

**ASSESSMENT OF LEGISLATURE'S IMPACT ON DEMOCRACY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN NIGERIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The distinguishing feature of the legislature among the three arms of Governments cannot be underestimated because it co-ordinates and checkmate governance through its legislative investigative procedures. The importance of this procedure lies in the facts that they are expected to objectively scrutinize the appropriation bill (budget), and the various public office holders for the betterment of the society. It was against this backdrop that the legislatures influence the budgeting and other public affairs for their own good. The paper adopts the role theory considering the fact that if the legislature which is indispensable in democracy promotes integrity through effective legislating, the other arms of government would equally be upright. It marvels at the various legislative proceedings expected to translate into development, but end up in chaos and house pandemonium. The paper concludes that until the judiciary take its rightful position of adjudication in a democracy the effectiveness of the legislature might never be ascertained.*

**Keywords: Legislature, Government, House of Assembly, Democracy.**

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

The world over, legislatures are considered to be strategic institution in democracy because they represents the people, make laws, participates in policy making as well as acts as a check particularly on the executive arm of the governments. This prompted the description of the legislature as the engine of democratic governance. In line with this, Lafenwa (2014:456) argues that effective legislature contributes to effective governance by performing important functions necessary to sustain democracy in complex and diverse societies. If government aims at development, then the arms of government whose major pre-occupation is ensuring this and directly have access to all what is needed in actualizing developmental objectives must be pragmatic in their approach. That is why Abe (2010:85) specify that the consensus across all climes has therefore been on the need to enhance the capacities of the machineries of governments through active engagement and mobilization of the people for effective and efficient management of resources. As such, the need to constantly redefine and reform the role of government in the management of resources for better service delivery to the citizens has been a major challenge that nations have had to grapple with. Relevance to this is the submission of Benson (2010:131) that governance has to do with the way power is exercised to meet the defined organizational goals. In organized political society, state governance is carried out by a government, while the ends of governance are directed towards the people and the development of the society as a whole. The government in most modern societies is spear headed by the known three organs, i.e. executive, legislature and the judiciary. The executive and the legislature co-ordinates government proceedings while the judiciary serves as umpire. Olojede (2006:274) contended that in any democratic society, government is supposed to serve the citizens. That government in modern state is the sum total of the legislative, executive and judicial bodies which engage in lawmaking, administering and interpretation of laws. By law, the legislature has powers over the executive as it relates to the management of public funds (sourcing and allocation). Ansah and Okaga (2007) in Olaleye (2010:59) argues that the notion of development points directly to the capabilities of a political system. This relates to the ability of a state to organize, harness and utilize its resources to accomplish the objectives for which the citizens yearn all which revolves round the functions of the arms of government. The term sub-national legislature entails the states houses of assemblies and are charged with the task of legislating for their states and ensuring the stability of the country by keeping their various executives in the right manner of governance through ideal legislating. The stability and the smoothness in governance which can best be attested to by citizens welfare in the state confirms the legislatures effectiveness and forms the crux of this paper.

### **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The legislative institution is, perhaps, the most visible manifestation of democratic tenets in contemporary nation-states. It is at least, the most representative of the three arms of government, being wholly composed, in the main, of accredited representatives of the people duly selected, in most cases, by direct elections (Alabi, 2008:53). In view of this, they are expected to do nothing short of the will of those whom they represent. In the process of different bills becoming law, consideration for citizens welfare must always top the agenda if such law would make any meaning. However, the various fracas which transpires in both the National Assembly and our various states houses of Assembly has always amaze citizens if it is in the interest of citizens wellbeing and for the betterment of our democracy.

## **1.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The objectives of the study are to:

- ❖ Plot ways of averting a re-occurrence of the ugly incidences of impeachment.
- ❖ Ensure effectiveness by ensuring legislators make laws that impact positively on the lives of the people.
- ❖ Ensure the independence of the legislators of the executive so that they serve the desired check on them.
- ❖ Certify that legislators discuss bills with member of his constituency before discussion in the house.
- ❖

## **2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **2.1 LEGISLATURE AND DEMOCRATISATION IN GOVERNANCE**

The legislature according to Bakare (2014:111) epitomizes the existence of democracy in a polity because it distinguishes a democratic government from an autocratic government as both systems have the executive and judiciary arms. The legislature is seen as the engine of democratic governance because laws made by it set the agenda for the government and regulate the conduct of the people. It also serves as the arena for reconciling differences in opinion about policy within the state. In addition, its oversight and representational duties are critical to sustainable development which is considered as one of the ends of democracy. Lafenwa (2014:459) opined that it is incontrovertible to adduce that apart from policy making legislatures could represent the views of the people to non-legislative elite in the executive and the bureaucracy and those legislatures could oversee the activities of the bureaucracy. Moreover, legislatures in most cases are considered to be effective instrument for nation building and national integration and that legislatures could mobilize public support for regime and thereby legitimizing the political system. These functions categorized by Mezey (1985:748) as non-decisional role according to him include representation and developmental activities of the legislature.

Bassey (2006:128) affirms that, that democracy in Nigeria is on trial is not subject of contestation. The battle line has so far developed in multiple arena and cut across vital constitutional issues that threatens to suffocate the process of democratic consolidation. One of the morbid symptoms of this deep and unsettled condition in our democratic order is the gladiatorial contest between the executive and the legislative arms of government, both at the federal and State levels. At the national level, this escalating contest has found manifest expression in the differences between the executive and legislative arms of government over the 2000 Appropriation Bills, the anti-corruption and Niger Delta Development commission Bills, the saga of the alleged ₦ 4m bribery of the house of representatives members to evict the speaker, Na' Abba, the offshore-onshore impasses and the series of exchanges culmination in the impeachment melodrama: at the state level, the unabated impeachment Sagas in the assemblies have developed in some cases into executive thuggery as sponsored agents (Students in Abia State and police in Osun State) descend on defenseless legislators.

The legislature in the assertion of Omotola (2014:3) is a cardinal institution of democracy. Its functions are defined in terms of law-making, representation, oversight and constituency related responsibilities, all of which are pivotal to the good health of democracy; if well delivered. The act and manner of delivering these functions stipulates the effectiveness of the legislature and diagnose the contents. The diagnosis reveals the direction of the legislative acts whether for egocentric purpose or for the benefit of the entire society. Precisely, the effectiveness of the Sub-

legislature in a state can be ascertained through their doggedness on the passage of bills that have directs benefits for the citizenry. On the contrary, the law makers have proven to stand in the way of those whom they claim to represent. The Eighteen (₦ 18,000:00) minimum wage issue which most states have not actualized is an example despite the fact that it derives its democratic strengths from the people.

One area where the electorates expects utmost efficiency and effectiveness from their lawmakers is in the defence of the public treasury which should be the concern of all stake holders, but to the dismay of electorates, their advocacy concerning the budgets is for their own good at the expense of public benefits. In line with this, Ojo (2014:94) specified in his article titled “The legislature and the challenge of public accountability, 1999-2011” that most of us came into the national assembly with very high expectations. It is an investment really to come to the national assembly. When we go around campaigning and asking for votes, we don’t get these votes free. You spend some money most of us even sold houses. You come in through legitimate means but you can’t recoup what you spent.

The above quotation by a one-time senate president in Nigeria – Adolphus Wabara-betrays what, psychologists would call a Freudian slip. He revealed why elected and oftentimes appointed public office holder engage in brazen corruption at the expense of the system they were elected or appointed to defend. Corruption punctures the effectiveness of legislatures in that in the Nigeria democratic system, and considering all the past democratic experiment the legislative refusal to endorse any executive presentation to the house (Budget or public office holders) has been proved to be for their egocentric reasons and not in the interest of the people they represents. Sincerely the analysis of the effectiveness of the legislature can be measured in terms of their relationship with the executive whom by virtue of the constitutional provision relates with from time to time. Historically, the experience of Nigeria according to Aiyede (2006:143) has been one of executive dominated policy-making. Indeed a national newspaper in 1963 referred to the federal legislature as an expensive irrelevant talking shop. When the parliamentary system was to be replaced with a presidentialist regime in 1979, the major issue was how to strengthen the legislature so that it could function as an effective check on the executive as well as an active, vigorous partner in the making of public policy. In fact, the constituent assembly had envisaged a legislature that would be empowered to make laws, an institution that would play the role of a “protector and watch dog of the people’s right against any encroachments from any quarters – be such quarters other branches of government or external interests”.

It was in this light,, that the 1979 constitution empowered the legislature to impeach the president or governor as the case may be on the grounds of gross misconduct, and bade the courts to entertain any action brought before them on impeachments. It is also left to the legislature to determine what constituted gross misconduct. The effective performance of these roles without compromise confirms the effectiveness of the legislature at any levels and guarantee the due governance of the society.

However, historical antecedents have pointed to the fact that the legislatures have always emphasized their own welfare at the expense of the welfare of the society which normally forments controversy between the two groups. For instance, the first conflict came in what came to be celebrated as the furniture allowance palaver”. Members of the national assembly were paid between 21,000 and 14,000 naira daily as accommodation allowance, because the legislators” quarters were still under renovation. Once the houses were ready, the legislators demanded an allowance of between 3 and 5 million naira to enable each legislator furnish his own house according to their respective tastes. The executive felt that it was the responsibility of the federal

bureaucracy to furnish the houses but the legislators argued that the sum (8 and 15 million naira) earlier proposed by the executive for furnishing the houses were not only exorbitant, previous renovation by the government at such exorbitant, prices were badly done. The president put the issue before the public arguing that the legislators' demand was a ploy to self-enrichment. The action of the president did not go down well with the member of the parliaments and it marked the beginning of the disagreement between the legislature and the executive (Aiyede, 2006:148)

Before the controversy over furniture allowance was laid to rest the legislature became embroiled on another conflict with the president over the budgetary provision made by parliaments for the accelerated development of legislative infrastructure. Sensing that the executive was not committed to strengthening the parliament. The legislators tried to use powers of appropriation to enhance the financial and infrastructural situation of the national assembly. But, these efforts further deepened its conflicts with the executive over the limits and extent of legislative powers. Thus the effort of the national assembly to position itself in order to effectively play its role became a source of conflict because even the procedures for carrying out this repositioning exercise were not clear. In fact, the Senate Leadership became involved in contract award scandals that further diminished the public image of parliament. Also important is the conflict over the distribution and execution of capital projects in the country. While the executive argued for its exclusive right for ensuring rationalism, national balance and realism in the distribution of projects contained in the budget proposals, the legislature wanted such projects implemented in a way that their roles are reflected in the spread of projects by providing for what they labeled constituency projects. They maintain that they also needed to be indentified with specific contribution to their constituencies concerning the promised dividends of democracy. Accordingly they made provisions for such projects as part of the amendments or adjustments to the budgets proposals they received from the executive in 2001. A 500 million naira project for each legislative constituency was built into the budget by the legislators to make a direct impact on their constituencies but the president felt it was uncalled for. As the years wore on, it became glaring to the legislature that such projects were consistently being disregarded in the process of implementation (Ogbodo, 2001:08).

## **2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The Role theory which emphasize roles by presuming that persons are members of social positions and hold expectations for their own behaviours and those of other persons. Agreement persists among role theorists that the basic concerns of the orientation are with characteristics behaviours, parts to be played (Biddle, 1986:67). Functional role theory focused on the characteristic behaviours of persons who occupy social positions within a stable social system. "Roles" are conceived as the shared, normative expectations that prescribe and explain these behaviours. Actors in the social system have presumably been taught these norms and may be counted upon to conform to norms for their own conduct and to sanction others for conformity to norms applying to the latter (Parsons, 1951).

## **3. CONCLUSION**

This paper has established that the sub-national legislature in the quest of discharging her duties was confronted with challenges of which that of the executive seems greatest. Representation for Omotola (2014:07) is an important function of the legislature that is central to democratic development though essentially a contested concept', political representation has been seen 'as a key activity, a lifeline or linchpin that connect the citizenry to the governments. To the citizenry, the government seems a very distant and remote institution from the people, a gap which

is expected of the sub-legislature to fill as compared with the Local Government. The need for effective representation of usually competing and at times, conflicting interest is much more acute in deeply segmented societies like Nigeria. In such societies, the legislatures is expected to be a reflection of various societal interest both in composition, decision making and policy outcomes (implementation). This process confirms the effectiveness of the sub-national legislature and endorsed by the people who might never be remembered by the members of the national assembly.

#### **4. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The legislature in modern democracies can be said to be the hope of the common man in that apart from defending the rights of the defenseless, they are equally empowered to empower the electorates through their constituency allowance. The under listed suggestions will go a long way in ensuring effectiveness of the sub-national legislators Being the lawmakers that are closest to the people (grassroots legislature), they should ensure the running of their constituency office so that they can collate the bulk of the problems facing the people and share the solutions with the national legislative members of their constituency.

Having acquired great knowledge of the needs of the electorates through the normal running of their constituency office, they are expected to influence the state executives on most of the capital expenditures of the budget as expected have shown that the executives only execute projects which interest them through financial gains. The sub-national legislature should enforce the state executives to give priority to the payment of salary since the recurrent expenditure determines the survival of those that will make use of the capital projects implemented.

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**AI-Assisted Language Therapy for Children with Language Disorders in Nigeria: A Promising Approach**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*This study explores the potential of AI-assisted language therapy in addressing language disorders in Nigerian children. The researchers discussed the current state of language disorders in Nigeria, the challenges faced by children with language disorders, and the potential benefits of AI-assisted language therapy. The researchers also examined the predictors of successful AI-assisted language therapy, including technical issues, user knowledge and skills, child characteristics, environmental factors, support and maintenance, cost and accessibility, data privacy and security concerns, parent-child interaction, educator training and support, research and evidence-based practice, and the potential risks and benefits of AI-powered tools. The findings suggested that AI-assisted language therapy has the potential to revolutionize language intervention for Nigerian children with language disorders, offering personalized, engaging, and effective support. However, successful implementation requires careful consideration of the predictors of successful AI-assisted language therapy. Recommendations for increasing awareness and accessibility, developing culturally sensitive interventions, leveraging AI-powered tools, providing comprehensive training and support, addressing technical and environmental challenges, ensuring data privacy and security, fostering research and evidence-based practices, and promoting equity and social justice were provided. By addressing these factors, AI-assisted language therapy could be used effectively and efficiently to support Nigerian children with language disorders.*

**Keywords:** AI, Language disorder, Children, Tools

## **INTRODUCTION**

Language disorders are a pervasive issue among children in Nigeria, with a significant impact on their communication, social interaction, and academic success. Despite the growing body of research on language disorders, there remains a substantial gap in understanding the unique challenges faced by Nigerian children.

Previous research has shed some light on the issue. For instance, Oyewole (2018) found that 10% of Nigerian children experience speech and language disorders, highlighting the need for effective interventions. Afolayan (2019) identified a lack of awareness and limited access to speech-language pathologists as significant barriers to addressing language disorders in Nigeria. Onuora (2017) explored the impact of language disorders on academic performance, revealing a significant correlation between language difficulties and poor academic outcomes.

However, there are still significant research gaps that need to be addressed. Limited research has focused specifically on the experiences of Nigerian children with language disorders, leaving a gap in understanding the cultural and contextual factors that influence language development. Few studies have investigated the effectiveness of interventions tailored to the Nigerian context, highlighting the need for culturally sensitive approaches. Furthermore, the integration of technology, such as AI-powered solutions, has not been extensively explored in addressing language disorders in Nigeria, representing a significant research gap.

These gaps highlight the need for further research to investigate the unique challenges faced by Nigerian children with language disorders, develop culturally sensitive interventions tailored to the Nigerian context, and explore the potential of AI-powered solutions in addressing language disorders in Nigeria. By addressing these research gaps, this study aims to contribute to the development of effective interventions and improved outcomes for Nigerian children with language disorders.

## **AI**

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a broad field that encompasses a range of technologies and techniques used to build intelligent machines (Kurzweil, 2005). AI involves the development of computer

systems that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as understanding language, recognizing speech, making decisions, and solving problems (Russell & Norvig, 2010).

AI can be categorized into two main types: narrow or weak AI, which is designed to perform a specific task, and general or strong AI, which is designed to perform any intellectual task that a human can (Bostrom, 2014). AI technologies include machine learning, natural language processing, computer vision, and robotics (Jordan & Mitchell, 2015).

AI has the potential to revolutionize numerous fields, including healthcare, education, finance, and transportation (Manyika et al., 2017). However, AI also raises ethical concerns, such as job displacement, bias, and privacy (Bostrom, 2014).

### **Language disorder**

Language disorder refers to a range of difficulties with language development, comprehension, and use. It can affect individuals of all ages, from children to adults, and can impact various aspects of language, including speaking, listening, reading, and writing. According to the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association (ASHA), language disorders can be classified into several types, including Expressive language disorder: difficulty with verbal or nonverbal expression of language; Receptive language disorder: difficulty with understanding language; Mixed receptive-expressive language disorder: difficulty with both understanding and expressing language; Language-based learning disability: difficulty with language skills that impact academic achievement.

The causes of language disorders are diverse and can be attributed to genetic, environmental, and neurodevelopmental factors. Research suggests that genetics play a role in language disorders, with family history being a significant risk factor (Leonard, 2014). Additionally, environmental factors such as limited exposure to language, poor language modeling, and socio-economic disadvantage can contribute to language disorders (Kuhl, 2010). Neurodevelopmental disorders such as autism spectrum disorder, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, and learning disabilities can also impact language development.

Language disorders can have significant impacts on individuals, including difficulty with communication and social interaction, academic underachievement, emotional and behavioral

difficulties, and reduced self-esteem and confidence. Early identification and intervention are crucial for addressing language disorders. Speech-language pathologists (SLPs) play a critical role in assessing, diagnosing, and treating language disorders, using a range of evidence-based interventions and strategies. SLPs work with individuals, families, and educators to develop personalized treatment plans that address the unique needs of each individual.

The impact of language disorders on socio-economic disadvantage is a critical consideration. Research highlights the relationship between language disorders and socio-economic disadvantage, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to support disadvantaged populations (Bishop, 2014). SLPs must be aware of these factors and work to address the systemic barriers that contribute to language disorders. By providing culturally responsive and evidence-based interventions, SLPs can help mitigate the effects of language disorders and support individuals in achieving their full potential.

Language disorders are complex and multifaceted, requiring a comprehensive understanding of their causes, impacts, and treatment. SLPs play a critical role in addressing language disorders, and their work has a significant impact on individuals, families, and communities. By staying current with research and best practices, SLPs can provide effective interventions that support individuals with language disorders in achieving their full potential.

### **Who are the children with Language Disorders?**

Children with language disabilities are individuals who experience difficulties with language development, comprehension, and use. According to various authors, these children may exhibit characteristics such as:

- I. Delayed or absent language development, difficulty with verbal or nonverbal communication, and struggles with understanding and following directions (Leonard, 2014).
- II. Difficulty with phonological processing, lexical retrieval, and syntactic processing, which can impact their ability to comprehend and express language (Kuhl, 2010).
- III. Struggles with language-based academic skills, such as reading and writing, which can impact their academic achievement and educational outcomes (Bishop, 2014).
- IV. Difficulty with social communication, including initiating or maintaining conversations, understanding nonverbal cues, and developing and maintaining relationships (Tager-Flusberg, 2016).

Leonard (2014) and Kuhl (2010) emphasize the importance of early identification and intervention for children with language disabilities. They highlight the need for comprehensive assessments and individualized treatment plans that address the unique needs and strengths of each child.

Children with language disabilities may also exhibit characteristics such as:

- V. Difficulty with attention and working memory, which can impact their ability to process and retain language information (Gathercole & Baddeley, 2014).
- VI. Struggles with emotional regulation and behavioral self-control, which can impact their ability to participate in language-based activities and develop social relationships (Webster-Stratton, 2018).
- VII. Difficulty with executive function skills, such as planning, organization, and self-monitoring, which can impact their ability to complete language-based tasks and achieve academic success (Hill & Frith, 2003).

By understanding the characteristics of children with language disabilities, educators and clinicians can develop effective strategies and interventions to support their language development, academic achievement, and social relationships.

### **Challenges of Language Disorder Patients**

Children with language disorders face a multitude of challenges that impact their daily lives, social interactions, and academic performance. According to past researcher' findings, one of the primary challenges is communication difficulties. Oyewole (2018) and Afolayan (2019) noted that children with language disorders struggle to express themselves effectively, initiate and maintain conversations, and understand complex concepts. This leads to frustration, social isolation, and difficulty forming relationships.

- b. Academic difficulties are another significant challenge faced by children with language disorders. Onuora (2017) and Olateju (2015) found a correlation between language difficulties and poor academic outcomes, including struggles with reading comprehension, writing skills, and completing assignments. These difficulties can lead to decreased academic achievement and increased stress.
- c. Social challenges are also prevalent among children with language disorders. Adeniyi (2016) and Ogunjimi (2018) noted that children with language disorders experience social isolation, difficulty forming relationships, and negative attitudes from peers. This can lead to emotional distress, including anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.
- d. Limited access to resources and stigma and discrimination further exacerbate the challenges faced by children with language disorders. Olateju (2015) and Onuora (2017)

noted that limited access to speech-language pathologists and specialized interventions can hinder progress, while Adeniyi (2016) and Ogunjimi (2018) found that stigma and discrimination can lead to social isolation and negative attitudes.

- e. Additionally, children with language disorders may struggle with abstract thinking, problem-solving, and critical thinking, as noted by Oyewole (2018) and Afolayan (2019). They may also experience difficulty with organization, planning, and self-regulation, leading to challenges with completing assignments and managing time effectively.
- f. Self-advocacy is another area of difficulty for children with language disorders. Adeniyi (2016) and Ogunjimi (2018) found that children with language disorders struggle to express their needs and assert themselves, leading to increased dependence on others.

Language disorders can impact family dynamics, leading to increased stress, tension, and affected relationships. Oyewole (2018) and Afolayan (2019) noted that comprehensive support and interventions are necessary to address the complex challenges faced by children with language disorders.

### **AI Tools as Therapies for Children with Language Disorders**

AI tools powered solutions offer a range of innovative and effective interventions for children with language disorders, supporting communication, language development, and literacy skills. One such solution is Speech Recognition Technology, which can help children improve their pronunciation, fluency, and comprehension. By recording the child's speech and using AI-powered software to analyze and provide feedback, children can receive personalized guidance to enhance their language skills.

- B. Another AI-powered solution is Language Learning Apps, which offer personalized language interventions, interactive games, and activities to support language development. By downloading the app and tailoring the settings to the child's language needs and goals, children can engage in interactive and fun language learning experiences.
- C. Chatbots are also an effective AI-powered solution, providing interactive language interventions, conversations, and storytelling to support language development and social skills. By engaging the child in conversations with the chatbot, using prompts and topics



tailored to their interests and language goals, children can practice their language skills in a fun and interactive way.

- D. Virtual Assistants, such as Amazon's Alexa or Google Assistant, can also support language development, literacy, and communication skills. By using voice commands to engage the virtual assistant, asking questions, telling stories, or completing tasks, children can practice their language skills in a real-world setting.
- E. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Tools are another AI-powered solution, providing alternative communication methods for children with severe language disorders. By customizing the AAC tool to the child's needs, using symbols, images, or text-to-speech functionality, children can communicate effectively and confidently.
- F. Reading and Literacy Tools are also available, offering personalized reading interventions, text-to-speech functionality, and interactive reading activities. By using the tool to read texts aloud, provide feedback on comprehension, and engage the child in interactive reading activities, children can improve their reading and literacy skills.
- G. Language Analysis Software is another AI-powered solution, providing detailed analysis of language skills, identifying strengths and weaknesses. By recording the child's language samples and using the software to analyze and provide feedback on language skills, children can receive personalized guidance to enhance their language skills.

By leveraging AI tools powered solutions, children with language disorders can receive personalized, engaging, and effective interventions to support their communication, language development, and literacy skills. These innovative solutions have the potential to revolutionize language therapy, offering new and exciting opportunities for children to improve their language skills and reach their full potential.

Some examples of AI-powered tools for children with language disorders, along with guidance on how to use them:

### **1. Speech Recognition Technology:**

Tool: Google Cloud Speech-to-Text

How to use: Record the child's speech using a device, then upload the recording to Google Cloud Speech-to-Text. The tool will transcribe the speech and provide feedback on pronunciation, intonation, and rhythm.

### **2. Language Learning Apps:**

Tool: 1) Duolingo

How to use: Download the Duolingo app and create a profile for the child. Tailor the settings to their language needs and goals, then engage them in interactive games and activities to support language development.

Tool 2: ChatGenie

How to use: Engage the child in conversations with the ChatGenie chatbot, using prompts and topics tailored to their interests and language goals. The chatbot will respond and engage the child in interactive language interventions.

### **3. Virtual Assistants:**

Tool: Amazon Alexa

How to use: Use voice commands to engage Amazon Alexa, asking questions, telling stories, or completing tasks. This will help the child practice their language skills in a real-world setting.

### **4. Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) Tools:**

Tool: Proloquo2Go

How to use: Customize the Proloquo2Go AAC tool to the child's needs, using symbols, images, or text-to-speech functionality. This will provide alternative communication methods for children with severe language disorders.

### **5. Reading and Literacy Tools:**

Tool: Reading Assistant Plus

How to use: Use the Reading Assistant Plus tool to read texts aloud, provide feedback on comprehension, and engage the child in interactive reading activities. This will help improve their reading and literacy skills.

### **6. Language Analysis Software:**

Tool: Language Tool

How to use: Record the child's language samples and use the Language Tool software to analyze and provide feedback on language skills. This will help identify strengths and weaknesses and guide language therapy.

When using AI tools powered solutions, it is essential to consult with a speech-language experts, pathologist or healthcare professional to determine the most suitable AI-powered solution for the child's specific needs. Additionally, customizing the AI-powered solution to the child's language goals, needs, and preferences, monitoring progress, and ensuring the child understands how to use the AI-powered solution are crucial for effective implementation.

### **Predictors in Using AI for Language Disorder Patients**

The successful utilization of AI-powered tools for children with language disorders is influenced by a complex array of factors. Technical issues, such as hardware or software malfunctions, internet connectivity problems, and compatibility issues with devices or platforms, can hinder the effectiveness of these tools. These technical issues can arise from a variety of sources, including the complex infrastructure required to support AI-powered tools, differences in operating systems or browser versions, and physical obstacles like distance from cell towers.

User knowledge and skills also play a critical role in the successful use of AI-powered tools. Adults and children alike can struggle with understanding and using new technologies, especially if they lack prior experience or training. This can lead to frustration, decreased motivation, and ultimately, ineffective use of AI-powered tools. Furthermore, insufficient training or support for parents, caregivers, or educators can exacerbate this issue, making it essential to provide adequate resources and guidance.

The child's individual needs and characteristics are also crucial factors to consider. Language disorders can stem from genetic predispositions, brain structure differences, or environmental factors like exposure to language. Learning styles and preferences can also vary greatly among children, influencing how they respond to different teaching methods and tools. Motivation and engagement are critical factors, as children who are not invested in the learning process may not benefit fully from AI-powered tools.

Environmental and contextual factors, such as the availability of resources, distractions or noise in the environment, and cultural and linguistic differences, can also impact the effectiveness of AI-powered tools. Limited access to devices, internet, and AI-powered tools can create unequal opportunities for children, exacerbating existing disparities in education and healthcare. Moreover, cultural and linguistic differences can influence how children interact with technology, highlighting the need for culturally sensitive and linguistically appropriate AI-powered tools.

Support and maintenance are essential for the successful utilization of AI-powered tools. Regular updates and maintenance are necessary to ensure that these tools continue to function optimally and address emerging issues. Technical support and customer service are also critical for addressing user questions and concerns. Ongoing training and support for users can help build confidence and competence in using AI-powered tools, ensuring that they are used effectively and efficiently.

Cost and accessibility are significant factors to consider, as financial constraints can limit access to devices, internet, and AI-powered tools. Limited access to these resources can perpetuate cycles of poverty and disadvantage, highlighting the need for affordable and accessible AI-powered tools. Moreover, data privacy and security concerns are growing, as AI-powered tools collect and analyze increasing amounts of data. Ensuring compliance with data protection regulations and addressing

concerns about data collection, storage, and usage are essential for building trust in AI-powered tools.

Parent-child interaction and educator training and support are critical factors in the successful implementation of AI-powered tools. Research has shown that parent-child interaction is a strong predictor of language development and learning outcomes. Educator training and support are also essential for effective implementation, as teachers play a critical role in integrating AI-powered tools into their teaching practices. Furthermore, research and evidence-based practice are necessary to ensure that AI-powered tools are effective and to identify areas for improvement. By prioritizing research and evaluation, we can ensure that AI-powered tools are used effectively and efficiently to support children with language disorders.

In addition to these factors, it is essential to consider the potential risks and benefits of AI-powered tools. While these tools offer numerous benefits, such as personalized learning and increased accessibility, they also pose risks, such as data privacy concerns and the potential for bias in AI decision-making. By carefully weighing these risks and benefits, we can ensure that AI-powered tools are used responsibly and effectively to support children with language disorders.

Moreover, the development and implementation of AI-powered tools must be guided by a commitment to equity and social justice. This requires ensuring that these tools are accessible and beneficial to all children, regardless of their background or circumstances. By prioritizing equity and social justice, we can ensure that AI-powered tools are used to promote greater equality and opportunity for all children.

The successful utilization of AI-powered tools for children with language disorders is influenced by a complex array of factors, including technical issues, user knowledge and skills, the child's individual needs and characteristics, environmental and contextual factors, support and maintenance, cost and accessibility, data privacy and security concerns, parent-child interaction, educator training and support, research and evidence-based practice, and the potential risks and benefits of these tools. By carefully considering these factors and prioritizing equity and social justice, we can ensure that AI-powered tools are used effectively and efficiently to support children with language disorders.

## **Conclusion**

This study has underscored the significant challenges faced by children with language disorders in Nigeria, including communication difficulties, academic struggles, and social isolation. Limited access to resources, stigma, and discrimination exacerbate these challenges. AI-powered tools present a promising avenue for addressing these issues by offering personalized, engaging, and effective interventions. These tools can support language development, literacy skills, and social interactions, providing new opportunities for children with language disorders to improve their skills and reach their full potential. However, successful implementation requires addressing technical issues, ensuring adequate training for users, and considering the child's individual needs and environmental factors.

### **Recommendations**

There is a need to increase awareness and accessibility regarding language disorders. Implementing nationwide awareness campaigns can educate the public about language disorders and the importance of early intervention. It is also crucial to increase access to speech-language pathologists and AI-powered tools, particularly in underserved areas, to ensure that all children receive the necessary support.

Developing culturally sensitive interventions tailored to the Nigerian context is essential. This involves collaborating with local educators, healthcare professionals, and families to create relevant and effective programs. Culturally appropriate interventions are more likely to be effective and accepted by the community, thereby improving outcomes for children with language disorders.

Leveraging AI-powered tools can significantly enhance the support provided to children with language disorders. Promoting the use of tools such as speech recognition technology, language learning apps, and virtual assistants can provide personalized and engaging learning experiences. These tools should be user-friendly and accessible to both children and their caregivers to maximize their effectiveness.

Providing comprehensive training and support for educators, parents, and caregivers on the effective use of AI-powered tools is critical. Training programs should be designed to enhance user confidence and address any technical issues that may arise. Ongoing support ensures that users can effectively integrate these tools into their daily routines and maximize their benefits.

Addressing technical and environmental challenges is necessary to ensure the successful implementation of AI-powered tools. Improving internet connectivity and device availability in schools and communities can help overcome these barriers. Regular updates and maintenance of AI-powered tools are also crucial to prevent technical issues and ensure their optimal functioning.

Ensuring data privacy and security is paramount. Implementing strict data protection measures can safeguard the personal information of children using AI-powered tools. Addressing privacy concerns is essential to build trust in these technologies and encourage their widespread adoption.

Fostering research and evidence-based practices can continuously improve language disorder interventions. Encouraging ongoing research to evaluate the effectiveness of AI-powered interventions and identify best practices ensures that the support provided to children is based on the latest evidence. This approach can lead to the continuous improvement of interventions and better outcomes for children with language disorders.

Promoting equity and social justice is crucial. Ensuring that interventions and AI-powered tools are accessible to all children, regardless of their socio-economic background, can address systemic barriers and provide equal opportunities for all children. By prioritizing equity and social justice, stakeholders can create a supportive environment that enables all children with language disorders to reach their full potential.

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