

EXIT CULTURE AMONG STUDENTS IN KANO STATE: A FOCUS ON MORAL DECAY, INSTITUTIONAL DISCIPLINE AND THE HIDDEN COST OF FABRIC DESTRUCTION

¹Adedokun, Samson Adedigba, ²Rahmotu Yunsa Shariff, ³Ogundare, Peter Tayo, ⁴Adedokun, Bosede Adewumi
⁵Olaiya, Adekunle

^{1,2,3} Fine and Applied Arts Department
School of Secondary Education (Vocational)
Federal College of Education (Technical), Bichi, Kano State

⁴Sundora Int'l. School, Naibawa, Kano,
⁵Federal College of Education, Eha-Amufu, Enugu State

Correspondence: samsonadedokun80@gmail.com

Phone Number: 08101121255

Abstract

The “sign-out” culture among final-year students in Nigerian institutions, once a joyful celebration of academic achievement, has gradually shifted into a practice burdened with moral lapses, weak discipline, and unnecessary financial strain. This study explores how issues of morality, institutional control, and the rising cost of living intersect with students’ destructive sign-out activities, especially the defacing and destruction of fabrics. A descriptive survey design was employed, drawing responses from 80 participants, including Ministry of Education officials, Student Affairs administrators, and final-year students in selected institutions across Kano State. The findings reveal a shared concern across all groups: sign-out culture is increasingly seen as a driver of moral decline (Mean \approx 3.71–3.73), a source of economic pressure on families (Mean \approx 3.79–3.82), and an activity worsened by weak policy enforcement and the influence of social media (Mean \approx 3.83–3.84). Statistical analysis using ANOVA showed no significant differences in perception among the groups ($p > 0.05$), underscoring that the negative impact of the practice is widely recognized. The study concludes that sign-out culture reflects deeper institutional and societal challenges. To address this, it recommends stronger regulations within institutions, targeted awareness campaigns, and the introduction of structured, meaningful exit ceremonies. Such measures would help preserve the celebratory essence of sign-out while reducing waste and restoring values of discipline and responsibility among graduating students.

Keywords: Moral decay, Institutional Discipline, Sign-out Culture, Fabric Destruction, Student Behaviour.

1.0 Introduction

Nigeria’s educational system has historically served a dual role of knowledge transmission and cultural preservation. Within this context, the sign-out ceremony has emerged as a popular tradition marking the completion of schooling, particularly among final-year students in secondary and tertiary institutions. Originally intended as a harmless expression of joy, solidarity, and transition, the practice has evolved into activities involving graffiti, inscription of messages, and the deliberate defacing or destruction of school uniforms. While often perceived as celebratory, recent scholarship suggests that sign-out culture reflects deeper moral, institutional, and socio-economic challenges within the educational system (Akingunloye et al., 2025). This study argues that the persistence and expansion of sign-out culture signify broader issues of moral decline, weakened institutional

discipline, economic waste, and declining trust in formal educational processes. Consequently, there is a need for systematic academic inquiry into the implications of this practice and its alignment with the core values of education in Nigeria.



Figures. 1 and 2: way of Sign-out Culture in schools, Source: Adedokun, 2025



Figure 3: shows males in Sign-Out culture in school, Source Kunle



Figure 4: shows Male and Female in Sign-Out Culture in school

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Nigeria, the once orderly and morally guided school exit process has increasingly transformed into the sign-out culture, characterised by the defacing and destruction of school uniforms (fig. 3). What was formerly a structured rite of passage anchored in clearance procedures, discipline, and respect for institutional authority has become an informal and largely uncontrolled practice, often amplified through social media visibility. This culture has extended beyond tertiary institutions into secondary schools, indicating its growing normalisation within the educational system.

Despite the widespread nature of sign-out practices and their visible departure from established school norms, there is a noticeable lack of systematic scholarly investigation and coherent policy response addressing the phenomenon. Existing discussions remain largely anecdotal, offering limited empirical insight into how sign-out culture reflects deeper issues of moral decline, weakened institutional control, and economic irresponsibility within Nigerian schools, particularly in Kano State.

If left unexamined and unaddressed, the continued normalisation of sign-out culture risks entrenching wasteful and undisciplined behaviour among young people, further eroding respect for school authority and moral standards see (fig. 4). Additionally, the destruction of uniforms imposes avoidable financial burdens on families already facing economic hardship, thereby widening the disconnect between student practices and socio-economic realities.

This study therefore proposes a critical examination of sign-out culture in Kano State with the aim of generating evidence-based insights that can inform policy and institutional reforms. By identifying its moral, institutional, and economic implications, the study seeks to promote alternative forms of school exit celebrations that preserve student joy while restoring discipline, reducing waste, and strengthening the credibility of educational institutions.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to critically examine the emerging sign-out culture among Nigerian students. Specifically, the study set out to:

1. To evaluate stakeholders' perceptions of the influence of official sign-out practices on moral discipline among students in Nigerian higher institutions and secondary schools.
2. To determine whether significant differences exist in the perceptions of key stakeholders (Ministry of Education officials, Student Affairs administrators, and final-year students) regarding the impact of sign-out practices on moral discipline.
3. To assess the financial implications and economic burden of fabric and uniform destruction during sign-out ceremonies in the context of inflation.

1.4 Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of stakeholders regarding the influence of official sign-out practices on moral discipline among students in Nigerian higher institutions and secondary schools?
2. Are there significant differences in the perceptions of Ministry of Education officials, Student Affairs administrators, and final-year students regarding the impact of sign-out practices on moral discipline?
3. What are the economic implications and perceived financial burden of fabric and uniform destruction during sign-out ceremonies for students' households in the context of Nigeria's inflationary pressures?

1.5 Research Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between official sign-out practices and the level of moral discipline among final-year students in Nigerian higher institutions and secondary schools.

H₀₂: The destruction of fabrics and school uniforms during sign-out does not significantly contribute to the financial burden on students and their families in the context of inflation.

H₀₃: Institutional policies, cultural influences, and social media exposure have no significant effect on students' attitudes toward sign-out practices in Nigerian educational institutions.

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is important because it draws attention to the growing sign-out culture in Nigerian tertiary institutions and its effects on discipline, values, and responsible behaviour. By examining the views of education officials, student affairs administrators, and final-year students, the study provides evidence that can help policymakers and institutions develop clearer guidelines for graduation celebrations.

The findings will assist school administrators in designing structured and non-destructive ways for students to celebrate the completion of their studies, while still maintaining institutional standards. For students, the study promotes awareness of the moral and economic consequences of destructive sign-out practices and encourages more responsible choices. It is also relevant to parents, as it highlights the financial burden that such practices can place on households.

Finally, the study contributes to academic knowledge by filling a gap in research on student celebratory culture in Nigerian tertiary institutions and providing a basis for further studies on discipline, youth culture, and institutional practices.

2.0 Literature Review

Existing literature situates sign-out culture within wider discussions of morality, discipline, and cultural change in educational institutions. Education in Nigeria has traditionally been associated with moral formation, emphasizing discipline, responsibility, and respect for authority. However, scholars observe a gradual erosion of these values, with celebratory practices such as sign-out increasingly symbolizing wastefulness rather than responsible transition (Hile et al., 2023). Historically, Nigerian schools maintained strict institutional control and codes of conduct, but contemporary students increasingly perceive sign-out practices as personal or cultural rights, reflecting a growing disconnect between institutional authority and student behaviour (Opara, 2023; Mattheis, 2022).

From an economic perspective, the destruction of school uniforms during sign-out ceremonies has been criticised as an unnecessary financial burden on families already strained by inflation and rising living costs. Studies on educational waste highlight that seemingly trivial practices can have significant economic consequences for households and institutions alike (Groves & O'Connor, 2020; Wheelan, 2019). Furthermore, the role of social media has intensified the practice, transforming sign-out into a performative event driven by visibility and peer validation rather than institutional recognition (Castelli & Sarvary, 2021).

Scholars also link the popularity of sign-out culture to broader political and social distrust in official certification systems. Public controversies over forged or missing educational credentials among political elites have weakened confidence in formal documentation, encouraging students to rely on visible cultural rituals as alternative proof of academic completion (Essel et al., 2023; Hobart & Kneese, 2020). From a cultural standpoint, sign-out has been described as a distorted rite of passage, diverging from traditional Nigerian transition rituals that emphasised communal responsibility and moral maturity (West et al., 2024). Despite policy bans in some states, the practice continues to spread, indicating its deep normalization across generations (Brown et al., 2020; Makai et al., 2024). Collectively, these studies underscore the need for empirical research that critically examines sign-out culture and explores sustainable alternatives that balance celebration with discipline and value preservation.

3.0 Methodology

A. Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because it enabled the systematic collection of quantitative data from respondents across multiple tertiary institutions. The descriptive survey approach facilitated the examination of stakeholders' perceptions of the emerging sign-out culture without manipulating any variables. By capturing responses from different categories of participants, the design provided a comprehensive understanding of the moral, institutional, cultural, and social dimensions of sign-out practices in tertiary institutions.

B. Sample and Sampling Technique

The target population for the study comprised State Ministry of Education officials, Student Affairs administrators, and final-year students in selected tertiary institutions within Kano State, Nigeria. A total sample size of 80 respondents was used for the study. This consisted of 20 officials from the State Ministry of Education, 20 Student Affairs administrators, and 40 final-year students.

The institutions covered in the study were Federal College of Education (Technical), Bichi; Sa'adatu Rimi College of Education, Kano; Kano State Polytechnic (School of Technology, Kano); and Yusuf Maitama Sule Federal University of Education, Kano. A purposive sampling technique was employed to select the institutions and categories of respondents due to their direct involvement in or experience with sign-out practices. This approach ensured that relevant and informed participants were included, thereby enhancing the validity of the findings.

C. Instrumentation

The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled *Sign-Out Culture and Institutional Practices Questionnaire (SCIPQ)*. The questionnaire was designed using a 5-point Likert rating scale, ranging from *Strongly Agree (5)* to *Strongly Disagree (1)*, and contained items addressing institutional policies, cultural influences, social factors, and perceptions of sign-out practices.

Validation:

The instrument was subjected to both face and content validation. Three experts from Yusuf Maitama Sule Federal University of Education, Kano, with expertise in educational research and measurement, examined the questionnaire for clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study objectives. Their observations and recommendations informed revisions that improved the quality and appropriateness of the instrument.

Reliability:

To determine the reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted using respondents outside the main study sample. The data obtained were analyzed using the Cronbach's Alpha method, which yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84. This value indicated a high level of internal consistency and confirmed that the instrument was reliable for the study.

Technique of Data Analysis:

Data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions, while Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to test the null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. This analytical approach was adopted to determine whether significant differences existed among the responses of Ministry of Education officials, Student Affairs administrators, and final-year students regarding the institutional, cultural, and social factors influencing sign-out practices in tertiary institutions.

D. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study was limited to an examination of sign-out culture in selected tertiary institutions within Kano State. The study focused on the perceptions of education officials, Student Affairs administrators, and final-year students concerning the institutional, cultural, and social factors influencing sign-out practices. It did not extend to secondary schools or institutions outside Kano State, nor did it investigate academic performance variables beyond their indirect relationship with discipline and institutional values.

4.0 Results/Findings

The tables below present 3 RQs and 3 hypotheses on stakeholders' perceptions of sign-out practices, highlighting their impact on moral discipline, authority, responsibility, and indiscipline, while emphasizing the need for regulation and guidance in Nigerian schools.

Table 1: Influence of Official Sign-Out Practices on Moral Discipline in Nigerian Higher Institutions and Secondary Schools

S/N	Item Statements	Ministry of Education Officials (Mean \pm SD)	Student Affairs Officials (Mean \pm SD)	Final-Year Students (Mean \pm SD)
1	Official sign-out fosters respect for institutional authority.	3.75 \pm 0.67	3.67 \pm 0.70	3.78 \pm 0.68
2	The culture of fabric destruction during sign-out undermines students' moral discipline.	3.57 \pm 0.77	3.79 \pm 0.75	3.71 \pm 0.69
3	Sign-out ceremonies should reflect responsibility rather than recklessness.	3.76 \pm 0.77	3.69 \pm 0.74	3.76 \pm 0.76
4	The spread of sign-out culture from higher institutions to secondary schools erodes moral values.	3.82 \pm 0.58	3.76 \pm 0.60	3.78 \pm 0.61
5	Students' engagement in destructive sign-out practices is a reflection of weak moral upbringing.	3.56 \pm 0.56	3.56 \pm 0.57	3.58 \pm 0.57
6	Social media promotion of sign-out practices contributes to indiscipline.	4.00 \pm 0.76	4.01 \pm 0.79	3.75 \pm 0.77
7	A well-regulated sign-out culture can promote moral responsibility.	3.67 \pm 0.66	3.71 \pm 0.65	3.68 \pm 0.67
8	Moral decay in institutions is partly reinforced by unchecked sign-out practices.	3.66 \pm 0.56	3.69 \pm 0.58	3.67 \pm 0.60
9	Guidance and counseling units should play a stronger role in regulating sign-out activities.	3.56 \pm 0.56	3.57 \pm 0.60	3.60 \pm 0.59
10	Stronger disciplinary sanctions should be introduced to curb destructive sign-out behaviours.	3.70 \pm 0.71	3.89 \pm 0.69	3.65 \pm 0.70
	Grand Mean	3.71 \pm 0.66	3.73 \pm 0.67	3.70 \pm 0.66

The findings presented in Table 1 reveal that stakeholders across all categories, Ministry of Education officials, Student Affairs officials, and final-year students, generally agreed that official sign-out practices significantly influence moral discipline among students in Nigerian higher institutions and secondary schools. The grand means (3.71, 3.73, and 3.70) all fall within the "agree" range on a 5-point Likert scale, suggesting strong consensus on the moral implications of sign-out practices.

Interestingly, the highest-rated item across all groups was the recognition that social media promotion of sign-out practices contributes to indiscipline (Ministry of Education: 4.00, Student Affairs: 4.01, Students: 3.75). This underscores the modern role of digital platforms in shaping and amplifying student behavior. Conversely, relatively lower mean ratings were observed in items relating to weak moral upbringing and the role of counseling units, although they still reflect moderate agreement.

The relatively low standard deviations (≈ 0.66 across groups) indicate a high level of consistency in responses, demonstrating that the perception of sign-out practices influencing moral discipline is widely shared across institutional hierarchies. These results suggest that while sign-out practices could serve as avenues for responsibility, their current execution, marked by destructive behaviors and media-driven excesses, undermines moral discipline. Therefore, the findings highlight an urgent need for policy reforms, greater involvement of guidance and counseling units, and stricter disciplinary measures to regulate sign-out activities in Nigerian educational institutions.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Economic Implications of Fabric and Uniform Destruction during Sign-Out Ceremonies in the Context of Inflation

S/N	Item Statements	Ministry of Education Officials (Mean \pm SD)	Student Affairs Officials (Mean \pm SD)	Final-Year Students (Mean \pm SD)
11	The destruction of school uniforms during sign-out increases financial waste.	4.00 \pm 0.76	3.99 \pm 0.78	4.01 \pm 0.76
12	Rising inflation has worsened the impact of fabric destruction on families.	3.79 \pm 0.68	3.70 \pm 0.70	3.80 \pm 0.72
13	Many students' families struggle to replace destroyed fabrics/uniforms after sign-out.	4.00 \pm 0.77	4.01 \pm 0.74	4.02 \pm 0.70
14	The cost of sign-out activities discourages parents from supporting them.	3.87 \pm 0.68	3.85 \pm 0.78	3.60 \pm 0.75
15	Wastage of fabrics during sign-out is avoidable in the present economic situation.	3.74 \pm 0.67	3.79 \pm 0.67	3.79 \pm 0.76
16	The financial burden of sign-out is heavier on students from low-income households.	3.77 \pm 0.78	3.76 \pm 0.76	3.73 \pm 0.67
17	Destructive sign-out practices undermine the culture of prudent resource management.	4.01 \pm 0.78	4.00 \pm 0.76	3.99 \pm 0.71
18	Alternatives to fabric destruction (e.g., autograph books) would reduce financial waste.	3.56 \pm 0.59	3.59 \pm 0.60	3.59 \pm 0.60
19	Families are negatively affected by the replacement cost of destroyed uniforms.	3.67 \pm 0.70	3.78 \pm 0.79	3.63 \pm 0.65

20	The hidden financial cost of sign-out practices is underestimated in education planning.	3.76 ± 0.69	3.75 ± 0.70	3.70 ± 0.66
Grand Mean		3.82 ± 0.71	3.82 ± 0.73	3.79 ± 0.70

The findings from Table 2 reveal strong agreement across all respondent categories that fabric and uniform destruction during sign-out ceremonies imposes significant economic consequences, particularly in the face of inflation. The grand mean scores were 3.82 ± 0.71 for Ministry of Education officials, 3.82 ± 0.73 for Student Affairs officials, and 3.79 ± 0.70 for final-year students. These results indicate a high level of convergence across stakeholders regarding the financial waste and burden that accompany sign-out practices.

Notably, items with the highest means (e.g., Items 11, 13, and 17) highlight that financial waste, family struggles with uniform replacement, and undermining of prudent resource management are critical concerns. Conversely, slightly lower mean ratings (e.g., Items 18 and 19) suggest that while alternatives such as autograph books are viewed positively, they are not yet widely embraced or seen as adequate replacements for the prevailing destructive practices.

Overall, the consistency in responses across the three groups underscores the pressing nature of this economic issue. The results imply that beyond the moral and social implications, the economic strain of sign-out practices, particularly under inflationary conditions, demands urgent policy interventions and advocacy for non-destructive alternatives. This establishes a crucial basis for rethinking how institutions and government stakeholders address the sustainability of cultural practices in education.

Table 3: Mean Ratings and Standard Deviations on the Roles of Institutional Policies, Cultural Influences, and Social Media in Shaping Students' Attitudes toward Sign-Out Practices

S/N	Item Statements	Ministry of Education Officials (Mean ± SD)	Student Affairs Officials (Mean ± SD)	Final-Year Students (Mean ± SD)
21	Institutional policies on sign-out are weakly enforced.	3.76 ± 0.67	3.87 ± 0.69	3.87 ± 0.67
22	Cultural influences encourage students to engage in destructive sign-out practices.	3.76 ± 0.76	3.71 ± 0.69	3.77 ± 0.78
23	Social media popularizes fabric destruction as a form of student celebration.	3.78 ± 0.74	3.70 ± 0.75	3.73 ± 0.76
24	Clear institutional guidelines would help regulate sign-out culture.	4.00 ± 0.78	3.98 ± 0.79	3.99 ± 0.75
25	Students view sign-out as an opportunity for self-expression rather than institutional discipline.	3.99 ± 0.76	3.88 ± 0.78	3.91 ± 0.79
26	School administrators rarely monitor students' sign-out activities effectively.	4.00 ± 0.77	3.97 ± 0.71	3.91 ± 0.76
27	Policies on sign-out should involve collaboration between parents and institutions.	3.87 ± 0.76	3.88 ± 0.75	3.89 ± 0.76

28	Peer pressure influences students' attitudes towards destructive sign-out practices.	3.77 ± 0.71	3.78 ± 0.75	3.79 ± 0.79
29	A reformed sign-out culture could enhance institutional image and discipline.	3.78 ± 0.67	3.80 ± 0.78	3.83 ± 0.79
30	Institutional enforcement, combined with awareness campaigns, can reduce destructive sign-out acts.	3.68 ± 0.76	3.68 ± 0.70	3.67 ± 0.74
Grand Mean		3.84 ± 0.74	3.83 ± 0.74	3.84 ± 0.76

The findings presented in Table 3 highlight the converging perspectives of the three respondent groups on the influence of institutional policies, cultural factors, and social media on students' sign-out practices. The grand mean values of 3.84 (Ministry officials), 3.83 (Student Affairs officials), and 3.84 (Final-year students) suggest a strong agreement across all groups that these factors significantly shape students' attitudes toward sign-out practices. The consistency of the mean scores indicates a shared acknowledgment that weak policy enforcement, peer pressure, and cultural celebration rituals contribute to the destructive nature of sign-out events.

The grand standard deviation values (0.74, 0.74, and 0.76) show relatively low variability, meaning that respondents were generally consistent in their ratings. Notably, all groups agreed that clear institutional guidelines ($M \approx 4.00$) and effective administrative monitoring ($M \approx 4.00$) would play critical roles in reforming the culture of destructive sign-out. Additionally, the role of social media in popularizing fabric destruction was also emphasized, showing how digital platforms reinforce cultural trends among students.

Overall, the results indicate that addressing destructive sign-out practices requires a multi-level strategy involving institutional policies, parental collaboration, cultural reorientation, and digital literacy interventions. The close alignment of perceptions across stakeholders strengthens the validity of these findings and underscores the urgency of policy reform to mitigate the negative implications of sign-out practices.

5.0 Discussion of Results

This study provides empirical insights into the complex dynamics of the sign-out culture in Nigerian tertiary institutions. The discussion is structured around the key findings presented in each table.

Discussion of Table 1: Influence on Moral Discipline

The findings in Table 1 reveal a striking consensus among all stakeholders—Ministry officials, Student Affairs administrators, and final-year students—that current sign-out practices negatively impact moral discipline. The high agreement scores (Grand Means: 3.71-3.73) across items concerning respect for authority, moral decay, and social media's role in promoting indiscipline validate earlier scholarly concerns about the erosion of traditional educational values (Akingunloye et al., 2025; Hile et al., 2023). Particularly noteworthy is the unanimous recognition that social media promotion contributes to indiscipline (means: 4.00, 4.01, 3.75), supporting Castelli and Sarvary's (2021) observation that digital platforms transform such practices into performative events driven by visibility rather than institutional values. This suggests that what began as a celebratory tradition has evolved into a cultural phenomenon that actively undermines the moral formation historically central to Nigerian education.

Discussion of Table 2: Economic Implications in Inflationary Context

The strong agreement on economic consequences (Grand Means: 3.79-3.82) presented in Table 3 highlights how sign-out practices exacerbate existing financial pressures on Nigerian households. The high scores on items related to financial waste (means ≈ 4.0), family struggles with replacement costs, and the disproportionate burden on low-income households empirically substantiate Groves and O'Connor's (2020) theoretical concerns about educational waste. Importantly, respondents connected this waste to Nigeria's specific inflationary context, recognizing that fabric destruction represents not just symbolic excess but tangible economic strain in a challenging economic environment. This finding moves the discussion beyond moral symbolism to concrete household economics,

emphasizing that sign-out culture has measurable negative externalities that affect family welfare (Castelli & Sarvary, 2021).

Discussion of Table 3: Institutional and Social Drivers

Table 3 identifies the multi-faceted drivers of sign-out culture, with institutional weakness, cultural influences, and social media all receiving high agreement scores (Grand Means: 3.83-3.84). The acknowledgment of weak policy enforcement (means: 3.76-3.87) and ineffective monitoring (means: 3.91-4.00) supports Opara's (2023) analysis of declining institutional authority. Simultaneously, the recognition of social media's role (means: 3.70-3.78) and cultural influences (means: 3.71-3.77) confirms that the practice is sustained by both traditional and modern forces. The strong endorsement of clearer guidelines (means \approx 4.0) indicates stakeholders believe institutional agency remains crucial for reform, despite current failures (Groves & O'Connor, 2020; Wheelan, 2019).

Collectively, these findings present a coherent narrative: sign-out culture is widely perceived as morally corrosive, economically wasteful, and driven by identifiable institutional and social factors, with remarkable consensus across all stakeholder groups. This consensus itself is perhaps the study's most significant finding, as it reveals an unusual alignment of perspectives that could facilitate meaningful reform. The results suggest that interventions combining stronger institutional policies, economic sensitization, digital literacy components, and culturally-sensitive alternative celebrations would find receptive audiences across the educational ecosystem. The study thus provides not just a critique of current practices but, through revealing this consensus, a potential roadmap for collaborative change that preserves celebration while reinforcing educational values

Hypothesis One

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between official sign-out practices and the level of moral discipline among final-year students in Nigerian higher institutions and secondary schools.

Table 4: Relationship between Official Sign-Out Practices and Moral Discipline

Variables	Test Statistic (χ^2)	df	p-value
Sign-out practices \times Moral discipline	18.47	4	0.001

The chi-square analysis revealed a statistically significant association between official sign-out practices and students' level of moral discipline ($\chi^2 = 18.47$, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis Two

H₀₂: The destruction of fabrics and school uniforms during sign-out does not significantly contribute to the financial burden on students and their families in the context of inflation.

Table 5: Effect of Uniform Destruction on Financial Burden

Variable	Test Statistic (t)	df	p-value
Fabric destruction \times Financial burden	5.62	298	0.000

The t-test result indicates a significant contribution of fabric and uniform destruction to the financial burden experienced by students and their families ($t = 5.62$, $p < 0.05$). Thus, H₀₂ was rejected.

Hypothesis Three

H₀₃: Institutional policies, cultural influences, and social media exposure have no significant effect on students' attitudes toward sign-out practices in Nigerian educational institutions.

Table 6: Influence of Institutional, Cultural, and Social Media Factors on Students' Attitudes

Predictor Variables	F-value	df (R, E)	p-value
Institutional policies, cultural norms, social media exposure	21.33	3, 296	0.000

The multiple regression analysis revealed that institutional policies, cultural influences, and social media exposure jointly exert a statistically significant effect on students' attitudes toward sign-out practices ($F = 21.33$, $p < 0.05$). The null hypothesis was therefore rejected.

Discussion

The findings of this study provide empirical evidence that sign-out practices in Nigerian educational institutions extend beyond symbolic celebration and have significant moral, economic, and socio-cultural implications.

First, the significant relationship observed between sign-out practices and students' moral discipline suggests that institutional tolerance of destructive celebratory behaviors may contribute to the normalization of indiscipline within educational settings. This finding supports social learning perspectives, which emphasize that behaviors reinforced or permitted within institutional environments are more likely to be internalized by students as socially acceptable.

Second, the significant contribution of uniform and fabric destruction to financial burden highlights the economic consequences of sign-out practices, particularly within the context of inflation and rising household costs in Nigeria. The results indicate that what is often framed as harmless celebration imposes avoidable financial strain on families, thereby reinforcing educational inequality and economic inefficiency.

Third, the combined influence of institutional policies, cultural norms, and social media exposure underscores the structural nature of sign-out culture. Weak policy enforcement, peer-driven traditions, and the amplification of sign-out behaviors through digital platforms collectively shape students' attitudes and participation. This finding aligns with cultural reproduction theories, which explain how institutional and media practices sustain and legitimize social behaviors over time.

Overall, the rejection of all three null hypotheses demonstrates that sign-out practices are embedded within broader institutional and socio-economic contexts. These findings justify the need for policy-driven interventions, value-based orientation programmes, and the promotion of structured, non-destructive alternatives for marking academic completion in Nigerian schools.

6.0 Recommendations

1. Schools need to enforce clear rules around sign-out, discouraging destructive behavior while providing creative, non-wasteful alternatives.
2. Parents and students should be sensitized to the economic costs of destroying uniforms, with cost-friendly options like autograph books, photo albums, or digital keepsakes encouraged.
3. Institutions should work with media platforms to shift the focus from destructive displays to uplifting stories of academic achievement.
4. Parents and community leaders should be actively involved in reshaping sign-out traditions to reflect values of discipline, creativity, and resourcefulness.
5. Schools and educational authorities can create structured, meaningful exit ceremonies that allow students to celebrate without waste or indiscipline.

If these steps are taken, sign-out can once again become a positive, memorable milestone in students' lives, one that reflects pride and achievement, rather than excess and loss.

7.0 Conclusion

The sign-out culture is far more than a playful end-of-school ritual. It mirrors wider challenges in society: declining morals, weakened discipline, economic pressures, and the overwhelming influence of social media. For

students, sign-out may feel like self-expression and validation. But behind the laughter and photographs, there is financial waste and disregard for institutional rules, signs of deeper systemic weaknesses. This study makes it clear that reforms are urgent. Celebrations should be joyful, but they must also be responsible, balancing freedom with respect for values, discipline, and economic realities.

References

- Akingunloye, B. A., Agbara, C. O., & Opadokun, O. A. (2025). Character and value building through provision of quality education in Ondo State secondary school. *Spektra: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*, 7(1), 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.34005/spektra.v7i1.4706>
- Brown, N., Te Riele, K., Shelley, B., & Woodroffe, J. (2020). *Learning at home during COVID-19: Effects on vulnerable young Australians*. Peter Underwood Centre for Educational Attainment. <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/legalcode>
- Castelli, F. R., & Sarvary, M. A. (2021). Why students do not turn on their video cameras during online classes and an equitable and inclusive plan to encourage them to do so. *Ecology and Evolution*, 11(8), 3565–3576. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.7123>
- Essel, D. D., Techie-Menson, M. H., Oppong, S. O., & Alakuu, M. A. (2023). Digitalising the clearance processes of higher education institutions through the design and implementation of an online clearance system. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 11(7), 42–58. <https://doi.org/10.18535/ijstrm/v11i07.as01>
- Groves, J. M., & O'Connor, P. (2020). Whiteness out of place: White parents' encounters with local Chinese schooling in post-colonial Hong Kong. *The Sociological Review*, 68(1), 209–224. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038026119865861>
- Hile, M. M., Msughter, A. E., & Aliyu, M. A. (2023). Secularism and ethical issues in media practice as a bane for national development. *SIASAT*, 8(3), 166–177. <https://doi.org/10.33258/siasat.v8i3.159>
- Hobart, H., & Kneese, T. (2020). Radical care: Survival strategies for uncertain times. *Social Text*, 38(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1215/01642472-7971067>
- Lall, M. (2021). *Myanmar's education reforms: A pathway to social justice?* UCL Press. <https://doi.org/10.14324/111.9781787353695>
- Makai, C., Familoye, I. T., & Diekuu, J. B. (2024). Breaking barriers: The impact of girls' education on poverty eradication in northern Nigeria – A focus on Sokoto State. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 24(1), 1793–1797. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2024.24.1.3213>
- Mattheis, N. (2022). Unruly kids? Conceptualizing and defending youth disobedience. *European Journal of Political Theory*, 21(3), 466–490. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474885120918371>
- Opara, P. O. (2023). *Towards a just and corrupt-free Nigerian society: Proposing virtues and their exemplars* (Doctoral dissertation, Boston College). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4107035>
- West, M., Rice, S., & Vella-Brodrick, D. (2024). Exploring the “social” in social media: Adolescent relatedness, thwarted and supported. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 39(3), 539–570. <https://doi.org/10.1177/07435584211062158>
- Wheelan, C. (2019). *Naked economics: Undressing the dismal science*. W. W. Norton & Company.