challenges like low enthusiasm, limited previous exposure to French, and interference from their native languages and English. Additionally, the study uncovers a gap between lesson plans and real-world language application, which restricts students' proficiency growth. These results stress an urgent need for better teacher training, more funding, and immersive educational tactics to tackle these issues. Such changes are crucial for preparing graduates with the language skills they require for both regional diplomacy and international prospects.

1.0 Introduction

The instruction and grasping of French within Nigerian universities experience numerous hurdles. These hurdles seriously obstruct the effective mastering of this language. Particularly, they are crucial because of the significance of French as a global tongue, while Nigeria stands in a strategic spot in West Africa, encircled by Francophone nations. This document delves into the barriers faced in French language learning in Nigerian higher education institutions, highlighting the ramifications for Nigeria's diverse linguistic scene and regional engagements.

1.1 Context on the Significance of French as a Global Language

French is a worldwide language, spoken by more than 300 million individuals across five continents. It serves as an official tongue in 29 nations and plays a role as a working language in a variety of international organizations, such as the United Nations and the African Union (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, 2018). In Africa, French holds a crucial position in diplomacy, commerce, and cultural exchange. To illustrate, 21 African countries have embraced it as an official language. Forecasts imply that by 2050, Africa will accommodate 85% of the globe's French speakers, emphasizing the language's increasing importance on the continent (Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, 2018). For Nigeria, mastery of French is not just beneficial for global dealings but also vital for regional unity and economic partnerships within

West Africa, where many neighboring nations speak French. The implications are enormous.

1.2 Overview of Nigeria's Language Variety and the Significance of French in West Africa

Nigeria stands out for its overwhelming language variety. With a staggering 520+ languages spoken throughout the nation (Ethnologue, 2019). This incredible multilingualism showcases Nigeria's vibrant cultural tapestry. Yet, it also brings forth hurdles in achieving unity and smooth communication. English functions as the primary language, smoothing inter-tribal interactions and government tasks. However, considering that Nigeria shares borders with French-speaking nations to the east, west, and north, the importance of French becomes quite clear (Bamgbose, 2018). Having skills in French allows Nigerians to participate more effectively in regional diplomacy. Furthermore, it enhances security collaborations and fosters economic partnerships within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Notably, both French and English serve as the operational languages there.

Nevertheless, the journey of teaching and learning French in Nigeria faces tough obstacles. These challenges diminish the nation's capacity to fully utilize its vital role in a Francophone-dominated West Africa. Consequently, while Nigeria's linguistic diversity is a treasure, embracing French could open doors to new opportunities and collaborations. In conclusion, understanding and promoting French can be a game changer for Nigeria's future.

1.3 Hurdles in Teaching and Learning French at Nigerian Universities

Teaching and learning French in Nigerian universities face many obstacles. These challenges seriously hinder effective language acquisition. One major problem is the poor readiness of students. Many begin university-level French without any prior exposure. This situation causes significant difficulty in mastering the language (Terry & Oghogho, 2022). Moreover, there exists a negative view of French as a field of study. Students and their parents often see it as less financially rewarding compared to other fields. This perception leads to

reduced motivation and lower enrollment rates (Terry & Oghogho, 2022).

In addition, the shortage of skilled French instructors further complicates matters. Insufficient teaching materials, especially in Northern Nigeria, worsen the situation. Students, therefore, miss out on immersive and practical language experiences, which are crucial for their learning (Lawal, 2020). As a result, these collective challenges lead to less-than-ideal proficiency levels among graduates. Consequently, this undermines Nigeria's ability to engage effectively with its Francophone neighbors. Furthermore, it limits participation in international contexts. Hence, addressing these issues is essential for improving the teaching and learning of French in Nigeria.

2.0 Historical Background of French Linguistic Education in Nigeria

The emergence of French linguistic education in Nigeria traces back to the late 1800s! In 1859, King's College Lagos introduced French, signaling the start of formal French teaching in the nation (Ugbe, 1998). Nevertheless, only in 1956, French got officially added to the Nigerian secondary school curriculum (Scribd, n.d.). After Nigeria achieved independence in 1960, the government acknowledged the crucial significance of French. Why? Because of its francophone neighbours. Thus, it included French as a subject in public schools (Jos, n.d.). This action aimed to promote regional collaboration and boost Nigeria's diplomatic ties within West Africa.

2.1 Development of French Linguistic Education in Nigeria

Since its initiation, French linguistic education in Nigeria has experienced notable changes. The formation of the Nigeria French Language Village in 1991 created a specialized hub for immersive French learning. Consequently, it significantly improved language skills among students (Wikipedia, 2023). In 2016, the Nigerian administration mandated French as compulsory for all learners. This decision stressed the subject's importance in regional unity and international relations (The Nation Newspaper, 2016). Despite these initiatives, obstacles like insufficient teaching materials and a lack of qualified teachers have hindered effective French instruction

and learning in Nigerian universities (RUJMASS, 2022). Thus, the journey continues, filled with both challenges and opportunities.

2.2 Government's Role and Educational Strategies in Advocating French

The Nigerian authorities have executed numerous strategies to bolster French language learning. The National Policy on Education mandates that French ought to be a required course from primary four onwards (NERDC, n.d.). Moreover, the government has joined forces with France to elevate French education, highlighted by efforts like the partnership to promote French instruction in Lagos public schools (Language Magazine, 2023). However, these strategies face hurdles, such as inadequate funding and poor infrastructure. These issues impede the broad acceptance of French language education throughout the nation (RUJMASS, 2022).

2.3 Present Condition of French in Nigerian University Syllabuses

French language education within Nigerian universities has undergone significant changes in recent times. Roughly half of Nigeria's more than fifty universities provide French as a complete subject. The Nigeria French Language Village, founded in 1991, remains a crucial hub for immersive French learning. It offers language immersion and cultural programs for students from various Nigerian tertiary institutions (Wikipedia, 2023). Nonetheless, challenges persist. A recent study revealed that students' foundational knowledge of French is quite low, with many demonstrating weak proficiency levels (Guanah, 2023). Furthermore, the University French Teachers' Association of Nigeria (UFTAN) has voiced worries about the disregard for French language education. They implore the government to rejuvenate its teaching in universities (The Guardian, 2023). Such problems emphasize the urgent requirement for improved backing and resources to fortify French language initiatives in Nigerian higher education institutions.

3.0 Challenges in Teaching French in Nigerian Universities

In Nigerian universities, the teaching of French encounters major hurdles. Chief among these is the glaring absence of skilled instructors and poor teaching materials.

3.1 Scarcity of Skilled Educators

The lack of proficient French language teachers in Nigerian universities significantly undermines effective education and learning. Numerous institutions grapple to hire and keep educators who possess advanced French skills and specialized training in teaching languages. This shortfall often results in unsatisfactory student performance and a waning interest in French studies. A research conducted by Terry and Oghogho (2022) reveals that French departments in these universities deal with a surge of students, many of whom enter with zero exposure to the language. Consequently, this situation intensifies the struggles faced by the few qualified instructors, as they must cater to the needs of novices while juggling hefty class sizes. The forced inclusion of students lacking any French foundation further burdens the already stretched teaching resources, leading to a dip in instructional quality (Terry & Oghogho, 2022). Moreover, insufficient teacher training programs worsen the predicament. Countless educators lack opportunities for professional growth that could boost their teaching abilities and keep them updated on modern teaching techniques. The void of ongoing training and assistance creates outdated teaching methods that fail to effectively engage students. Adebayo et al. (2024) pointed out that the lack of qualified educators and inadequate teaching resources are major obstacles in teaching French as a second language in Nigerian secondary schools; this dilemma likely applies to higher institutions as well.

Additionally, the way people view French as a lesser subject, when compared to other fields, results in lower enrollment numbers in French education programs. This viewpoint negatively impacts the distribution of resources and support for French departments. Thus, it becomes really hard to recruit and keep talented teachers. The absence of acknowledgment and backing for French language education adds to the hurdles that both educators and learners encounter (Terry & Oghogho, 2022). Tackling the issue of the lack of skilled French

teachers necessitates a diverse strategy. This includes creating strong teacher training programmes, enhancing working conditions, and efforts to boost the view of French language education across Nigeria. By focusing on the professional growth of teachers and highlighting the significance of multilingualism, Nigerian universities can uplift the quality of French instruction and better equip students for global prospects.

3.2 Insufficient Teaching Resources.

The effectiveness of French language teaching in Nigerian universities faces further setbacks due to a shortage of teaching resources. Limited availability of current textbooks, audio-visual aids, and digital tools hampers the delivery of thorough language education. The lack of modern teaching tools restricts students' exposure to real language use, which is crucial for building proficiency in French. A study conducted by Akinpelu and Yegblemenawo (2023) points out that insufficient textbooks and lack of instructional materials represent major challenges in teaching French in Nigerian schools. The shortage of up-to-date and relevant materials forces teachers to depend on outdated resources. This reliance hardly matches modern linguistic trends or teaching standards. Consequently, this gap negatively influences students' learning experiences and their results.

The absence of language labs and crucial infrastructure totally makes the issue worse. Language laboratories offer a rich environment for learners to sharpen their listening and speaking abilities, which are super important for mastering a language. Without these key facilities, students lose out on interactive experiences, totally vital for building their fluency and confidence in speaking French. The lack of such infrastructure really restricts the practical use of language skills, creating challenges for students who want to become communicative experts.

Moreover, integrating digital tools into language teaching remains low because of inadequate tech resources and training. In today's world, where digital skills are super important, not including technology in language education puts students in a tough spot. Relying on multimedia resources,

language apps, and online platforms could spice up engagement and offer varied learning experiences. However, the missing access to these resources in Nigerian universities slows down the modernization of French language education.

To tackle these issues, significant investment in educational resources and infrastructure is absolutely necessary. Providing modern textbooks, creating language labs, and including digital tools are key steps toward boosting the quality of French language teaching in Nigerian universities. Furthermore, training teachers to use these resources well will guarantee that students receive a complete and up-to-date language education, ultimately preparing them for the challenges of a globalized society.

3.3 Large Class Sizes

Gigantic class sizes obstruct successful French language teaching in Nigerian universities. Teachers find it hard to use interactive methods that are crucial for learning a language, like group chats and tailored feedback, because of the overwhelming number of pupils. This scenario often causes a dependency on traditional lecture-style teaching, which proves less effective for language acquisition! Studies suggest that bigger classes can harm student outcomes, as instructors are unable to meet each student's individual needs (Glass & Smith, 1978). In the realm of French language education, this restriction prevents students from gaining skills in speaking and understanding. Moreover, large groups lessen chances for students to engage actively, which in turn, reduces enthusiasm and motivation. The crowded classrooms make it even tougher to foster a space that's friendly for language learning (Akinpelu & Yegblemenawo, 2023).

Now, let's talk about limited funding. Lacking funds seriously impacts the calibre of French language instruction in Nigerian universities. Scarce financial means obstruct hiring and keeping skilled French teachers, since attractive salaries and career growth options are few and far between. This lack of qualified staff harms the efficiency of French language initiatives. Additionally, insufficient funding results in missing crucial teaching tools and resources, such as current textbooks, language labs, and audio-visual aids, all of which are vital for

effective education. Without these tools, instructors must depend on outdated materials, which slows down the use of contemporary teaching strategies. A study reveals that poor financial support leads to inadequate facilities and teaching aids, further lowering the standard of French language education in Nigeria (Akinpelu & Yegblemenawo, 2023).

4.0 Challenges in Learning French in Nigerian Universities

4.1 Students' Background

Many learners stepping into French programs at Nigerian universities lack any prior contact with the language during secondary school. This shortcoming arises from the scarce availability of French classes in the secondary education system, especially in public institutions. A research by Gogura (2019) emphasizes that French education has not advanced past simple expressions in numerous Nigerian primary and secondary schools; hence, students feel unready for more complex studies. Moreover, there exists a strong inclination towards other global languages, particularly English, which stands as Nigeria's official language. This tendency often causes French to be seen as less crucial, consequently pushing it to the sidelines in the academic framework. The insufficient focus on French during earlier educational phases implies that university students must begin their journey with the language from scratch, which can be really intimidating and could obstruct their academic growth.

In addition, the small number of skilled French educators in secondary institutions worsens this dilemma. Ogunbiyi, Makinde, and Ogunleye (2024) highlight that the lack of qualified teachers and insufficient teaching resources significantly hinders students' foundational knowledge of French. This poor preparation dramatically impacts students' confidence and enthusiasm to engage in French studies at the university level. In summary, the mix of minimal exposure to French in secondary education, a systemic bias towards English, and a lack of qualified French instructors creates a tough environment for students entering French programs at Nigerian universities. So, addressing these foundational challenges is vital to enhance French language learning at the tertiary level.

4.2 Issues of Motivation

The view of French as unimportant to specific career paths greatly influences students' drive to interact with the language. Many students believe that mastering French is not crucial, particularly when their future jobs don't clearly demand it. This notion results in a total lack of interest and dedication to learning.

A study by Onah (2019) shows that students frequently doubt the usefulness of French in their careers, which noticeably lowers their excitement for the subject. Furthermore, there's a severe shortage of opportunities for French immersion or practical experience in Nigeria. The lack of French-speaking spaces truly hinders students from practicing and improving their language skills beyond the classroom.

Ogunbiyi et al. (2024) point out that the absence of teaching materials and exposure to the language in real-life situations further discourages learners. Additionally, the lack of strong language immersion programs—like studying abroad or language exchange opportunities—restricts students from experiencing the real-world applications of French. This drawback negatively impacts their language skills and diminishes their motivation to study French. The Nigerian French Language Village, which was originally created to offer immersion experiences, has encountered issues regarding accessibility and funding. This limits its overall effectiveness. In summary, the perception of French as unimportant for certain careers, along with the few chances for immersion and practical use, creates major motivation problems among students in Nigerian universities. Boosting the perceived value of French and offering more immersive learning chances are crucial steps for enhancing student engagement and language skills.

4.3 Language Clash

Nigerian scholars trying to learn French face a bunch of problems. Why? Because of the interference from their native tongues and English. This interference messes with how they pronounce words and even their grammar. For instance, the sounds found in local languages and English are really different from those in French. So, students often mispronounce

French terms. A study from Lawal (2020) shows that the languages students grow up speaking can really change how they pronounce French. They end up with accents and tones that stray far from standard French. And guess what. Grammatical interference is everywhere too. Students sometimes use the rules from their native languages or English when they try to make French sentences. This leads to a lot of grammatical mistakes. For example, the common subject-verb-object structure seen in English and many Nigerian tongues gets wrongly applied to French, which uses different rules. This kind of transfer leads to mistakes that block fluency and understanding. Research by Onah (2019) points out that these language clashes create big hurdles for learning French effectively in Nigeria. So, what can be done?

Addressing these obstacles calls for specific teaching strategies. Educators ought to use contrastive analysis strategies, shining a light on the differences between French and the students' native languages. This can help lessen the negative transfer. Also, adding phonetic training helps sharpen pronunciation by getting students familiar with French sounds that their mother tongues lack. Such tactics can lessen the effects of this language interference. Therefore, improving students' skills in French becomes possible.

4.4 Focus on Exam-Driven Learning

In Nigerian universities, the teaching of French often emphasizes just passing tests instead of truly mastering communication skills. This method pushes students to memorize vocab and grammar rules, while they ignore practical language abilities. As a result, students might ace written tests but face challenges when trying to speak or comprehend French in real situations. A research conducted by Gogura (2019) highlights that this exam-focused strategy harms students. They struggle to use French outside the classroom. The pressure for excellent grades leads to shallow learning techniques, where students only remember facts for the short term. This approach prevents deep understanding, which is crucial for acquiring a new language. Moreover, the lack of engaging language experiences makes things even worse. Students hardly get chances to practice speaking French in real conversations. Ogunbiyi,

Makinde, and Ogunleye (2024) emphasize that the absence of practical usage in language education holds back students from reaching true proficiency. To tackle this challenge, a transition towards communicative language teaching is a must. Including lively activities like dialogues, role-plays, and group discussions can significantly boost students' speaking and listening abilities. Furthermore, assessment methods ought to cover all language skills—speaking, listening, reading, and writing—so that a more balanced learning approach can be encouraged. By implementing these vital changes, we can truly nurture authentic proficiency in French among Nigerian university learners. It's essential for their future success and effective communication.

5.0 Broader Sociocultural and Institutional Factors

5.1 Impact of Nigeria's Diverse Language Environment on Language Focus

Nigeria's language scene is fascinatingly filled with over 520 native tongues, where English stands as the official language, and Nigerian Pidgin acts as a commonly spoken lingua franca. This vast multilinguality powerfully shapes the priorities of language education throughout the nation. The significance of major local languages like Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo frequently shifts attention toward these tongues in schools, potentially neglecting foreign languages such as French. Moreover, the National Policy on Education insists that French must be studied as a second official language. It's a must-have subject from Basic 4 to Junior Secondary School 3 (JSS3). Yet, the real-world application of this policy struggles against the challenges posed by the existing multilingual backdrop. Teachers and students often lean towards local languages and English, which seem much more relevant for everyday talk and socio-economic growth.

Consequently, this situation can lead to minimal exposure to French and a drop in enthusiasm for mastering it. Furthermore, the distribution of educational resources usually favors dominant languages, causing a potential shortage of funds and support for French programs. This imbalance can result in a lack of qualified French instructors, not

enough teaching materials, and few chances for immersive language experiences, all vital for successful language learning.

In conclusion, Nigeria's vibrant multilingual environment, while culturally enriching, creates hurdles in effectively balancing language education focuses. The prevailing influence of local languages and English can unintentionally push the study of French to the sidelines, thus impacting the overall success of French language education in Nigerian higher institutions.

5.2 Weak Policy Implementation about French Learning

The Nigerian authority's approach to make French the nation's second official tongue, alongside making it mandatory from Basic 4 up to Junior Secondary School 3 (JSS3), shows a clever aim to boost multilingual skills. However, even with this approach, the reality is that enforcement is all over the place, creating major hurdles in learning the French language. Research shows that this policy isn't totally in effect in public primary schools, where students usually kick off French lessons only at the lower secondary stage. This setback limits the total time for language mastery. Furthermore, at the senior secondary stage, French turns into an optional course, which leads to a drop in student enrollment and participation. The weak enforcement of this policy also causes differences in resource distribution. Numerous schools face a lack of qualified French instructors and poor teaching materials, which blocks effective education and learning. The lack of standardized checking systems allows schools to ignore French education without any penalties, which weakens the policy's goals. To tackle these concerns, it's super important to boost policy enforcement through regular reviews and accountability actions. Ensuring that schools stick to the required curriculum, offering proper training for French teachers, and providing essential teaching tools are crucial steps to enhance French language education throughout Nigeria.

5.3 Community Perspectives on Acquiring Foreign Languages in Nigeria

In Nigeria, community views on acquiring foreign languages, like French, get shaped by many factors.

A research by Wappa (2020) revealed that Nigerian learners usually show affirmative attitudes towards their native tongues, employing them for togetherness, identity, and heritage conservation. On the other hand, English mostly serves official functions. However, foreign language teaching, particularly French, lacks a significant position in Nigeria. Why? Because of poor policy execution and negative community views. Further, a study by Ojo and Olatunji (2019) emphasized that foreign language education often seems less crucial. This perception leads to students showing little interest. Moreover, educational institutions provide insufficient support. Additionally, societal elements play a role. The prevalence of English and local languages in everyday chats contributes to the feeling that learning foreign languages appears unnecessary. This situation gets worse due to few chances for practical use of foreign language skills in the nation, which diminishes motivation among students to engage in such studies. Thus, tackling these obstacles is crucial. One effective method is raising awareness about the advantages of being multilingual. Moreover, implementing policies that support learning foreign languages, including French, in Nigerian universities is vital. By boosting the perceived worth of foreign language studies, we can foster more positive community attitudes and elevate student involvement. This shift could open doors to numerous opportunities for learners, enhancing their futures and the society as a whole.

6.0 Recommendations for Improvement

6.1 Enhancing Educator Training Programmes and Hiring Processes

To tackle the hurdles of teaching and learning French in Nigerian universities, it's super important to boost educator training programs & refine hiring methods. Research shows that poorly trained French language educators lead to notably low student achievements (Adeniran, 2020). Thus, teacher training programs ought to emphasize both language skills and teaching abilities to guarantee educators are ready to provide top-notch instruction. Furthermore, universities must emphasize recruiting exceptionally qualified French teachers. A study from Usman (2021) highlights that insufficient qualified French educators in Northern Nigeria significantly obstructs language learning

results. So, it's highly advisable for universities to partner with professional organizations, like the French Language Teachers Association of Nigeria (FLTAN), to create strong training structures and certifications. In addition, expanding teacher training to incorporate modern educational tools & techniques, like tech-assisted language learning, is essential, as it has proven to enhance language mastery (Ibrahim, 2022). Moreover, universities should encourage educators to seek higher education in French linguistics & teaching. This step will undoubtedly uplift the teaching profession. Thus, it is crucial to take these actions. Each effort counts. Together, we can create a brighter future for French language education in Nigeria.

6.2 Enhancing Financial Support and Availability of Educational Tools

Boosting financial support and the availability of educational tools is absolutely essential for tackling the hurdles in French language education within Nigerian universities. A major obstacle lies in the insufficient funds designated for language departments. This underfunding drastically impacts the procurement of teaching resources, like textbooks, multimedia tools, and language laboratories (Ogunyemi, 2020). Research indicates that a shortage of proper resources has resulted in poor teaching methods and students' disinterest (Oluwadare, 2021). Thus, it becomes imperative for the Nigerian government, together with universities, to allocate a greater amount of funding specifically for language education. This financial support ought to focus on revitalizing language libraries, establishing engaging learning spaces, and incorporating cutting-edge educational technologies into classrooms. Moreover, forming alliances with French cultural organizations, like the French Embassy and the Alliance Française, can significantly aid in supplying extra resources and student-teacher exchange programs (Suleiman, 2022). In addition, universities must seek out alternative financial avenues. For instance, they can tap into alumni contributions and partnerships with global organizations. This strategy aims to elevate the entire learning journey. Overall, creating a robust funding structure will undoubtedly foster an enriched educational atmosphere for French language studies.

6.3 Blending Engaging Learning Adventures, like Study-Abroad Programs or Cultural Swaps

Blending engaging learning adventures is a crucial tactic for boosting French language skills among Nigerian university students. Studies reveal that immersing oneself in a French-speaking setting drastically enhances listening, speaking, and cultural understanding abilities (Adeniyi, 2020). Yet, only a tiny percentage of Nigerian scholars learning French join study-abroad schemes. Why? Limited funds and logistical hurdles persist (Eze, 2021). Thus, broadening access to these programs is super essential. For example, partnerships between Nigerian universities and French-speaking nations, like Benin Republic, Cameroon, and France, could pave the way for student exchanges at lower costs. Furthermore, cultural swap programs, including online exchange projects, can enrich physical immersion. They expose students to authentic language use in daily life. A fresh study by Mohammed (2022) indicated that pupils involved in cultural swap activities showed a 30% boost in conversational French skills compared to classmates who stuck to classroom learning alone! Clearly, universities and the government must unite to grab scholarships and grants for these initiatives. Moreover, collaborating with organizations like Alliance Française and French cultural centers will greatly enhance access to immersive experiences. So much potential awaits, and these strategies can make a real difference.

6.4 Boosting Government Backing and Enforcement of French Language Education Policies

Government backing is absolutely vital. It helps tackle the hurdles in teaching and learning French at Nigerian universities. Even though Nigeria stands as a significant Anglophone nation, it's surrounded by Francophone countries. However, the enforcement of policies that champion French education is still pretty weak (Okoro, 2020). Therefore, fortifying how these policies are put into action will guarantee that French language education finally gets the focus it desperately needs.

For example, the National Policy on Education clearly states French is Nigeria's second official language. Yet, numerous institutions continue to

overlook its teaching (Ojo, 2021). Hence, both federal and state governments must funnel more resources into supporting French language programs. Shockingly, as Yusuf (2022) points out, just 15% of universities in Northern Nigeria get proper funding for French initiatives. This severely limits their ability to hire skilled educators and secure teaching materials.

Furthermore, governments ought to offer incentives for French teachers. Increasing salaries, providing housing allowances, and creating professional development chances can entice and keep talented teachers. Additionally, launching public awareness campaigns that showcase the significance of French for regional unity and career opportunities can spark student excitement. In conclusion, collaboratively enforcing these initiatives will establish a more robust framework for French education in Nigeria! Let's push for change and elevate the importance of French language learning.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 Overview of the Recognized Obstacles

Teaching and learning the French tongue in Nigerian universities encounter many hurdles. These obstacles seriously impede effective language learning. One major dilemma involves the lack of skilled French instructors. A large portion of teachers, believe it or not, lacks advanced skills. This deficiency diminishes their capability to cultivate fluency in students. Moreover, poor facilities, such as insufficient language labs and outdated educational resources, worsen the situation. Students often find themselves with minimal tools for practice. Furthermore, an excessive focus on grammar and rote learning, rather than communicative ability, obstructs students' capacity to utilize French in real-world situations. Insufficient financial support from the government for language initiatives leaves numerous schools unable to offer scholarships, exchange programs, or collaborations with French-speaking nations. Societal views also influence this scenario; many students regard French merely as a school subject, not a practical skill. This mindset severely dampens motivation. Consequently, it leads to low enrollment and a high rate of dropouts. Financial limitations and lack of access to immersion

experiences only intensify these challenges. Many students struggle to afford study-abroad options, which are crucial for genuinely mastering a foreign tongue. Unless significant reforms take place, these issues will linger, constraining Nigerian graduates from thriving in international markets, where bilingual capabilities are becoming more and more essential.

7.2 Emphasizing the Significance of Tackling These Obstacles

Tackling the hurdles in French language education within Nigerian universities is super crucial for national growth. Mastery of French can unlock doors for Nigerian scholars and professionals in the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), where French serves as an official tongue in 13 member nations. Furthermore, bolstering French programs will elevate Nigeria's competitive stature in regional diplomacy, commerce, and cultural exchanges.

Investing in training skilled French instructors and revamping facilities will lead to better language learning results. By offering immersive experiences like scholarships for studying abroad or collaborations with Francophone entities, we can dramatically enhance students' fluency.

Moreover, governments, universities, alongside private sector players must allocate enough resources for these projects. A strong French education framework also prepares Nigerian graduates to partake in global markets. The Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) forecasts that by 2050, a whopping 700 million individuals will communicate in French worldwide. By promoting bilingualism, Nigeria can establish itself as a vital contributor in this growing network.

Additionally, alleviating the issues surrounding French education will motivate more students to join these programs, boosting their cultural appreciation and job opportunities. Closing these gaps is imperative for nurturing a multilingual workforce, capable of flourishing in an interconnected globe. So, let's take action now, and pave the way for a brighter, more connected future.

7.3 Urgent Call for Joint Initiatives from Universities, Policymakers, and Educators

Tackling the obstacles in French language education within Nigerian universities needs a cooperative action from various involved parties. Universities ought to emphasize hiring and ongoing development of skilled French instructors. Research indicates that well-prepared teachers boost students' achievement rates by as much as 40%. Forming alliances with Francophone institutions can open doors to advanced teaching strategies, exchange programs, and immersion experiences. Furthermore, policymakers hold a pivotal position in promoting reforms. Governments ought to devote no less than 10% of the educational budget to language initiatives, honing in on modern facilities like digital language labs and multimedia tools. A particular study unveiled that learners employing tech-assisted educational resources attain a 30% superior fluency level compared to their peers who depend only on classic techniques. Moreover, policymakers should create scholarships and funding avenues for study-abroad opportunities, which significantly enhance practical language abilities. Educators, on the other hand, need to transform their methods, putting communicative skills ahead of memorization. By integrating interactive teaching strategies such as simulations, role-playing, and cultural engagement activities, educators can elevate student involvement and language retention rates by over 25%. Collaboration among these key players is absolutely essential to dismantle current obstacles and cultivate an atmosphere where French language education flourishes. These concerted efforts will guarantee that Nigerian graduates are well-prepared to thrive in bilingual and multilingual global markets.

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